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ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO SOCIAL CATEGORY AND HOME ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

The present research work was specifically undertaken to study the adjustment problems of senior secondary school students with respect to their social category and home environment. Survey technique under descriptive method of research was adopted in this present investigation. A sample of 750 senior secondary school students was selected from four district of Himachal Pradesh by employing convenient sampling technique. In the present investigation data were collected with the help of Adjustment Problems Assessment Scale by Sinha and Singh (2017) and Home Environment Scale by Misra (2004). The collected data were analyzed by employing statistical technique Analysis of Variance (Two way). The findings of the study revealed that senior secondary school students belonging with reserved and unreserved social category possessed similar level of adjustment problems. The senior secondary school students possessing different level of home environment did not differ significantly from each other with regard to their adjustment problems. Further, it also indicated that the home environment and social category taken together did not affected adjustment problems of senior secondary school students significantly. The end of the paper discussion on the results and implications of the findings of the investigation has been discussed in detail.

Keywords: Adjustment Problems, Social Category and Home Environment

Introduction

The concept of adjustment is as old as human race on earth. From the very beginning of the period of Darwin the concept was used purely in biological sense. But man as a social animal not only has to adopt for physical demands but also adjust to social pressures. Thus the concept of adjustment is not as simple as adaptation. Most of the biologist uses the term adaptation strictly for physical demands of the environment but psychologists use the term adjustment for varying conditions of social or interpersonal relations in the society. The relationship which becomes established among the biological heritage or organism, the environment and the personality is adjustment. The term adjustment refers to a harmonious relationship between the person and the environment. The degree of harmony depends upon two things i.e. certain personality within a person and character of environment.

A person is said to be adjusted when he is to relate to reasonably adequate environment that he is relatively happy efficient and has a degree of social feeling. Adjustment is an all-inclusive term, meaning relationship between an individual and his environment through which his needs are satisfied in accordance with social demands. The adjustment process is a universal sequence that can be identified in the behaviour of organism from the lowest species up to man. Life is a continuous activity of adjustment to the social and physical environment. Every individual organism right from its emergence to its disappearance strives to adjust itself to the surrounding conditions education is the process to train the student for the adjustment in life situation. Main concern of the teachers is to develop the capacity among the children for adjustment in home, school and in society. The individual is born in society and lives in society. The society provide him with an environment of a particular type "which has its own tempo and own peculiarities". The process of adjustment to this particular type of environment begins at the first movement of his life emergence. Development of personality of the child and the teacher to a great extent depends on the adjustment with the environment. Efficiency of the teacher is also influenced by adjustment. Adjustment helps in having integrated and balanced personality. Though the word 'Adjustment' is not new, it has been a source of great confusion as it has many meanings packed into it. Herbert Spencer introduced the



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term into scientific parlance in his book “Principles of Biology” in 1864. “Life”, “he defined is the continuous adjustment of the individual to the external relations”. This lends itself to the suggestion that life always is modified to fit external circumstances and ignores the essence of civilization, which is modification of the external world to suit man’s internal needs and desires. Adjustment as a process is of major interest to psychologists who want to understand a person and his behaviour. The way one adjusts himself to his external environment at any point of time depends upon the interaction between the biological factors in growth and his social experiences.

Adjustment refers to a harmonious relationship between the person and the environment that affords him comfortable life devoid of strain, stress, conflict and frustration. The concept of the adjustment is as old as human race on earth. Adjustment refers to degree of capacity by which an individual tries to cope with inner tensions, needs, conflicts, frustration. It is a continuous process. The home environment is the surroundings and conditions in which a child grows up. It includes everything in the family that affects a child’s learning, behavior, and development. It is the first place where children begin to learn and develop their personality, emotions, and social skills. A good home environment provides love, care, and support, helping children feel safe and confident. It involves how parents, siblings, and other family members interact with the child, the values they teach, and the opportunities they provide for learning and growth. Things like family relationships, communication, and even the financial situation of the family are part of the home environment. A positive home environment helps children develop good habits, curiosity, and self-confidence, while a negative one can create stress and hinder their growth. In simple terms, the home environment is like the foundation of a house it shapes how strong and successful a child becomes in the future. **Raja and Soundararajan (2013)** revealed that a **statistically significant relationship** between students' **personality traits** especially extraversion and their adjustment levels. Students with more positive personality traits were found to be better adjusted. The study emphasized that personality plays a vital role in how students cope with various challenges and adjust to school life. **Alam (2017)** indicated no significant difference in emotional, social, or educational adjustment between adolescents from nuclear and joint families. This suggests that family structure might not significantly influence adolescents' ability to adjust, at least in the emotional and social domains. **Mahajan and Kauts (2018)** showed that no significant differences in the home environment or adjustment levels between adolescents of working and non-working mothers. Additionally, it was found that the home environment did not have a significant impact on adolescents' adjustment levels in either group. **Bhati (2020)** revealed that a significant **correlation** between emotion regulation and school adjustment. Students who were better at regulating their emotions also showed better adjustment in school, suggesting that emotional maturity plays a critical role in how adolescents adapt to their academic and social environments. **Shah and Shah (2023)** indicated that significant differences between male and female adolescents in relation to emotional, social, educational, and overall adjustment. Specifically, female adolescents exhibited better adjustment in all areas compared to their male counterparts. The study highlighted that emotional adjustment showed the most significant gender differences, with females outperforming males in emotional adjustment. This suggests that female adolescents may have better coping mechanisms and emotional regulation skills, which could positively influence their overall adjustment in school. **Kamala and Kumari (2023)** found that the location of the school, parental occupation, and parental income had no significant effect on students' adjustment to their home environment. However, gender was found to positively influence home adjustment, with girls demonstrating better adjustment. **Devi and Vaidharani (2024)** showed that there was no significant correlation between Study Habits and the Home Environment of male and female prospective teachers. Also, there was no significant correlation between study habits and the home environment of rural as well as urban prospective teachers.

Objective of the Study:

1. To study social category-wise difference in adjustment problems of senior secondary school students.
2. To study the adjustment problems of senior secondary school students with respect to their home environment.
3. To study the combined influence of social category and home environment with respect to adjustment problems of senior secondary school students.



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Hypotheses of the Study:

1. There will be no significant social category- wise difference in adjustment problems of senior secondary school students.
2. There will be no significant difference in adjustment problems of senior secondary school student with respect to their home environment.
3. There will be no significant combined influence of social category and home environment with respect to adjustment problems.

Methodology

In the present study, survey technique under descriptive method was employed for achieving the objectives of the study.

Sampling

The data were gathered from the four districts of Himachal Pradesh i.e. Mandi, Bilaspur, Kullu and Hamirpur. A total sample of 750 senior secondary school students was comprised for the study.

Research Tools Used

“Adjustment Inventory for School Students” by Sinha and Singh (2017) and “Home Environment Inventory” by Misra (2004) were used for the data collection. The collected data were analyzed using the statistical method of analysis of variance (Two-way).

Analysis of Data

In order to study the main and interactional effects of social category and level of home environment on adjustment problems of senior secondary school students, Analysis of Variance (2x3 factorial design) involving two types of social category i.e. reserved and unreserved and three levels of home environment i.e. high, average and low, was applied on mean scores of adjustment problems. The mean adjustment problems scores of senior secondary school students with respect to social category and levels of home environment are given in Table 1.

TABLE 1

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS SCORES OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO SOCIAL CATEGORY AND HOME ENVIRONMENT

Sr. No.	Levels of Home Environment Social Category		Means Adjustment Problem Scores			
			High Level	Average Level	Low Level	Total
1	Reserved	Means	45.68	44.90	45.59	45.19
		S.D.	7.807	8.801	6.400	8.322
		N	165	340	49	554
2	Unreserved	Means	45.06	45.62	45.00	45.27



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3	Total	S.D.	8.303	7.503	6.446	7.596
		N	49	126	21	196
		Means	45.54	45.09	43.62	45.21
		S.D.	7.908	8.468	6.431	8.133
		N	214	466	70	750

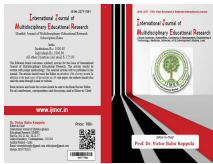
From the mean adjustment problem scores of senior secondary school students with respect to social category and level of home environment, 'F-Values' were calculated. The summary of results was given in Table 2 as follows:-

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR HOME ENVIRONMENTS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO SOCIAL CATEGORY AND HOME ENVIRONMENT

Sr. No.	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Means Square (Variance)	F-Ratio
1	Social Category (A)	33.343	1	33.343	0.502 ^{NS}
2	Home Environment (B)	26.278	2	13.139	0.198 ^{NS}
3	Social Category X Home Environment (AxB)	118.504	2	59.252	0.892 ^{NS}
4	Error Variance	49394.329	744	66.390	
5	Total Sum of Square	49547.292	749		

NS-----Not Significant



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Main Effects

(a) Social Category (A)

The calculated value of F- Ratio for the main effects of social category on adjustment problems of senior secondary school students for degree of freedom 1 and 744 came out to be 0.502, which is less than the table value (3.85) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the Hypotheses no. 1, "There will be no significant social category- wise difference in adjustment problems of senior secondary school students," was retained. Therefore, it may be inferred that there were no significant difference in adjustment problems of senior secondary school students belonging to reserved and unreserved social category.

The mean adjustment problem score of senior secondary school students belonging to the unreserved social category was 45.27, while that of students from the reserved social category was 45.19. Based on these mean scores, it can be concluded that students from the reserved social category are slightly better adjusted than those senior secondary school students from the unreserved category, as a lower adjustment problem score reflects better adjustment.

(b) Home Environment (B)

The calculated value of 'F- Ratio' for the main effects of home environment on adjustment problems of senior secondary school students, for degree of freedom 2 and 744, came out to be 0.135 which is below the table value (3.00) even at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the Hypotheses No. 2 that, "There will be no significant difference in adjustment problems of senior secondary school student with respect to their home environment,' was accepted. So, this is indicative of the fact that there was no significant difference in the adjustment problems of senior secondary school students with regard to different levels of home environment.

From Table 2, it can be seen that the mean adjustment problem scores of senior secondary school students with high, average, and low levels of home environment are 45.54, 45.09, and 43.62, respectively. Although, the senior secondary school students with a high level of home environment (mean = 45.54) reported higher adjustment problems as compared to those with an average level (mean = 45.09) and a low level (mean = 43.62). Since a lower adjustment problem score indicates better adjustment, it may be concluded that students with a low level of home environment are better adjusted than those with average or high levels of home environment.

Interactional Effect (AX B)

It is evident from the Table 2, the obtained value of 'F-Ratio' for interactional effects of social category and home environment on adjustment problem of senior secondary school students, for degree of freedom 2 and 744, came out to be 0.519, which is less than the table value (3.00) even at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis no. 3 that, "There exists no significant combined influence of social category and home environment with respect to adjustment problems of senior secondary school students" was accepted. This showed that social category and level of home environment did not taken together influenced adjustment problems of senior secondary school students significantly.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The present study was undertaken the adjustment problems of senior secondary school students with respect to their social category and home environment. The findings of the study revealed that senior secondary school students from both reserved and unreserved social categories showed similar levels of adjustment problems. Additionally, students with different types or levels of home environment did not significantly differ in their adjustment issues. The combined effect of social category and home environment was also found to be insignificant in influencing students' adjustment. These findings have important implications for educational planning and school practices.



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Firstly, the absence of significant differences between reserved and unreserved category students in terms of adjustment problems suggests that adjustment challenges are common across all social groups. Therefore, support programs and interventions in schools should be designed to include all students, without assuming that those from a specific social background face more or fewer adjustment issues. This promotes fairness and inclusivity in school policies and support systems. Secondly, since differences in home environment levels did not significantly affect students' adjustment, it indicates that factors beyond home life such as school support systems, peer relationships, or individual coping skills may play a bigger role in how students adjust. As a result, schools should focus more on creating a positive and supportive school atmosphere. This includes promoting healthy peer interactions, ensuring respectful teacher-student relationships, and providing access to guidance and counseling services.

Additionally, since the study shows no significant combined effect of home environment and social category on adjustment, it suggests that students' adjustment issues are more individual in nature rather than being determined only by background or environment. Schools should therefore consider individual student needs, and provide flexible support through regular check-ins, mental health awareness, and emotional skill-building activities such as life skills education or social-emotional learning. Teachers should be made aware that adjustment issues may not always be visible or linked to obvious external factors like family background or social category. Teacher training programs should include strategies to identify and support students who may be struggling silently with adjustment issues.

In summary, these findings suggested that all students, regardless of social category or home environment, deserve equal attention and emotional support. Schools must create inclusive, student-centered support systems that focus on promoting overall well-being, resilience, and personal growth for every learner.

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