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RESEARCH PAPER

Study of Adolescents' Adjustment in Relation to their Social Maturity

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Abstract

Adolescence, which is known as the age of stress and strain is the most critical stage, during which adolescents have to adjust with their own changes in personality on one side and the changing socio-economic environment on the other. Some adolescents find it difficult to adjust normally with these changes and experience some problems. For the development of the nation as well as the upliftment of the society, well-adjusted and socially mature individuals are important. In the modern society due to the lack of social maturity maladjustment at home, school as well as in society, the main objectives of imparting education are not being achieved. Keeping all these things into mind the investigator has conducted the present descriptive study by taking the sample of 100 adolescent students from different schools of Pathankot district to find out the results of the present study. The main findings of the study are: 1) There exists positive relationship between Adjustment and Social Maturity of adolescent students. 2) The difference between mean scores of Adjustment of boys and girls of adolescent students found to be significant. 3) The difference between mean scores of Adjustment of rural and urban adolescent students was found to be significant. 4) The difference between mean scores of Social Maturity of male and female adolescent students was found to be significant. 5) The difference between mean scores of social maturity of rural and urban Adolescent students was found to be significant.

Introduction

From the developmental stages, adolescence stage is most critical stage during which some important biological, psychological and social changes take place. It is a period of stress and storm. Adolescents have to adjust with their own changes in personality on one side and the changing socio-economic environment on the other side. Some adolescents find it difficult to adjust normally with these changes and experience some problems. An adolescent develops a good amount of social sense. Now he has to mould his behavior according to the norms of the

society. With the development of social and civic sense, children during this period learn to behave according to the norms of the society and culture. The formation of strong sentiments during this period intensifies the process of moral development.

Meaning of Adjustment

The dictionary meaning of the word "adjustment" is, to fit, make suitable adapt, arrange, modify, harmonize or make correspondent. Thus adjustment between two things means modify one or both of them to correspond to each other. The struggle between the need of the individual and external forces is a continuous struggle since time immortal. According to the Darwin (1859) theory of evolution, those species which adapted successfully to the demands of living, survived and multiplied while others, who did not, died out. Therefore adaptation or change in oneself according to the external environment is basic need for survival. "Adjustment" can be defined as a process of altering one's behavior to reach a harmonious relationship with the environment. This is typically a response brought about by some type of change that has taken place. The stress of this change causes an individual to try to reach a new type of balance between him and his environment. "Adjustment is the interaction between a person and his environment .An individual is adjusted if he is adjusted to himself and to his environment". - Arkoff (1968).

Areas of Adjustment:

Broadly speaking there are three areas where an individual needs to be adjusted to live a balanced life. These are family and home, school, and society.

a) Adjustment in family and home

An individual is not born adjusted or maladjusted. It is his physical, mental and emotional potentialities that are influenced and directed by the factors of environment in which he finds himself adjusted or maladjusted. The family is the oldest and the most important of all the institutions that man has devised to regulate and integrate his behavior as he strives to satisfy his basic needs. One of important roles of family is presumed to be the socialization of the child. Home is the first social institution where a child needs to be adjusted. He needs to be trained to modify his purely self centered interests and to cooperate in the activities of and for the welfare of others. From the very beginning he imitates the speaking and eating habits of his family and gradually reflects attitudes learned in the home towards elders. Good and bad behaviour that are exhibited at home are carried by the child into this relationship with

persons outside the home. Thus the family attitudes become an important consideration in the adjustment of a child.

b) Adjustment at school

Personal challenges occur as child takes new identity at school. Children face the challenges to adjust to the strange building, new teachers, new academic activities, and they need to mix with the new and more diverse group of children. At school, daily schedule is more structured, with more formal rules. Children are faced with large group of children of different ages and size especially during assembly and playtime, and they are confronted with the challenges of making new friends. Successful adjustment to school largely depends on past experiences at home and on children's skills and knowledge.

c) Adjustment in society

Adolescence is the period during which a child cares very little for the society, an adolescent develops a good amount of social sense. He ceases to be egocentric, selfish and unsocial. Now he has to mould his behavior according to the norms of the society. He believes in making intimate friendship and attaches himself closely to a group. Peer group relationship controls the social behavior of this age. The child develops a strong sense of loyalty towards group. He wants to be accepted by the group of which he is a member. The rejection is costly as it creates so many adjustment problems. Another significant change in the social aspect of the child during adolescence lies in his relationships with his parents and the family. He gives more importance to the values and beliefs maintained by his peer group than the advice of his parents. There may be hidden or open rebellion, if the parents try to impose their opinion and values on their adolescent children. Area of social adjustment is influenced by social maturity of the person. Maturity in social relationships means to establish good relations with family, neighbors', playmates, class-fellows, teachers and other members of the society.

Characteristics of a well-adjusted person:

Well-adjusted person is supposed to possess the following characteristics:

- A well-adjusted person knows his own strengths and weaknesses. He tries to make capital out of his asserts in some areas by accepting his limitations.
- The dislike of one-self is a typical symptom of maladjustment. An adjusted individual has respect for himself as well as for others.

- His level of aspiration is neither too nor too high in terms of his own strength and abilities. He does not try to reach for the stars and also does not repent over selecting an easier course for his advancement.
- His basic organic, emotional and social needs are full satisfied or in the process of being satisfied. He does not suffer from emotional cravings and social isolation. He feels reasonably secure and maintains his self-esteem.
- He appreciates the goodness in objects, persons or activities. He does not try to look for weakness and faults; his observation is scientific rather than critical or punitive. He likes people, admires their good qualities, and wins their affection.
- He is not rigid in his attitude or way of life. He can easily accommodate or adapt himself to changed circumstances by making necessary changes in his behavior.
- He is not easily overwhelmed by adverse circumstances and has the will and the courage to resist and fight odds. He has an inherent drive to master his environment rather than to passively accept it.
- He holds a realistic vision and is not given to flights of fancy. He always plans, thinks and acts grammatically.
- A well-adjusted individual feels satisfied with his surroundings. He has well in his home, family, neighborhood and other social surroundings.
- A well-adjusted person has a philosophy which gives direction to his life while keeping in view the demands of changed situations and circumstances.

Adjustment problems of Adolescents

a) The problem of rapid growth and development

The characteristic of rapid growth and development at this stage itself creates a big problem for the adolescent. The change is also rapid and madden that he finds it difficult to properly cope with it. He is neither a child nor an adult, and therefore feels awkward in the company of others. This poses adjustment problems for him between the idealism of adolescent and the realism of the environment. This leaves the adolescent bewildered and confused. **Hall** (1904) views adolescence as a period of storm and stress marked by vacillating and contradictory emotions. According to **Gilmore et.al.(1984)** lack of experience, egocentrism and curiosity to experiment with new and sometimes risky social roles in order to establish unique identity, place adolescents in high risks for developing certain emotional and social problems.

b) The problem of social values

Every society has its own customs and traditions, which it wants to, maintain and perpetuate. Every individual has to follow these social codes of conduct. But the adolescent may not see eye to eye with these social values which are out of date and therefore, superfluous. His independence of thinking may come into clash with the prevailing values. But he is told that he has to accept the traditions and values of society. This clash of values produces various types of complexes in the mind of the adolescent.

Meaning of Social Maturity

This ability to function in an appropriately responsible manner while understanding the social rules and norms in a given culture and the ability to use that knowledge effectively is known as social maturity. It is the ability to tolerate and adjust to frustration with stress while attaining tolerant outlook, a satisfactory life philosophy that enables to satisfy physical as well as psychological needs. Social maturity produces a climate of trust, harmony, active co-operation and peaceful co-existence while social immaturity on the other hand, produces a climate of fear, discord and one war after another. Socially mature person behaves in accordance with social norms, customs and traditions. He never engages himself in anti-social activities. The major problem of the adolescent is that he lacks experiences and social maturity. Social maturity means knowing what to do and striving for it by following role models to reach the desired level of acceptable social behaviour. Social maturity is a term commonly used in two ways like, with respect to the behaviour that is appropriate to age of the individual under observation and secondly the behaviour that conforms to the standard and expectations of the adults. Thus social maturity permits more detailed perception of the social environment which helps adolescents to influence the social circumstances and develop stable patterns of social behaviour. Raj defines social maturity as the level of social skills and awareness that an individual has achieved relative to particular norms related to an age group. It is a measure of the development competence of an individual with regard to interpersonal relations, behaviour appropriateness, social problem solving and judgment. Social responsibility, also a sub-trait of social maturity, defined as adherence to social rules and role expectations, by Wetz is instrumental in the acquisition of academic knowledge and skills. Social responsibility makes two contributions to learning:

- 1) Behaving responsibly can aid learning by promoting positive interactions with teacher and peers, e.g. peer sharing of materials or exchanging help with assignments;

2) Students' goals to be compliant and responsible can constrain and enhance the learning process, e.g. pupil's striving to complete assignment- on time to comply with requirements.

Justification of the Study

In modern society, there are so many challenges related to the personality of the adolescents like maladjustment, frustration, committing anti-social activities, aggressive behaviour etc. which are the main barriers in the way of development of society and the nation. Adolescence stage is the most critical stage in which the adolescents have to face many challenges. It is seen commonly that the adolescents are finding themselves difficult in adjusting with the changing world resulting into disaster. They are finding themselves unable to develop efficiency to use their time properly, control their emotions, develop sense to deal with the different people in the society, develop gentle personal relationships, acquire the quality of adjustment, co-operation, sacrifice, independence, develop the ability to make judgments, decisions and take proper actions when faced with a problem and critical issue. It is due to the lack of the social maturity. The more, social maturity among the students, more mature will be the society and the nation. Taking these things into consideration the present study has been undertaken to study the adjustment of adolescent students in relation to their social maturity.

Statement of the Problem

Study of Adolescents' Adjustment in Relation to their Social Maturity

Operational Definitions

Adjustment

The term "adjustment" means a harmonious relationship of an individual with his environment which affords him comfortable life devoid of strain, stress, conflict and frustration.

Adolescents

Adolescents are those individuals who lie in the age group of 13 to 19 years and in the present study adolescents refer to the students who are studying in classes +1 and +2.

Social Maturity

The ability to function in an appropriately responsible manner while understanding the social rules and norms in place in a given culture and the ability to use that knowledge effectively.

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study the adjustment of adolescents in relation to their social maturity.
- 2) To study the difference in adjustment of male and female adolescents.
- 3) To study the difference in adjustment of rural and urban adolescents.
- 4) To study the difference in social maturity of male and female adolescents.
- 5) To study the difference in social maturity of rural and urban adolescents.

Hypotheses of Study

- 1) There exists significant relationship between adjustment of adolescents and their social maturity
- 2) There exists no significant difference in adjustment of male and female adolescents
- 3) There exists no significant difference in adjustment of rural and urban adolescents.
- 4) There exists no significant difference in social maturity of male and female adolescents.
- 5) There exists no significant difference in social maturity of rural and urban adolescents.

Delimitations of the Study

- 1) The present study was delimited only to one district of Punjab i.e. Pathankot.
- 2) The present study was delimited to adolescent students of +1 and +2.

Research Methodology

For the present study descriptive survey method was used by the investigator.

Sample

For the present study, out of twenty two districts in Punjab, one district was selected from which 10 schools (5 rural and 5 urban) were selected randomly. From each school 10 students (5 male and 5 female) were taken as sample. Thus total sample was comprised of 100 adolescents.

Tools Used

For the present study the following tools were used.

- 1) Adjustment Inventory for school students developed by Dr. A.K. P. Sinha and Dr. R. P. Singh (1993).
- 2) Social Maturity Scale developed by Dr. R.P Srivastava (2000).

Statistical Techniques Used

To analyse the data following statistical techniques were used

- Mean
- Standard deviation
- correlation
- t-test

Analysis and interpretation of data

The investigator has made an attempt to analyse and interpret the data to carry out analysis with an aim to testify the hypotheses framed in the present study as under :

Hypotheses-1

“There exists significant relationship between adjustment of adolescents and their social maturity”.

Table 1: Showing the significant relationship between adjustment of adolescent students and their social maturity.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Correlation	Level of significance
Adjustment	100	31.90	5.19	0.6	Positive Correlated
Social Maturity	100	32.89	4.83		

It is clear from the table no. 1 that correlation between adjustment social maturity variables is 0.6. It means that there is a significant positive relationship between adjustment of adolescents and social maturity. Hence, the Hypothesis -1 stands strongly accepted.

Hypothesis -2

“There exists no significant difference in adjustment of male and female adolescents”

Table 2 showing the significant difference in adjustment of male and female adolescents.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	t-Value	Level of significance
Male	50	37.8	3.38	2.43	Significant at 0.05 level
Female	50	36.4	2.76		

It is clear from the table no 2, that t- value 2.43 is significant at 0.05 level. Hence second hypothesis ‘There exists no significant difference in adjustment of male and female adolescents’ stands rejected in favour of male adolescent.

Hypothesis-3

“There exists no significant difference in adjustment of rural and urban adolescents”.

Table 3: Showing the significant difference in adjustment of rural and urban adolescents.

Group Area	N	Mean	S.D	t -Value	Level of significance
Rural	50	36.4	3.16	2.16	Significant at 0.05 level
Urban	50	37.56	2.87		

It is clear from the table no 3, that t- value is 2.16 which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence third hypothesis ‘There exists no significant difference in adjustment of rural and urban adolescents’ stands rejected in favour of urban adolescents.

Hypothesis-4

“There exists no significant difference in social maturity of male and female adolescents”.

Table 4: Showing the significant difference in social maturity of male and female adolescents.

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	t -Value	Value of significant
Male	50	34.00	5.54	2.10	Significant at 0.05 level
Female	50	30.00	12.54		

It is clear from the table no 4, that t- value is 2.10 which is significant at 0.05 level . Hence 4th hypothesis ‘There exists no significant difference in social maturity of male and female adolescents’ stands rejected in favour of male adolescents.

Hypothesis -5

“There exists no significant difference in social maturity of rural and urban adolescents”.

Table 5. Showing the significant difference in social maturity of rural and urban adolescents.

Group Area	N	Mean	S.D	t -value	Level of significance
Rural	50	32.9	4.05	2.8	Significant at 0.05 level
Urban	50	35	3.5		

It is clear from the table no 5, that t -value is 2.8 which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence fifth hypotheses ‘There exists no significant difference in social maturity of rural and urban adolescents’ stands rejected in favour of urban adolescents

Main Findings of the Study

The main findings of the present study are reported below:

1. There exists positive relationship between Adjustment and Social Maturity variables in respect of adolescent students. It means that social maturity has effect on adjustment of adolescent students and vice-versa.
2. The difference between mean scores of Adjustment of boys and girls high school students found to be significant. The difference was in favour of male students. Therefore it was concluded that gender did account for difference in Adjustment.

3. The difference between mean scores of Adjustment of rural and urban high school students was found to be significant. The difference was in favour of urban students. Therefore it was concluded that location did account for difference in Adjustment.
4. The difference between mean scores of Social Maturity male and female high school students was found to be significant. The difference was in favour of male students. Therefore it was concluded that gender did account for difference in social maturity.
5. The difference between mean scores of social maturity of rural and urban Adolescent students was found to be significant. The difference was in favour of urban students. Therefore it was concluded that location did account for difference in social maturity.

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