



“Exploring Adolescent Adjustment In Secondary Schools: Insights From East Siang District”

¹Mumtak Ering, ²Boa Reena Tok, ³Omini Ering

¹Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh, India

²Professor, Department of Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh, India

³Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Arunachal Pradesh University, Arunachal Pradesh, India

Abstract:

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage marked by significant physical, emotional, and social changes. The ability to adjust effectively to these changes is essential for adolescents' overall well-being and success in various life domains, including academics. This study explores the adjustment levels of secondary school learners in the East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh, focusing on emotional, social, and educational adjustment in relation to gender. A descriptive survey method was used, with a sample of 100 learners (50 boys and 50 girls) from Mirku Secondary School. The Adjustment Inventory standardized by A.K.P. Sinha and R.P. Singh was employed to measure the adjustment levels. The findings reveal that both boys and girls exhibit an average level of adjustment across all areas, with boys showing stronger social and educational adjustment, while girls demonstrate better emotional adjustment. The results highlight the need for gender-specific strategies to address the adjustment challenges faced by both boys and girls. The study emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive school environment, integrating activities like yoga, sports, and counselling services, and engaging parents to foster positive adjustment. The study concludes that targeted interventions can significantly improve the adjustment process, aiding adolescents in their transition from childhood to adulthood.

Keywords: Adolescent, emotional, social and educational adjustment, Mirku secondary school.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Adolescence is a critical and transformative phase in an individual's life, characterized by creativity, risk-taking, and significant challenges. During this period, adolescents often face a range of issues that impact both their physical and mental health, such as mood swings, irritability, irresponsible behaviour, depression, and physical changes. Adjustment, in this context, refers to an individual's ability to effectively cope with and adapt to these challenges. For adolescents, successful adjustment is essential for navigating

the transition from childhood to adulthood. Delays in this process can lead to maladjustment, which can impede personal growth and well-being.

Adjustment involves the process of balancing conflicting needs or overcoming environmental obstacles to achieve personal goals. This ability to adjust is crucial throughout all stages of development and plays a key role in ensuring a successful and fulfilling life. A person cannot develop a healthy personality without adjusting to their surroundings. Individuals who are well-adjusted tend to experience greater success and happiness, often performing better in areas such as academics. Therefore, adjustment is a vital component of overall personality development, particularly for students.

In a broader sense, adjustment refers to an individual's capacity to adapt to evolving circumstances and effectively overcome barriers that may impede the attainment of goals, particularly in challenging situations. This dynamic process involves managing constraints and navigating obstacles with resilience and consistency. As each day brings new challenges and opportunities, adjustment becomes essential for fostering personal growth, achieving objectives, and maintaining a sense of balance in both internal and external contexts.

Agarwal (2007) emphasizes that adolescent's ability to adjust depends on satisfying their specific needs, which include physical, emotional, social, intellectual, moral, and vocational requirements. This process of adjustment entails continuously adapting to changes and maintaining stability amidst such variations. During their school years, students undergo significant transitions, such as moving from home to school, progressing from one educational level to another, or transitioning to college or work. These shifts often represent pivotal moments in the lives of both students and their parents. To mitigate parental stress, adjustments are made to align with the environment and developmental stage.

Isakson et al. (2006) conducted a short-term longitudinal study to examine adolescents' adjustment during the transition to junior high school. The findings highlighted that students experience significant adaptation challenges when transitioning to a new school environment. The increasing prevalence of academic stress among students has prompted investigations into its potential impact on high school learners.

Surekha (2008) found in her study that students from private schools were better equipped to handle academic demands compared to their counterparts in government schools. Private school students also exhibited higher academic achievement. Additionally, the study revealed a negative correlation between changes in student adjustment and academic performance.

Deepshikha and Suman Bhanot (2011) explored social and emotional adjustment among adolescent girls in the context of family dynamics. Their study, involving 12 girls aged 17–18, utilized the Domestic Environmental Quality System and an Adornment Record for School Students. Through statistical analysis, including percentages and multiple regression, they identified key family factors, such as solidarity, visible conflict, acceptance and care, independence, recreation, order, and control that significantly influence the social, emotional, and educational development of adolescent girls.

Overall, these studies highlight that effective adjustment is crucial for the successful academic and emotional development of adolescents. The ability to adapt to both academic pressures and family dynamics is key to overcoming the challenges faced during this critical stage of life. Considering the significant role that adjustment plays in adolescent development, the researcher is particularly interested in examining the adjustment of secondary school students in Arunachal Pradesh, with a focus on gender differences. This study aims to explore how boys and girls' learners in this region navigate the challenges of adolescence, including academic, social, and emotional adjustments, and how these factors influence their overall well-being and academic performance. By investigating potential gender-based differences in adjustment, the study seeks to provide insights into how these factors shape the experiences of students in Arunachal Pradesh.

2. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

In the current context, the rising rates of child delinquency, suicide, domestic violence, drug abuse, and social offenses are alarming, and these issues are often deeply rooted in individual psychosocial maladjustment. Maladjustment is a biological, mental, and social phenomenon which is derived from a sense of insecurity. It is a mechanism which causes a person to be unable to cope with the demands of normal society and high number of this cases are found to be from the adolescent group. Therefore, this age group requires immediate attention and strong mental, emotional, and physical health support from parents, teachers, and society at large.

The importance of good adjustment during adolescence cannot be overstated, as it plays a key role in the overall personality development of young individuals. Achieving this adjustment is possible primarily through education. However, to effectively educate and guide adolescents, it is essential to first understand their needs and challenges. In Arunachal Pradesh, particularly among tribal communities, there is often a lack of understanding regarding the issues faced by young people, and maladjustment in children is frequently overlooked. This is why the East Siang district was chosen for this study. The pilot study conducted in this district aims to assess the level of adjustment among secondary school learners. The findings of this study will help raise awareness among parents, teachers, and educational counsellors about the importance of adjustment in the lives of adolescents and assist in formulating effective remedial measures to address adjustment problems.

3. OBJECTIVES:

1. To find out the level of Adjustment of Secondary School learners of East Siang District.
2. To find out the level of emotional, social and educational adjustment of Secondary School learners of East Siang District.

4. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

For the present study Descriptive cum survey method was employed to measure the level of adjustment of the secondary school learners.

5. SAMPLE OF THE STUDY:

The present study was carried out at Mirku Secondary School Learners of East Siang District. A sample of 100 was selected randomly from 9th grade learners out of which 50 are boys and 50 are girls.

6. TOOLS USED:

To assess the adjustment levels of secondary school learners in Arunachal Pradesh, the standardized Adjustment Inventory developed by A.K.P. Sinha and R.P. Singh was employed. This tool is specifically designed for individuals aged 14–16 and evaluates three key dimensions of adjustment: emotional, social, and educational.

7. STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES:

For the present study Percentage analysis was used to determine their level of adjustment.

8. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION:

1. To find out the level of Adjustment of Secondary School learners of East Siang District.

Table 1.1: Levels of Adjustment among secondary school learners

Description of adjustment level	Score range	Over all Adjustment	
		Total students	% of students
Above average adjustment	27-41	25	25%
Average adjustment	42-62	43	43%
Below average adjustment	63-77	32	32%
Total		100	100%

Interpretation: From Table 1.1, it is revealed that 25% of boys demonstrate an above-average level of adjustment, 43% exhibit an average level, and 32% show a below-average level of adjustment. These observations indicate that the majority of secondary school learners in the East Siang District possess an average level of adjustment.

2. To find out the level of emotional, social and educational adjustment of Secondary School learners of East Siang District.

Table 1.2: Levels of Adjustment among Boys

Description of adjustment level	Emotional Area		Social Area		Educational Area	
	Total students	% of students	Total students	% of students	Total students	% of students
Below average Adjustment	17	34%	13	26%	12	24%
Average Adjustment	18	36%	19	38%	20	40%
Above average Adjustment	15	30%	18	36%	18	36%
Total	50	100%	50	100%	50	100%

Interpretation: From Table 1.2, it is observed that in the emotional area, 34% of boys exhibit a below-average level of adjustment, 36% show an average level, and 30% demonstrate an above-average level.

In the social area, 26% of boys display a below-average level of adjustment, 38% have an average level, and 36% exhibit an above-average level of adjustment.

In the educational area, 24% of boys show a below-average level of adjustment, 40% exhibit an average level, and 36% demonstrate an above-average level.

These observations indicate that the majority of boys in the East Siang District exhibit an average level of adjustment across emotional, social, and educational domains.

Table 1.3: Levels of Adjustment among Girls

Description of adjustment level	Emotional Area		Social Area		Educational Area	
	Total students	% of students	Total students	% of students	Total students	% of students
Below average Adjustment	13	26%	15	30%	17	34%
Average Adjustment	20	40%	18	36%	21	42%
Above average Adjustment	17	34%	17	34%	12	24%
Total	50	100%	50	100%	50	100%

Interpretation: From Table 1.3, it is observed that in the emotional area, 26% of girls exhibit a below-average level of adjustment, 40% show an average level, and 34% demonstrate an above-average level.

In the social area, 30% of girls display a below-average level of adjustment, 36% exhibit an average level, and 34% have an above-average level of adjustment.

In the educational area, 34% of girls show a below-average level of adjustment, 42% have an average level, and 24% demonstrate an above-average level of adjustment.

These observations clearly indicate that the majority of girl learners in the East Siang District exhibit an average level of adjustment in the emotional, social, and educational domains.

9. FINDINGS:

- i) The study revealed that the majority of secondary school learners in the East Siang district exhibited an average level of adjustment, indicating their ability to cope reasonably well with academic, social, and emotional challenges. However, a small proportion of learners demonstrated a below-average level of adjustment, which is a matter of concern. This highlights the need for targeted interventions and support systems to address the specific needs of these students, ensuring their overall well-being and development. Such efforts could involve enhancing life skills education, promoting a supportive school environment, and fostering positive relationships with peers and teachers to help these learners improve their adjustment levels.
- ii) The study reveals that both boys and girls in the East Siang District show an average level of adjustment across all areas, which suggests that they find classroom lessons engaging, enjoy participating in school activities, and perform academic tasks with interest. They appear socially stable, enjoy socializing with peers, and adapt well to different social behaviours. This finding is consistent with Panor (2021), which highlighted similar levels of adjustment among students.
- iii) Regarding specific areas of adjustment, boys demonstrated better social and educational adjustment. This suggests that boys tend to perform better in adapting to social environments and managing their educational responsibilities. In contrast, girls showed better emotional adjustment. This indicates that girls tend to have a stronger ability to manage emotional challenges, suggesting greater emotional resilience.

10. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

- i) The findings suggest that boys tend to perform better in social and educational adjustment, while girls exhibit stronger emotional adjustment. This highlights the need for gender-specific strategies to address the unique adjustment challenges faced by both boys and girls. Teachers play a vital role in supporting students' adjustment, and their efforts can be enhanced by integrating activities like yoga, meditation, group interactions, sports, and motivational sessions into the school curriculum. These initiatives can help improve emotional well-being and promote better adjustment among students.
- ii) Moreover, schools should focus on creating an environment that fosters positive adjustment by offering orientation programs, social activities, and opportunities for students to participate in student-led organizations. A friendly and open school climate is crucial, as it allows students to feel comfortable interacting with teachers and peers, which can greatly contribute to their overall adjustment. It is also important for schools to provide programs that cater to the diverse needs of

students and to engage parents in supporting their children's emotional, social, and educational growth.

To address specific student needs, schools should establish counselling services, academic support, financial aid, and tutoring programs. These services can help students cope with various challenges and enhance their adjustment. In addition, encouraging adequate rest, physical activity, and recreational activities is vital for the overall well-being and adjustment of students. By implementing these strategies, schools can play a significant role in helping students navigate the complexities of adjustment during their secondary education years.

11. CONCLUSION:

Adjustment refers to an individual's ability to adapt to their environment and effectively manage academic, social, and emotional challenges. It plays a critical role in the growth and development of adolescents, enabling them to navigate the complexities of this transformative stage. For secondary school learners, adjustment is essential for maintaining a balance between personal needs and environmental demands, fostering academic success, emotional stability, and positive social interactions.

This study highlights the significance of adjustment among secondary school learners in East Siang District. The findings reveal that both boys and girls generally demonstrate average levels of adjustment, with boys performing better in social and educational domains, while girls excel in emotional adjustment. These results underscore the need for holistic strategies to enhance students' adjustment skills, addressing the unique challenges faced by each gender. By emphasizing life skills education, strengthening counselling services, and fostering an inclusive school environment, educators can support learners in improving their adjustment capabilities. This not only facilitates their successful transition into adulthood but also contributes to their overall well-being and future achievements.

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