

**Social and Personal Adjustment of Adolescents- A study of Higher Secondary Students of District Srinagar**\*Hafiz Mudasir,<sup>1</sup> \*Dr. M.Y Ganaie<sup>2</sup>

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**Abstract:** The present study aims to measure the Social and Personal Adjustment of Adolescents of higher secondary students. The investigators used California Test of Personality (CTP) of L.P. Thorpe, W. Clarke & W. Teigs for collecting data for the research. The sample for the present study consisted of 60 Adolescent Students (30 male and 30 female). The study revealed that on overall components of Social and Personal adjustments, the female adolescents were found to be personally and socially well adjusted than the male adolescents.

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**Key words:** Adjustment, Social Adjustment, Personal Adjustment, Adolescents, Secondary Students.

**1. Introduction**

Adjustment, in psychology, refers to the behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied. Hungry people, for example, are stimulated by their physiological state to seek food. When they eat, they reduce the stimulating condition that impelled them to activity, and they are thereby adjusted to this particular need. In general, the adjustment process involves four parts: (1) a need or motive in the form of a strong persistent stimulus, (2) the thwarting or non-fulfillment of this need, (3) varied activity, or exploratory behavior accompanied by problem solving, and (4) some response that removes or at least reduces the initiating stimulus and completes the adjustment. Social and cultural adjustments are similar to physiological adjustments. People strive to be comfortable in their surroundings and to have their psychological needs (such as love or affirmation) met through the social networks they inhabit. When needs arise, especially in new or changed surroundings, they impel interpersonal activity meant to satisfy those needs. In this way, people increase their familiarity and comfort with their environments, and they come to expect that their needs will be met in the future through their social networks. Ongoing difficulties in social and cultural adjustment may be accompanied by anxiety or depression. Adjustment plays a pivotal role in the development of an individual. It is adjustment which is responsible for the organization of behavior to life situations in every sphere.

The Adjustment course has been part of the curriculum in psychology since at least the 1940s when a number of popular texts began to appear (such as

Klein, 1944; McKinney, 1941; Munn, 1946). The course appears to have peaked in popularity in the 1970s, when Lux and Daniel (1978) reported that it was the tenth most widely listed course in a survey of psychology departments. More recent data from Perlman and McCann (1999) suggest that its popularity has declined, although they reported that it was still among the 30 most frequently listed psychology courses across all types of institutions, and the sixth most commonly listed course at two year colleges. The decline of the Adjustment course seems perplexing in light of frequent, high-profile pleas for psychologists to emphasize the practical relevance of their discipline (Fowler, 1999; Klatzky, 2009; Miller, 1969; Zimbardo, 2004) although specific titles for psychology courses often vary across colleges, this seems to be especially true for the Adjustment course. In its earliest incarnations it was often titled Mental Hygiene. Other popular titles have included Personal Development, Personal Growth, Human Relations, Practical Psychology, Personal Adjustment, Personality and Adjustment, and Applied Psychology. This variation in course titles may reflect a similar diversity in course content, as Bridges (1988) concluded that the topical coverage in Adjustment courses tends to be less consistent or standardized across texts and instructors than in other psychology courses.

Adjustment can be defined as a process of altering one's behavior to reach a harmonious relationship with their environment. This is typically a response brought about by some type of change that has taken place. The stress of this change causes one to try to reach a new type of balance or homeostasis between the individual (both inwardly and outwardly), and with their environment. Adjustment occurs over time – in common speech; this is often referred to this as an “adjustment period”. The length and depth of the

adjustment required is dependent upon the complexity of the change that catalyzed it, and the underlying resilience of both the person and their environment. Adjustment is the relationship which comes to be established between the individual and the environment. Every individual plays certain position in his social relations. He is trained to play his role in such a way that his maximum needs will be fulfilled. So, he should play his role properly and get maximum satisfaction. The term adjustment refers to the extent to which an individual's personality functions effectively in the world of people. It refers to the harmonious relationship between the person and the environment. In other words, it is the relationship that comes among the organisms, the environment and the personality. A well-adjusted personality is well prepared to play the roles which are expected of the status assigned to him within given environment. His needs will be satisfied in accordance with the social needs. Psychologists have interpreted adjustment from two important points of view. When a relationship between an individual and his environment is according to established norms then that relationship is considered as normal adjustment. A child who obey his parents, who is not unduly stubborn; who studies regularly and has neat habit is considered adjusted. On the other hand, Abnormal Adjustment means problem behavior or popular speaking maladjustment. Maladjustment takes place when the relationship between an individual and his environment is not according to established standards or norms. A delinquent child adjusts with his environment but he is a maladjusted child because he is violating certain moral codes.

Social adjustment can be defined as a psychological process. It frequently involves coping with new standards and values. In the technical language of psychology, getting along with members of society, as best as one can, is called social adjustment. As social beings we live in a society, we form opinions about others and others have opinions about us. Everybody wants acceptance and recognition from and within society. We try to behave according to the norms of the society so that we can adjust with others. But it is not an easy task as the personality of each individual is a unique organization. This organization has to make special efforts to adjust with others unique organizations, which we call society. Actually adjustment is a wider term used in various spheres of life. For example, if an individual is well adjusted in his family environment, his family adjustment will be good. So before defining social adjustment it is necessary for us to restrict the area of social adjustment. Psychologists use the term adjustment of varying conditions of social and interpersonal relations in the society. Thus we see that adjustment means reaction to the demands and

pressures of the social environment imposed upon the individual. Whenever two types of demands come into conflict with each other and resultant in an adjustment being made, a complicated process for the individual, then some special problems of adjustment arise. Impartial perception is needed for social adjustment. The processes of behavior e.g. learning, maturation, sensation, perception and motivation are significant in our life because they contribute to the process of adjustment. The way we interact with people depends to a great extent upon how we perceive them and how we interpret their behavior. The perceptions about people - what we think, what they are like - influence the way we respond to them. If you perceive that a student is hostile, you are unlikely to interact or adjust with him. Your behavior in a group is certainly different from the behavior when in alone. Group affects an individual's behavior. The mere presence of others affects our performance. How do we come to know about other people? Our social perceptions of others are initially based on the information we obtain about them - in some instances the attribution (inferences) we make about the causes for their behavior. It is, of course, important to have accurate knowledge of others before deciding on the kind of possible interactions with them. Our perceptions of others' personalities and feelings guide us in deciding the way we respond to them and what sort of relationships we have with them. Knowledge about others influences our adjustment with them.

Social adjustment has been a popular topic of investigation in recent years. Concern about the quality of children's social relationships has been motivated in large part by longitudinal evidence suggesting a link between social adjustment in childhood and later life difficulties (see Parker & Asher, 1987, for a review). Recent efforts to understand children's social difficulties have demonstrated the utility of social-cognitive approaches to social adjustment. These investigations have typically been based on the premise that social cognitions are the mechanisms leading to social behaviors that, in turn, are the bases of social adjustment evaluations by others (e.g., Dodge, 1986; Ladd & Mize, 1983; Rubin & Krasnor, 1986). From this perspective, comparisons of the social cognitions of socially adjusted and maladjusted children are important because they shed light on particular cognitive styles or difficulties that may contribute to mal adjustment. The study of children's social cognition has a long history (for reviews, see Shantz, 1975a; 1983) and has been conducted by researchers working within diverse fields, including developmental psychology (e.g., Berndt & Berndt, 1975; Ladd, 1981), educational psychology (e.g., Asher & Wheeler, 1985), clinical psychology (e.g., Coie, 1990; Dodge, 1986; Furman & Bierman, 1983; Shantz, 1975b), and

communication (e.g., Burlison, 1982). Not surprisingly, many different aspects of children's social cognition have been emphasized by various researchers working at different points in time. Initially, the methods and theories used in studies of children's social-cognitive abilities were largely adapted from those used in studies of nonsocial cognitive development. This application resulted in examination of global cognitive constructs such as perspective taking, role taking, and referential communication (e.g., Flavell, Botkin, Fry, Wright, & Jarvis, 1968; Selman, 1971). However, the mixed findings often produced by studies of these global constructs (see Shantz, 1975a; 1983) and the introduction and growing popularity of information-processing theories (e.g., Newell & Simon, 1972) have led to major changes in empirical and theoretical approaches to the study of social cognition in children. One important change has been a focus on more specific components of "on-line" cognition than those examined in earlier work (Dodge & Feldman, 1990). Consequently, researchers interested in children's social adjustment have begun to speculate about the individual cognitive tasks that might be involved when a child is engaged in social interaction. In recent years, social information-processing models of social behavior have emerged that have provided significant advances in the understanding of children's social adjustment (e.g., Dodge, 1985, 1986; Dodge & Crick, 1990; Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey, & Brown, 1986; Heusmann, 1988; Ladd & Crick, 1989; Rubin & Krasnor, 1986; Slaby & Guerra, 1988; Yeates & Selman, 1989). In one version of this model (Dodge, 1986), it is proposed that children, when faced with a social situational cue, engage in four mental steps before enacting competent social behaviors (see Figure 1): (a) encoding of situational cues, (b) representation and interpretation of those cues, (c) mental search for possible responses to the situation, and (d) selection of a response. During Steps 1 and 2, encoding and Interpretation of social cues, it is hypothesized that children focus on and encode particular cues in the situation and then, on the basis of those cues, construct an interpretation of the situation (e.g., an inference about the intent of a peer with whom the child is interacting). During Steps 3 and 4, it is proposed that children access possible responses to the situation from long term memory, evaluate those responses, and then select the most favorable one for enactment.

We are aware that a person passes through various stages of growth and development before he reaches adulthood. Invariably at every stage of one's life, the person tries hard to fulfill his biological, psychological and social needs and gears himself effectively to meet the existing demands of the society. Biogenic needs such as hunger, thirst, rest and sleep are conditioned in the organism of an individual right

from infancy as appropriate to the culture and geographical conditions in which he lives. To cite an example, people from the North of India are conditioned to eat wheat, but people from the South prefer rice as their staple food. Generally, there is no difficulty in fulfilling these needs. A need which is satisfied with little effort doesn't affect adjustment. For example, availability of sufficient air and water seldom leads to maladjustment. At times, these needs may be thwarted by natural calamities like floods, droughts, earthquakes, epidemic diseases, only then does it become difficult for individual to adjust. Personal adjustment in a new culture is an individual process that immigrants face. When immigrants arrive in the United States, they often encounter culture shock caused by different language, food, social values, life styles and communication styles. Generally, culture shock has four stages: exciting stage—being exposed to a new culture, everything is fresh and interesting; depressing stage—experiencing confusion, conflict and discomfort; adjustment stage—figuring out some differences between home culture and host culture and willingness to learn the host culture; and, recovery stage—beginning to feel comfortable about the new culture and trying to fit in. Even though people with different cultural backgrounds and different personal histories have different experiences with the adjustment process, they are more or less expected to experience the stages of culture shock. The duration of the stages usually lasts about one year (Zapf, 1993; Winkelman, 1994). "Language differences, cultural knowledge, learning or behavioral disorders, and physical health problems" may be the problems that some persons faces when entering a new culture (Huang, 1993, p.6). Abilities to acquire new beliefs, rules of behavior, communication patterns, and ability to cope with stress and prejudice are the important factors that determine if they can overcome the cultural conflicts and adjust themselves successfully (Trueba, Jocabas & Kirton, 1990). When people enter a new culture, they have to learn new information and patterns of behavior, different ways of thinking and behaving and appropriate new social skills. They are facing new challenges from language difficulties, loss of similar friends and family. They may experience psychological stress (Huang, 1977; Cross, 1995). Entering into another culture also causes acculturative stress that results in some psychological changes and behaviors, such as cognitive fatigue, withdrawal, sleeping, eating and drinking disorders, greater acculturative stress than later generation immigrants, and depression and anxiety, feeling of marginality and alienation, heightened psychosomatic symptoms, and identity confusion. First generation immigrants experience individuals who are aged 12 years and above generally experience more acculturative stress

than those younger than age 12 (Hovey & King, 1996; Winkelman, 1994).

**Statement of Problem**

*Social and Personal Adjustment of Adolescents- A study of Higher Secondary Students of District Srinagar*

**Operational Definitions of Terms and Variables**

**Personal and Social Adjustment:** Personal and Social Adjustment has been assessed with California Test of Personality. It has two dimensions:

- I. Personal Adjustment
- II. Social Adjustment

**Objectives of the Study:** The following objectives have been formulated for the present study:

1. To study the Social and Personal Adjustment of male and female students of Govt. Secondary Schools of District Srinagar.
2. To compare male and female Adolescents on Social Adjustment.
3. To compare male and female Adolescents on Personal Adjustment.

**Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis has been formulated for the present study:

1. Male and female Adolescents differ significantly on Social Adjustment.
2. Male and female Adolescents differ significantly on Personal Adjustment.

**Design of the Study**

**Sample**

The sample for the present study consisted of 60 Adolescent Students (30 male and 30 female). The sample was selected randomly from different Higher Secondary Students of District Srinagar. The break-up of the sample is as under:

Group	N	Total
Male	30	60
Female	30	

**Description of Tools**

The investigators used California Test of Personality (CTP) of L.P. Thorpe, W. Clarke & W. Teigs (1954) for collecting data for the research. The test contains 144 items and is divided into two main divisions of personal and social adjustment. The items in the personal adjustment are designed to measure evidence to six components of personal security. The items in the social adjustment are designed to measure evidences of six components of social security.

**Analysis and Interpretation**

The perusal of table 1 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on self-reliance dimension of Personal Adjustment. The

entire table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on Self-reliance and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents were found to be more Self-reliant, emotionally stable in their behavior as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 1: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Self-reliance dimension of Personal Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	4.25	1.29	6.96	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	5.29	1.37		

**Table 2: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Sense of Personal Worth:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	5.32	1.19	11.83	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	8.29	1.63		

The perusal of table 2 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on sense of Personal worth component. The above table reveals that there is significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on sense of personal worth and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents were found to be more capable, reasonable and attractive as compared to male adolescents.

**Table 3: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on sense of Personal Freedom.**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	3.96	1.86	6.82	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	8.66	1.93		

The perusal of table 3 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on sense of Personal Adjustment. The above table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female adolescents on sense of personal freedom and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms have sense of personal freedom as compare to male Adolescents.

**Table 4: Showing the Mean Comparison between**



**male and female Adolescents on Feeling of Belongingness:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	4.38	1.22	9.28	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	5.96	1.56		

The perusal of table 4 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on feeling of belongingness of Personal Adjustment. The entire table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on Feeling of belongingness and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents enjoy the love of their family as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 5: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Withdrawal Tendencies:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	6.78	1.40	10.40	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	6.41	1.70		

The perusal of table 5 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on Withdrawal Tendencies of Personal Adjustment. The entire table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on Withdrawal Tendencies and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors male Adolescents which conforms that male Adolescents were found to be more better characteristically, sensitive and feels lonely as compared to female Adolescents.

**Table 6: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Nervous Symptoms:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	8.54	1.98	9.56	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	6.58	1.59		

The perusal of table 6 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on nervous symptoms of Personal Adjustment. The entire table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on nervous symptoms and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors male Adolescents which conforms that male Adolescents feel loss of appetite,

variety of physical symptoms and frequent eye strain as compared to female Adolescents.

**Table 7: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Composed Scores of Personal Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	32.55	3.69	4.31	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	41.23	5.17		

The perusal of table 7 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on overall composed score of Personal Adjustment. The entire table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on overall components of personal Adjustment and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents were found to be personally well adjusted than the male Adolescents.

Therefore, hypothesis No.1 which reads as "male and female adolescents differ significantly on Personal Adjustment" stands accepted.

**Table 8: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Social Standard of Social Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	6.23	1.29	11.98	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	8.85	1.61		

The perusal of table 8 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on social standard of social Adjustment. The entire table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on social standard of social Adjustment and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents understand the rights of others as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 9: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Social Skills of Social Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	5.46	1.01	12.29	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	8.62	1.33		

The perusal of table 9 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on social skills of social Adjustment. The above table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on social skills of social Adjustment and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents were found to be socially skillful or effective as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 10: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Anti-Social Tendencies of Social Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	6.23	1.53	8.63	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	4.28	1.69		

The perusal of table 10 reveals the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on anti-social tendencies of social Adjustment. The above table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on anti-social tendencies and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors male Adolescents which conforms that male Adolescents were found to be bullying, frequent-quarrelling, disobedient and destructive to property as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 11: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Family Relations of Social Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	4.52	1.47	6.53	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	6.91	1.96		

The perusal of table 11 shows the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on family relations of social Adjustment. The above table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on family relations and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents have sense of security and self respect as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 12: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on School Relations of Social Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	6.42	1.47	7.52	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	7.73	1.76		

The perusal of table 12 shows the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on school relations of social Adjustment. The above table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on social relations and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents have better level of adjustment with school environment as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 13: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Community Relations of Social Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	5.89	1.11	15.23	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	8.83	1.22		

The perusal of table 13 shows the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on community relations of social Adjustment. The above table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on community relations and the difference is significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents have better adjustment with community, neighbors as compared to male Adolescents.

**Table 14: Showing the Mean Comparison between male and female Adolescents on Composed Scores of Social Adjustment:**

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-Value	Level of Significance
Males	30	23.32	3.71	12.96	Significant at 0.01 Level
Females	30	36.22	4.36		

The perusal of table 14 shows the mean difference between male and female Adolescents on overall composed score of social Adjustment. The above table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Adolescents on overall components of social adjustments and the difference is

significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference favors female Adolescents which conforms that female Adolescents were found to be socially well adjusted than the male Adolescents.

Therefore, hypothesis No.2 which reads as “Male and female adolescents differ significantly on social adjustment” stands accepted.

### **Conclusions (Analysis and Interpretation of data)**

On the basis of analysis and interpretation, the following conclusions have been drawn from the present investigation.

#### **Personal Adjustment**

1. It was found that there is a significant mean difference between male and female adolescents on self-reliance dimension of personal adjustment. The female adolescents were found to be more self-reliant, stable and responsible in their behavior as compared to male adolescents.
2. On sense of personal worth component of personal adjustment, the female adolescent were found to be more capable and reasonable, attractive than male adolescents.
3. On sense of personal freedom component of personal adjustment, the female adolescent were found to have better personal freedom as compared to male adolescents.
4. On feeling of belongingness of personal development, the female adolescents were found to have good relationship with their associated and feel proud at place of work as compared to their counterparts.
5. On withdrawal tendencies component of personal adjustment, male adolescents were found to be a characteristically sensitive, they feel lonely as compared to female adolescents.
6. On nervous symptoms components of personal adjustment, the male adolescents were found to have symptoms like loss of appetite, inability to sleep, tendencies of chronically tired as compared to their counterparts.
7. On overall components of personal adjustments, the female adolescents were found to be personally well adjusted than the male adolescents.

#### **Social Adjustment**

1. It has been found that there is a significant mean difference between male and female adolescents on social standard component of social adjustment. The female adolescents were found to understand the rights of others as compare to male adolescents.
2. On social skills component of social adjustment, the female adolescents were found to be socially skilled or effective as compared to male adolescents.

3. On anti-social tendencies component of social adjustment, the male adolescents were found to be bullying, frequent-quarrelling, disobedient and destructive to property as compared to female adolescents.
4. On family relations component of social adjustment, the female adolescents were found to have more sense of security and self-respect as compared to male adolescents.
5. On school relation component of social adjustment, the female adolescent were found to be good adjusted in their school, they feel that their teachers liked them and they adopted the school work to their level of interest and maturity than male adolescents.
6. On community relation component of social adjustment, the female adolescent were found to be more adjusted with their community and neighbors as compared to male adolescents.
7. On overall components of social adjustment, the female adolescents were found to be socially well adjusted as compared to male adolescents.

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