

# A Study Of The Influence Of Home Environment On The Adjustment Of Secondary School Students

Dr. D. Nagaraja Kumari<sup>1</sup> & S. Mary Kamala<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, IASE & Chairperson,  
BOS in Education (PG)

Department of Education, Andhra University,  
Visakhapatnam-530003, A.P., India

<sup>2</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Education, Andhra  
University, Visakhapatnam-530 003  
Andhra Pradesh, India

## Abstract

Adjustment refers to the ability to cope in social situations and achieve satisfaction of one's needs. It is the achievement of harmony between an individual and his environment which affords him comfortable life devoid of strain, stress, conflict and frustration. It is also the process of adapting behavior to a changed environment. Home plays a central role in the development of cognitive and non-cognitive characteristics of children. Home environment is one of the important factors that has significant effect on the adjustment of school going children. The present study is an attempt to explore the influence of home environment on the adjustment of students in the secondary schools of Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh. The researchers investigated to know the influence of four demographic variables, viz., gender, location of the school, occupation of parents and parental income on the adjustment of secondary school students in relation to their Home Environment. Descriptive Survey method has been adopted for the present investigation. A sample of 1000 students (460 boys and 540 girls) from the secondary schools of Visakhapatnam district has been selected using stratified random sampling method. The researchers used Home Environment Inventory (HEI) developed by K.S. Mishra (2012) to collect data from the respondents. The data were analyzed using different statistical techniques such as means, standard deviations, t-test and one

way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings of the study revealed that the location of the school, occupation of parents and parental income have no influence on the adjustment of students in secondary schools to Home Environment. However, the gender has a positive influence on their adjustment to Home Environment. The study has suggested that home environment should be congenial for students to adjust themselves to the new situations.

Key words: Adjustment, Secondary School Students, Home environment, Performance of students

### **Introduction**

Adjustment is the process of adopting modes of behavior suitable to the environment or the changes in the environment. It plays a pivotal role in the development of an individual. The present century is an era of revolutionary changes and to cope up with such a dynamic environment, one has to make changes in oneself to adjust to the environment. The parents, the school and the peer group – all play an important role in helping an individual to get adjusted to the environment in which they are living.

Home environment is a crucial factor that affects the adjustment of children to a great extent. The milieu in which a child develops physically, intellectually, emotionally, culturally and socially is the home. Home plays a central role in the development of cognitive and non-cognitive characteristics of children. The families are expected to pay attention in the physical, moral and social development of their children. Home is the primary institution where children get an opportunity to learn, interact and socialize with other members. The first experience of socialization within the family is the most important step in the right growth and development of a child's personality. Better educated and eager parents are more likely to mirror the academic style of classrooms at home by their praise and interaction with their children. It is rightly observed that the families are very powerful institutes and their influence over their young members is visible in every part of their lives.

### **The concept of 'Adjustment'**

Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence

the satisfaction of these needs (Shaffer, 1961). It is the achievement of harmony between an individual and his environment which affords him comfortable life devoid of strain, stress, conflict and frustration. It is used to emphasize the individual's struggle to live or survive in his/her social and physical environment. According to Good, C. V. (1959), 'Adjustment' is the process of finding and adopting modes of behavior suitable to the environment or the changes in the environment (Mangal, S.K. 2002, p.490). The term, 'adjustment' is often used as a synonym for accommodation and adaptation. Strictly speaking, the term denotes the results of equilibrium, which may be affected by either of these processes (Monroe, 2007). If an individual fails to adjust himself to the situations, it results in several problems. It may be any one of the psychological sequences like conflict, frustration, undesirable emotions, aggression and violence. In the study of adjustment, the individual and the environment are the two crucial factors that play a significant role. With regard to the individual, the considerations are the heredity and biological factors, the psychological factors and the quality of socialization given to him/her. On the other hand, the environment includes all the social factors. Every individual from the time he/she steps out of the family and enters the society is subjected to a long series of adjustments between the unique personality and the environment. Each boy and girl gets a passionate desire to become an individual having a healthy physique, a growing intellectual ability, a greater degree of emotional balance and increased participation in social groups. Such characteristics enhance one's personality. Even parents, teachers and other significant members of the society to which people belong to, should encourage this kind of a desire among the students. Among different agencies, the home is said to be the most important agency which helps in the growth of physical, mental and psychological faculties among the children during their crucial period of development.

### **Home Environment**

Home is first social institution where a child needs to be adjusted. When a child becomes aware of other individuals who comprise his social environment at home, he tends to regard them as a means through which he may attain personal satisfaction. From the very beginning, he imitates the speaking and eating habits of his family members and gradually reflects attitudes learned in the home towards elders. The behavior, good or bad, exhibited at home will be carried by the child into the relationships with

persons outside the home at a later stage. Thus, the family attitudes become an important consideration in the adjustment of a child in the school and community. Further, the adjustment of the child to School and Social environment also depends mostly on his/her adjustment to the Home environment.

Children learn proficiencies in various abilities such as social communications, handling emotions and the management of day-to-day interactions at home. In reality, the growing child is dependent on the immediate environment i.e. the home and the family to meet the needs of his growth. The concern, therefore, extends to how the facilities at home can be improved to meet the needs of the children for their healthy growth.

### **The process of adjustment**

Adjustment is a behavioural process by which a person maintains balance among various needs that one encounters at a given point of time. It lays emphasis on the process by which an individual adjusts to his external environment. Each and every situation of life demands that the person concerned should be able to effectively perform in accordance with some guiding principles and should be able to strike a balance among various forces. Adjustment is defined as a process wherein one builds variations in the behaviour to achieve harmony with oneself, others or the environment with an aim to maintain the state of equilibrium between the individual and the environment. Piaget has studied the adjustive process from different angles. He uses the term assimilation and accommodation to represent the alternation of oneself or environment as a means of adjustment. A person who carries his values and standards of conduct without any change and maintains these in spite of major changes in the social climate is called assimilator. The person who takes his standards from his social context and changes his beliefs in accordance with the altered values of the society is called accommodator. In order to adjust successfully in the society, a person has to resort to both the devices, i.e., assimilation and accommodation.

### **Role of Home Environment in the adjustment of the children**

The home environment plays a crucial role in the adjustment of children. A child's early experiences and interactions within their family and home setting have a significant impact on their emotional, cognitive, social, and psychological development.

The following are some of the important areas in which the home environment influences the adjustment of children:

- (i) **Emotional Development:** The emotional atmosphere of the home greatly affects a child's emotional development. A nurturing and supportive home environment where children feel loved, valued, and secure helps them develop a strong sense of self-worth and emotional resilience. Conversely, a chaotic, inconsistent, or hostile environment can lead to emotional instability and difficulty in managing emotions.
- (ii) **Social Development:** The interactions children have with family members at home serve as the foundation for their social skills. Positive role modeling by parents and siblings helps children learn how to communicate, cooperate, share, and resolve conflicts. A healthy home environment promotes the development of empathy, kindness, and the ability to form positive relationships with peers and others.
- (iii) **Cognitive Development:** The home environment is a child's first learning environment. Parents who engage in meaningful conversations, read to their children, provide stimulating activities, and encourage curiosity contribute to the child's cognitive development. Exposure to a rich learning environment enhances language skills, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking.
- (iv) **Behavioral Adjustment:** Children learn appropriate behavior and social norms primarily from their family. Consistent discipline and clear boundaries in a positive and respectful manner help children understand expectations and consequences. A well-structured home environment reduces behavioral problems and helps children learn self-control and responsibility.
- (v) **Academic Achievement:** A supportive home environment can significantly impact a child's educational success. Parents who emphasize the value of education, provide a quiet space for studying, and show interest in their child's academic progress contribute to a positive attitude towards learning and better academic outcomes.

- (vi) **Cultural and Moral Values:** The home environment is where children first learn about their cultural and moral values. Family traditions, religious practices, and ethical beliefs are typically transmitted through interactions at home. These values play a critical role in shaping a child's identity and worldview.
- (vii) **Stress Management:** A stable and supportive home environment can buffer the effects of stress on children. When children experience stressful situations, such as changes in family dynamics or external challenges, a strong support system at home can help them develop effective coping strategies and emotional resilience.
- (viii) **Sense of Security:** Children need a sense of security and stability to thrive. A consistent and predictable home environment provides children with a safe haven where they can explore, learn, and grow without excessive anxiety or fear.
- (ix) **Identity Development:** Children develop a sense of self and personal identity through interactions with family members. A positive home environment that values individuality and encourages self-expression allows children to develop a strong and healthy self-concept.
- (x) **Communication Skills:** Effective communication is a vital skill that children learn within the home environment. Parents who listen attentively, encourage open dialogue, and express themselves clearly provide a foundation for their children's communication skills, which are important for academic, social, and future professional success.

Thus, the home environment has a profound influence on a child's adjustment and overall development. Positive interactions, a nurturing atmosphere, and consistent support contribute to children's emotional well-being, social competence, cognitive growth, and successful adaptation to various life challenges. Parents and caregivers play a critical role in creating a home environment that fosters healthy adjustment and sets the stage for a child's lifelong development.

### **Review of Related Studies**

A review of the studies relating to the influence of home environment on the adjustment of children is carried out by the researchers; and a brief summary of the same is provided below.

**Shaomei Li et al. (2023)** conducted a study to explore the relationship between the home learning environment and its intrinsic structure (i.e. structural family characteristics, parental beliefs and interests, and the educational processes) and children's social-emotional competence, and whether gender plays a moderating role in the relationship. The study randomly selected a sample of 443 children from 14 kindergartens in western China. The Home Learning Environment Questionnaire and the Chinese Inventory of Children's Social-emotional competence scale were used to investigate the home learning environment and social-emotional competence of these children.

The results of the study revealed: (i) Structural family characteristics and parental beliefs and interests both had a significant positive predictive effect on children's social-emotional competence. (ii) The educational processes fully mediate between structural family characteristics, parental beliefs and interests, and children's social-emotional competence. (iii) Gender moderated the effect of the home learning environment on children's social-emotional competence. Gender moderates not only the indirect effects between parental beliefs and interests and children's social-emotional competence, but also the indirect effects between structural family characteristics and children's social-emotional competence. At the same time, gender also moderated the direct effects between parental beliefs and interests and children's social-emotional competence. The study suggested that parents should pay attention to create a congenial home learning environment that promotes the positive development of children's social-emotional competence.

**Syed Inshaallah Tahir et al. (2022)** conducted a descriptive study on 'Home environment and Social Adjustment among Secondary School Students in Kashmir'. Data were collected from 300 secondary school students using self-constructed questionnaires. Statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, percentage method, t-test and Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation were employed to analyze the acquired data. This study revealed that there exists a significant association between home

environment and social adjustment of secondary school students of Kashmir. The study also revealed that male and female secondary school students differ significantly with regard to the association of home environment and social adjustment. When students were assessed based on their geographic location (Urban versus Rural), it was evident that rural secondary school students had better home contexts and social adaptations as compared to their urban counterparts. The home environment has such a considerable impact on students' social adjustment, as they are provided with peace and tranquility at home. Through valiant efforts, sheer determination and familial support, they can fulfill all their career ambitions in their later life with their adaptation to the social environment in which they live.

**Ms. Samita (2021)** conducted a study to explore the impact of Family Environment on Secondary School students in relation to their gender and location. 100 students of class 10<sup>th</sup> from the secondary schools of Amritsar district were selected using random sampling method. The researcher used Family Climate Scale (FCS) developed by Beena Shah (2006) to collect data from the respondents. The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference between boys and girls with regard to the Family Environment. However, there is significant difference in the family environment of urban and rural secondary school students.

**Gangadhara Murthy, K. (2018)** conducted a study on the adjustment of IX standard students in relation to their Home Environment. The sample of the study consisted of IX standard students studying in different types of schools, viz., Government, private aided and Unaided. The data were collected using the Adjustment Inventory scale developed by Bell and Home Environment and School Environment Inventory scale developed by K. S. Mishra. "t" tests were used for data analysis. The results of the study revealed that no significant relationship was found between adjustment of IX standard student and control of Home environment. Differences in Home and Gender had no impact on adjustment of students of IX standard. However, the Type of school in which the students are studying had a positive impact on their adjustment

#### **Need for the present investigation**

Adjustment plays a significant role in the life of an individual. Children should be brought up by the parents in such a manner

that they should adjust themselves to the environment or the circumstances in which they live. There are various factors within the home environment which influence significantly a child's ability to adapt and thrive in the school setting in their later life. A positive family environment fosters healthy communication, which helps children develop social and emotional skills necessary for school adjustment. When children feel that their families are attentive and responsive to their needs, they are more likely to feel secure and confident in the school environment. A supportive and nurturing home environment contributes to a child's emotional well-being, which in turn affects their ability to cope with challenges, manage stress, and build positive relationships with peers and teachers at school. The parents who demonstrate positive behavior, possess right attitudes and follow moral values at home are role models for their children in their behavior and attitudes in school. The home environment plays a crucial role in shaping a child's ability to adjust and thrive in the school setting. A supportive, communicative, and emotionally nurturing home environment enhances a child's social, emotional and academic development, facilitating their successful adaptation to school life. Keeping in view the importance attributed to home environment in the overall development of the children, the researchers thought it desirable to conduct a research study on the relationship between home environment and the adjustment of school children. Further, the investigators proposed to study the influence of different demographical variables, viz., gender, residence, occupation of parents and parental income on the adjustment of secondary school students. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

#### **Objectives of the study**

1. To study the adjustment of secondary school students in relation to home environment.
2. To examine the influence of Home Environment on the adjustment of secondary school students in relation to the demographic variables – gender, location of the school, occupation of parents and parental income.

#### **Hypotheses of the study**

1. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of boys and girls in secondary schools in relation to Home

Environment.

2. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students of rural and urban secondary schools in relation to Home Environment
3. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students with their parents working as labourers, farmers and employees in relation to Home Environment
4. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students with their parental income below 2 lakhs, between 2-5 lakhs; and 5 lakhs & above.

### **Limitations of the study**

The study is limited to find out the adjustment of secondary school students studying in 40 selected secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. Further, the study is confined to find out the influence of four demographic variables, viz., gender, location of the school, occupation of parents and parental income on the adjustment of secondary school students in relation to Home Environment.

### **Methodology**

#### **(a) Method of Research**

The researchers followed the Descriptive Survey Method of research for the present investigation.

#### **(b) Sample**

The sample of the study consists of 1000 students (460 boys and 540 girls) from Classes 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> studying in the selected secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh using Stratified Random Sampling technique.

#### **(c) Research Tool**

**The Home Environment Inventory (HEI) developed by K.S. Mishra (2012):** It is a 78-item self report measure of quality and quantity of the cognitive, emotional and social support that the school going children gain in the Home Environment. The tool is designed to assess 10 dimensions of the home environment, viz., Control, Protectiveness, Punishment, Conformity, Social Isolation, Reward, Deprivation of privileges, Nurturance, Rejection and Permissiveness.

**(d) Administration of the Tools**

The Home Environment Inventory (HEI) consisting of 78 items on ten different dimensions relating to the adjustment of school going children to Home environment is administered to 1000 students of Classes 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> from the selected secondary schools in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh.

**(e) Statistical Techniques Used**

The investigators used different statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, the 't'- test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for data analysis and interpretation.

**Table showing the Influence of Home Environment on the adjustment of Secondary School students with different variables**

S. No.	Variable		N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio/ F-value	Result
1	Gender	Boys	460	233.63	68.46	5.31*	*Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Girls	540	211.69	60.88		
2	Location of the school	Rural	570	228.29	64.57	0.59*	* Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Urban	430	230.64	61.53		
3	Occupation of Parents	Labourers	330	232.01	56.81	0.012*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Farmers	380	233.34	58.57		
		Employees	290	230.57	52.45		

4	Parental Income	Below 2 lakhs	340	233.09	56.54	0.04*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Between 2-5 lakhs	430	234.27	61.21		
		5 lakhs & above	230	228.85	54.69		

**Findings and conclusions:**

1. There is significant difference in the adjustment of boys and girls in secondary schools in relation to Home Environment.  
 Since the mean score of boys ( ) is higher than the mean score of girls ( ), it is understood that boys have exhibited higher level of adjustment problems as compared to girls. In other words, it is concluded that **girls are better adjusted to Home Environment as compared to boys in secondary schools.**
2. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students of rural and urban secondary schools in relation to Home Environment.  
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It is concluded that **location of the school has no influence on the adjustment of students to Home Environment.**

3. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students with their parents working as labourers, farmers and employees in relation to Home Environment.

It is concluded that **the occupation of parents has no influence on the adjustment of students to Home Environment.**

4. There is no significant difference in the adjustment of students with their parental income below 2 lakhs, between 2-5 lakhs and 5 lakhs & above.

It is concluded that **the parental income has no influence on the adjustment of students to Home Environment.**

### **Recommendations**

The study has suggested that home environment plays a very significant role during the crucial period of development of the children. Since the adjustment of the children depends mainly on the love and affection what the parents have towards them at home, the parents should take every care in creating a congenial home environment that fosters healthy adjustment and sets the platform for a child's lifelong development.

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