

Research Paper

## A Feeling of Alienation Among School Going Adolescents and its Preventive Measures: Focus on Nagpur, Maharashtra

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### ABSTRACT

An empirical study was planned to see the level of Alienation among different school-going adolescents. A sample of 320 school-going boy and girl adolescents from 10th to 12th classes was drawn from Nagpur city, Maharashtra given 15 to 20 years of age. According to our research plan, 264 boy and girl adolescents were finally selected from their information sheet. Therefore, boy and girl adolescents were distributed in four groups in aspect of their age groups. Then 66 adolescents were taken from each group and applied the Alienation Scale on them. The obtained scores on the Alienation scale were analysed using ANOVA and t-test to examine the significant differences among different age groups of boy and girl adolescents. In our final analysis, boy adolescents were more alienated than girl adolescents. Moreover, increasing age, familial structure, and social and educational circumstances of school-going adolescents were more responsible for alienation.

**Keywords:** *Feeling of Alienation, School-going Adolescents, Prevention*

The present investigation was planned to see the level of alienation among school-going boy and girl adolescents and its preventive measures. Adolescence is a transitional stage in which several mental, physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and psychological changes occur rapidly and are reflected in their behaviour accordingly (Jha & Pashine, 2023). Alienation is a loss of purpose and a diminished sense of belonging, impacting mental, educational, social, and emotional well-being. When any adolescent withdraws and becomes isolated from their familial, social, and educational surroundings or other people, it manifests an increasing level of alienation. Many school-going adolescents are alienated and remain out of the charmed circle of the school education system and other activities as well as unable to participate fully in the teaching-learning process and develop a feeling of isolation, separation, and dissatisfaction in their life space. Alienation refers to the experience of nonparticipation in shaping and controlling one's vital life activities; lack or loss of relationships with others; and a general sense of meaninglessness, helplessness, and loneliness.

Seeman (1959) opines that alienation has five components: Powerlessness, Meaninglessness, Normlessness, Isolation, and Self-estrangement. The feeling of alienation is dysfunction of

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the self that manifests as impoverishment, boredom, apathy, impotence, vagueness, and withdrawal, resulting in one's self-worth. Bonsaint (1984) has discussed five dimensions of loneliness namely, interpersonal, social, psychological, cultural, and cosmic loneliness. Therefore, alienation refers to a psychological state in which an individual feels relatively powerless, normless, apartness, strange, cynicism, and dissatisfied and develops a sense of loss of relationship with others.

Some school-going adolescents are socially, mentally, and educationally alienated from their goals and ambitions subsequently, they cannot be determined in the fast-growing in the present education system. The feeling of alienation adversely affects the adolescent's academic achievements and lifestyle such as learning process, thinking ability, imagination, visualization, recognition, and future goal of life. Still, the stark fact is an underlying factor in other school problems such as violence, student unrest, vandalism, and poor academic achievement. Alienation usually refers to the latter, while the term anomie has been used to describe a social state in which conditions of normalness or the breakdown of social rules are identifiable. Alienation may be a state of negative feelings of loneliness in which low self-confidence, willpower, and competence gradually develop.

However, even today the present condition of some school-going adolescents is miserable, aimless, and helpless. Strictly speaking, nearly 25 percent of school-going adolescents still live in remote areas without facilities, as they have to cover a long distance to reach the schools without any viable means of transport. Subsequently, they feel helpless and alienated in their life. Moreover, in remote areas, parents cannot provide healthy food, health care, housing facilities, child-rearing practices, quality education, and adequate training of socialization. Thereby, these circumstances of their life produce in them a sense of alienation and dissatisfaction.

Generally, some school-going adolescents from urban and rural areas rarely get the opportunity to achieve their ambitions in life, as they are unable to obtain high marks in academic institutions, because they are less competent to benefit from teaching in the classroom and fail to compete with the other adolescents in the class. As a result, their association with other adolescents decreases socially and educationally and generates a feeling of alienation.

Although the number of schools is growing daily along with the increase in the adolescent population in urban, rural, and remote areas, the quality of education has still to improve (Jha, 2005). Moreover, due to inexperience and less competent teachers, educational institutions cannot draw out the latent spirit and suppress talent from school-going adolescents. Therefore, the number of dissatisfied, isolated, and frustrated adolescents has increased greatly, and thereby, they develop feelings of alienation in their lives.

Socially and educationally alienated adolescents come from families with low income, low parental education, low caste affiliation, and residence in remote and rural areas, while the socially and educationally advantaged children come from families with high income, highly educated father, high caste affiliation and residence in urban areas (Rath and Samant, 1975).

Miller (1970) has listed the following characteristics of socially, educationally, and economically isolated students: economic deprivation, negative parental attitude toward the children, inadequate and overcrowded housing, malnutrition, low parental education, and

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poor household management. The family of the socially and culturally isolated child is traditional, superstitious, alienated, and dissatisfied (Reissman, 1962). M. Malik (2015) has observed that Madrasa school students lose their identity because their degrees are least recognized, so they cannot compete with the other modern school students thereby, they lose their self-confidence and feel alienation.

The alienated and deprived students suffer from educational and financial trouble, as they are unable to fulfil their basic requirements in life. The parents of the school-going adolescents who were asked to take the tests can send them to school not because of their academic achievements but due to the Governmental assistance and stipends (Jha, 2005). Owing to the educational and social alienation adolescents are incapable of facing the challenges of higher and quality education, as they are less competent to take their admission to Engineering, Medical Science, Computer Science, Information Technology, M B A, Management, Architecture, Fashion Designing, and other technical and advance training, etc. as compared to other adolescents. A feeling of alienation among school-going adolescents can be a serious psychological problem and strain that can lead to several negative outcomes namely;

### ***Squat mental health***

Alienation can increase the risk of mental health issues such as reality misapprehension, use of alcohol, and intoxication. They may develop distracted thoughts, the tendency to suicide, frustration, depression, mental stress, sadness, and anxiety. Alienated adolescents have started excessive arguments with their teachers and feel trouble with classmates. Alienated adolescents can manifest their anger and irritability before others.

### **The problem with social behaviours**

Alienated adolescents may be more likely to bully others, they may manipulate others someone try to get what they want by deceiving and cheating people in clever ways. Thereby, their social relation deteriorates within society and they have fewer friends and a smaller social network. Most of the adolescents are reluctant to share their problems with their teachers and parents, it leads to alienation.

### **Classroom behaviours**

Alienated adolescents are unable to concentrate on the teaching-learning process completely, they may sit in class and stare, verbally abuse the teacher, and disrupt the class. Their interaction and persuasion with other adolescents can be depreciated. Sometimes strange behaviour can be seen apparently.

### **Deviant behaviours**

Alienated adolescents may engage in gang activity, violence, vandalism, absenteeism, and truancy. Besides, they are away from their responsibilities in the classroom, play, and extracurricular activities. They feel difficulty in concentrating on their learning work.

### **Lower academic performance**

Alienated adolescents may be less attracted to teaching and learning processes and may have reduced motivation. Generally, alienated adolescents hardly get the opportunity to fulfil their academic ambitions in life, as they cannot achieve a good rank in academic institutions because they are less competent to benefit in the classroom and fail to compete with others.

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### **Emotional Problem**

Alienated adolescents are more emotional they are unable to face their insults in the classroom and out of the classroom thereby, they manifest their aggression before others. They may develop an inferiority complex in academic institutions.

Therefore, alienation can occur when an adolescent's needs and expectations are not aligned with those of school and society. It can also be caused by negative school experiences, such as academic failure or school suspension.

So, proper educational training along with encouragement, emotional support, and a ray of hope in life should be given to the alienated school adolescents by their parents, family members, and able teachers. So that this experience makes them stand in a creative and goal-oriented direction and facilitates to reduce the feeling of alienation. Special educational programs, vocational training, and extracurricular activities should be arranged in the schools intermittently to develop willpower, positive thought, and self-confidence among adolescents to reduce the level of alienation.

### ***Preventive measures and approaches for school-going adolescents:***

The following strategies should be adopted by school-going adolescents to reduce their alienation levels.

- Start yoga and meditation under the open sky regularly in the early morning.
- Take regular breakfast, lunch, and dinner at a fixed time.
- Have proper sleep at least 6 to 8 hours daily.
- Develop a sense of cooperation and positive thinking with others.
- Articulate and share your problems with another person.
- Established an interaction within the peer group.
- Focus and visualize your necessary work.
- Control the unrealistic expectations in life.
- Participate in pleasurable activities and events.
- Do not compare with others and identify your unique strengths.
- Develop a habit to learn from mistakes.
- Do not feel regret and remorse in life as you are.
- Away your friends who are involved in bad practices.
- Cooperate with someone who is seeking help.
- Respect another person and learn from them.

### ***Preventive measures and approaches for parents and teachers of school-going adolescents:***

Jha & Pashine, (2023) have observed that proper love, affection, encouragement, educational facilities, and emotional and social support should be given to alienated school-going adolescents by their parents and able teachers to solve their social, educational, and familial problems.

The following circumspection should be taken by parents and teachers to reduce the alienation level of school-going adolescents.

- Parents and school teachers must be affectionate for their school-going adolescents.
- Parents and school teachers should be aware of their adolescent's behaviour, attitude, thinking, mood, and emotion.

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- Parents and teachers should establish trust and belief with their adolescents.
- Parents and teachers should be available to help their adolescents to talk when he or she is ready.
- Parents and teachers should express good emotional responses for their adolescents.
- Parents and teachers should be encouraged to their adolescents when they feel dissatisfied and have problems.
- Parents and teachers should facilitate their adolescents for meditation, yoga, and physical activity and suggest good nutrition.
- Parents and teachers should teach about the moral responsibilities of school-going adolescents.
- Parents and teachers should support school-going adolescents when poor decisions are made in the family and school.
- Parents and teachers should encourage and help their adolescents to participate in extracurricular activities namely, games, dance, drama, music, etc.
- Parents and teachers should make their adolescents aware of the harmful effects of drugs, alcohol, and other intoxication before experimentation begins.
- Parents and teachers should monitor their tension, frustration, depression, anxiety, and stress levels in the family and school respectively.
- Parents should contact or communicate with school teachers and vice-versa with any concerns to assist their adolescents.
- Proper counselling and guidance should be given to the school-going adolescents intermittently by their parents and able teachers to reduce the level of alienation.

### ***Need of the study***

A large number of school-going adolescents are suffering from alienation, separation, withdrawal from reality, incompetence, and helplessness. Therefore, they are away from the mainstream and charmed circle of creativity and the modern education system. Thereby, they cannot face the challenges of quality and technical education. However, even today, the level of alienation is mushrooming among school-going adolescents, and incapable of enjoying all the fruits of national development. The dilemma of alienated adolescents is that they have no separate schools for them into which to withdraw and seek solace in an educational identity of their own.

Therefore, it is essential to study the alienation level among school-going adolescents and its preventive measures. The present research work will facilitate school-going adolescents, school teachers, parents of adolescents, counsellors, and others in their respective fields of research. Moreover, this study will contribute to excelling in the educational efficacy and competence of alienated school-going adolescents for national development.

### ***Sample:***

The sample constituted 320 school-going boys and girls adolescents from different schools in Nagpur city, Maharashtra. The age of adolescents ranged from 15 to 20 years. As per our research plan boy and girl adolescents were distributed in four groups namely, in group A boy adolescents from 15 to 17 years, in group B girl adolescents from 15 to 17 years, in group C boy adolescents from 18 to 20 years, in group D girl adolescents from 18 to 20 years, including from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> classes. Therefore, 66 adolescents from each group were finally selected by their furnished personal information given by determining the sample size for research activities (Robert V. Krejcie & Daryle W. Morgan, 1970). Consequently, 132

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adolescent boys and 132 adolescent girls were selected separately for the final study. Thus, four groups of boy and girl adolescents were matched concerning age, sex, income, education, family size, and area of residence.

### ***Hypotheses:***

In the inclination of previous research, the following hypotheses were formulated;

1. It was postulated that boy adolescents from 15 to 20 years of age will be more alienated as compared to girl adolescents from 15 to 20 years of age. Consequently, boy adolescents from 15 to 20 years of age will obtain higher scores on the alienation scale than girl adolescents.
2. Secondly, boy adolescents from 18 to 20 years of age will be more alienated as compared to girl adolescents from 18 to 20 years of age. Consequently, boy adolescents from 18 to 20 years of age will obtain higher scores on the alienation scale than girl adolescents.
3. Thirdly, girl adolescents from 15 to 17 years of age will be less alienated in comparison to boy adolescents from 15 to 17 years of age. Subsequently, boy adolescents from 15 to 17 years of age will obtain higher scores on the alienation scale than girl adolescents.
4. Fourthly, boy adolescents from 18 to 20 years of age will be more alienated as compared to boy adolescents from 15 to 17 years of age. Therefore, boy adolescents from 15 to 17 years of the will obtain lower scores on the alienation scale than boy adolescents from 18 to 20 years of age.
5. Fifthly, girl adolescents from 18 to 20 years of age will be more alienated as compared to girl adolescents from 15 to 17 years of age. Therefore, girl adolescents from 15 to 17 years of age will obtain lower scores on the alienation scale than girl adolescents from 18 to 20 years of age.
6. Lastly, boy adolescents from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> classes will be more alienated in comparison to girl adolescents from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, and significant differences will be found between scores of boy and girl adolescents.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### ***The procedure of investigation:***

Each adolescent of the four groups was contacted personally to administer the Alienation Scale. The adolescents were from different schools in Nagpur city, Maharashtra. Therefore, the investigator contacted them to collect the data either in their respective schools or in their residing places. Sometimes, the investigator administered the scale to a single adolescent and sometimes, in small groups varying from 02 to 05 adolescents. The time was given up to 25 minutes in a group for administering the Alienation Scale so that data could be collected properly for the empirical study.

### ***Tools used:***

1. **Personal Information Sheet:** The personal information sheet included questions regarding age, sex, education, family size, income, family status, and area of residence. Therefore, nearly 160 boys and 160 girl adolescents from different schools in Nagpur city of Maharashtra were given a personal information sheet in various small groups to fill in. Thereafter, based on their furnished information, 66 adolescents were selected separately from each group. Therefore, 264 adolescents were finally selected in which 132 boys and 132 girls were included in the final study.

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2. **General Alienation Scale:** The general Alienation Scale (Ray, 1974) consists of 20 items including positive and negative items. The split-half reliability and test-retest reliability of the scale were .78 and .71 respectively. Each item has five response categories; ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘undecided’, ‘disagree’, and ‘strongly disagree’. For the positive items, the ‘strongly agree’ response is given a score of 05, ‘agree’ a score of 04, ‘undecided’ a score of 03, ‘disagree’ a score of 02, and ‘strongly disagree’ a score of 01. In the case of negative items, the scoring is reversed, such as the ‘strongly disagree’ response is given a score of 05, ‘disagree’ a score of 04, ‘undecided’ a score of 03, ‘agree’ a score of 02, and ‘strongly agree’ a score of 01. The minimum possible score on the scale is 20 and the maximum possible score is 100. A higher score on the scale indicates a higher level of alienation.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The effect of school, education, sex, age, physical, mental, and emotional changes, teachers and parents were determined on Alienation scale. For testing the hypotheses one-way ANOVA was performed and tabulated to see the variation in Alienation scores of school-going adolescents. The results of ANOVA are mentioned in Table 1.

*Table-1 ANOVA*

Source of Variance	df	Ss	Ms	F	p
Between Groups	3	8789.89	2929.96		
Within Groups	260	5840.34	22.46	130.45	<.01
Total	263	14630.24			

The result indicates that the groups of boy and girl adolescents create significant variations in the Alienation scores ( $F= 130.45, p< .01$ ). Therefore, boy and girl adolescents have indicated a significant role in the scores of Alienation scales. Further, to examine the significant differences between obtained means of boy and girl adolescents t-test was tabulated. The statistics of group differences are mentioned in Table 2

*Table-2 t-Test*

No. of Groups	Adolescents Groups	N	Mean	SD	Group Difference	t-ratio	p
A	Boy adolescents from 15 to 17 years	66	54.89	4.24	A B	13.20	
B	Girl adolescents from 15 to 17 years	66	44.85	4.43	B C	18.68	
					C D	8.94	< .01
C	Boy adolescents from 18 to 20 years	66	60.50	5.10	A C	6.82	
D	Girl adolescents from 18 to 20 years	66	52.17	5.51	A D	3.15	
					B D	8.35	

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The result table shows that boy and adolescents obtained the Mean scores of 54.89 and 60.50 and SD were 4.24 and 5.10 by 15 to 17 years and 18 to 20 years of age respectively. The obtained t-ratio was 6.82 between the two groups of boys. The obtained t-ratio between the A and C groups was highly significant with a 0.01 level of confidence. On the other hand, girl adolescents obtained Mean scores of 44.85 and 52.17 and SD 4.43 and 5.51 by 15 to 17 years and 18 to 20 years respectively. The obtained t-ratio was tabulated at 8.35. The obtained t-ratio between B and D groups was significant with a 0.01 level of confidence. Therefore, boy and girl adolescents from 15 to 17 years obtained a Mean of 54.89 and 44.85, and SD 4.24, and 4.43 respectively. The obtained t-ratio was 13.20. The obtained t-ratio between the A and B groups was highly significant with a 0.01 level of confidence. Therefore, boy and girl adolescents from 18 to 20 years obtained a Mean of 60.50 and 52.17 and SD of 5.10 and 5.51 respectively. The obtained t-ratio was 8.94. The obtained t-ratio between the C and D groups was highly significant on a 0.01 level of confidence. Thus, boy and girl adolescents effectively reinforce the obtained scores on the Alienation scale. Consequently, boy adolescents obtained higher scores in comparison to girl adolescents. Therefore, the hypotheses of the present investigation are confirmed.

### **CONCLUSION**

In our final analysis, the present investigation has indicated that school-going boy and girl adolescents create a significant difference in the scores on the Alienation Scale. Therefore, boy adolescents were more alienated than girl adolescents. Besides, boy and girl adolescents from the age of 18 to 20 years were utmost alienated in comparison to their counterparts. Therefore, alienation is a complex feeling of disconnection from others and society. This sense of detachment can emerge from economic and social inequality, cultural and societal norms, mental health issues, trauma, identity crises, distrust in institutions, displacement, and migration. Alienation can be a cumulative effect of familial, social, educational, economic, and cultural factors and may vary in intensity depending on individual circumstances. The level of alienation can be brought down more easily for school-going adolescents if positive and noticeable reforms within the society, educational system, job opportunities, and more Governmental assistance are affected. In the present scenario, the process of modernization and urbanization has touched only just the soft upper crust of the social, environmental, and educational earth of alienated adolescents and their predicament.

However, alienated school-going adolescents who have remained impervious to change over the last decades are slowly beginning to slough off the familial, mental, emotional, social, and educational deadweight of the past and respond to the new winds of change. They want to imitate the modern and sustainable educational system and try to mix up with the upper strata of modern society and identify themselves more with the upper middle class. The level of alienation may vary among school-going adolescents but the fact is that it remains in their collective consciousness.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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