

Adjustment Challenges: A Study of Hostel and Day-scholar Students

Dr. Shraddha Thacker^{1*}, Dr. Nanda Rathi²

ABSTRACT

Adjustment plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's academic and social experiences, particularly among students living in different environments. This study explores the differences in adjustment patterns between hostellites and day-scholar girls, focusing on their emotional, health, family, social, and educational adjustments. Hostel life presents unique challenges and opportunities, influencing independence, peer interactions, and coping mechanisms, whereas non-hostellites experience a different set of familial and social influences. To understand these variations, the study aims to provide insights into the differences in their level of adjustments of both groups. The study's effective sample consisted of 100 adolescent girls, including 50 hostel students and 50 day-scholars. Global Adjustment Scale (Vohra,1993) was employed for the data collection. The results of the study revealed that day scholars significantly revealed better adjustment with respect to all five dimensions.

Keywords: *Adjustment, Adolescent Girls, Day-Scholar Vs Hostellite*

Adjustment in psychology refers to an individual's ability to adapt to changes in their physical, occupational, and social environment. It is a behavioral process through which individuals attempt to balance conflicting needs or respond to environmental challenges. Both humans and animals engage in continuous adjustment to their surroundings; for instance, physiological stimuli such as hunger, drive individuals to seek food, thereby restoring equilibrium. Several scholars have defined adjustment from various perspectives:

- **Drever (1952):** Adjustment is the modification required to compensate for or meet specific conditions.
- **Skinner (1952):** Adjustment entails the organization of personality, leading to a dynamic equilibrium between the individual and their social and physical environment.
- **Coleman (1956):** Adjustment is the outcome of an individual's efforts to cope with stress, fulfill needs, and maintain harmonious relationships with their surroundings.
- **Good (1959):** Adjustment is the process of identifying and adopting appropriate behavioral strategies to adapt to environmental changes.

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Human Development, L.A.D. and Smt. R.P College for Women, Nagpur.

²Head and Professor, Department of Human Development, L.A.D. and Smt. R.P College for Women, Nagpur.

*Corresponding Author

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- **Shaffer (1961):** Adjustment is the means by which living organisms maintain a balance between their needs and the external circumstances affecting the satisfaction of these needs.
- **Munn (1995):** Adjustment is the process of accommodating oneself to changing circumstances, as seen in a student successfully integrating into a social group.

Thus, successful adjustment is essential for overall well-being and mental health. Individuals who struggle with adjustment are at a higher risk of experiencing clinical anxiety, depression, hopelessness, anhedonia, concentration difficulties, sleep disturbances, and reckless behavior. Adjustment can be conceptualized in two ways:

- **Adjustment as an Achievement:** This perspective evaluates how effectively an individual fulfills their responsibilities in various situations. Efficient and well-adjusted individuals contribute significantly to domains such as business, military, education, and other social institutions, thereby promoting societal progress. When adjustment is considered an achievement, specific criteria must be established to assess its quality.
- **Adjustment as a Continuous Process:** Adjustment is an ongoing, lifelong process that begins at birth and continues throughout an individual's existence. Both the person and their environment undergo continuous change, necessitating dynamic adaptation. Arkoff (1968) asserts that there is no final or absolute state of adjustment; instead, individuals must continuously reassess and reestablish equilibrium in response to evolving circumstances.

Successful adjustment, often termed being well-adjusted, is a critical determinant of mental health and overall life satisfaction. While adjustment exists on a continuum, rather than as a fixed state, individuals who are well-adjusted typically exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Self-awareness:** An understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses, with an emphasis on leveraging strengths while minimizing the impact of weaknesses.
- **Self-respect and self-appreciation:** A well-adjusted individual values themselves inherently.
- **Realistic aspirations:** Goals are set within an achievable range, requiring effort while avoiding unrealistic expectations that may lead to failure.
- **Fulfillment of basic needs:** Consistent access to essential resources such as food, water, shelter, sleep, security, and positive self-esteem.
- **Positive outlook:** A tendency to recognize the positive attributes in people, situations, and activities while acknowledging but not fixating on flaws.
- **Flexibility:** The ability to adapt to changes in the environment.
- **Resilience in adversity:** A capacity to handle negative life events proactively rather than adopting a passive or defeatist attitude.
- **Realistic worldview:** A well-adjusted individual maintains a balanced perspective, towards promoting pragmatic decision-making.
- **Comfort within various environments:** A sense of ease across different social contexts, including home, school, workplace, and community organizations.
- **Balanced life philosophy:** An awareness of the reciprocal influence between individuals and their broader environment, fostering both personal responsibility and adaptability.

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Adjustment plays a pivotal role in psychological well-being, influencing an individual's ability to navigate personal and environmental challenges. Thus, the study aimed at assessing the adjustment among hostellite and day-scholars.

Objectives:

- To assess the adjustment levels of hostel students and day scholars across five dimensions: emotional, health, family, social, and educational.
- To compare the adjustment levels of hostel students and day scholars in these five dimensions.

Significance of the study

Hostels provide students with a living environment that is distinctly different from their home setting, encompassing unique physical, social, psychological, and philosophical aspects. Students residing in hostels, known as hostellers, live away from their families and often experience a lack of the emotional and physical comforts typically available at home. They must adhere to the structured rules and norms set by the hostel authorities, which can influence their overall adjustment and well-being. In contrast, non-hostellers live with their families and commute to school or college for study hours. They benefit from continuous parental support, family interactions, and a familiar home environment, which contributes to a greater sense of security and emotional stability. Given these differences, hostel students may face distinct challenges in various dimensions of adjustment- emotional, social, health-related, family and educational-compared to their non-hosteller counterparts. Understanding these variations and by assessing and comparing the adjustment levels of hostellers and non-hostellers, this study aimed to provide valuable insights into the support systems and interventions necessary to improve student life in both settings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The reviewed studies explore various aspects of student adjustment in relation to intelligence, gender, academic stress, peer pressure, and living arrangements.

- **Pandey & Sharma (2021)** conducted a comparative study on intelligence and adjustment among 500-degree college students in Ujjain. While no significant IQ differences were found between genders, males and females differed in home, health, and emotional adjustment. Urban students had higher intelligence, but rural students were better adjusted in social and emotional aspects. Science students scored higher in intelligence than arts students, but adjustment levels were similar across academic streams.
- **Kumari & Kamala (2022)** examined adjustment issues among 450 secondary school students in Visakhapatnam, using the Jain Adjustment Inventory. Findings indicated that gender, class level, school location, and management type had no impact on adjustment levels. The study emphasized the importance of a supportive home and school environment for academic success.
- **Maqsood & Bano (2022)** investigated gender differences in peer pressure, academic stress, and goal adjustment among 300 college students in Lahore. Their findings showed that day scholars experienced more direct peer pressure and academic stress compared to hostellites. Male day scholars were more likely to disengage from unattainable goals and reengage with new ones.

While research has extensively covered social, educational, and emotional adjustment, there is limited work on the adjustment differences between hostel and day scholar students. This

gap suggests the need for further investigation and thereby the following research study was undertaken.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample size:

The study's effective sample consisted of 100 adolescent girls, including 50 hostel students and 50 day-scholars. The participants were pursuing undergraduate education. The sample was randomly selected from the Nagpur and Gondia districts. Prior permission was taken from the subjects for the conduction of the test. The subjects were explained the objectives of the research and were assured that their answers will be kept confidential. Instructions were given and the subjects were asked to answer spontaneously and honestly. The subjects were thanked for their cooperation.

Tool used:

Global Adjustment Scale (Vohra,1993) was employed for the data collection. This test is for adolescents and takes about 30 minutes to complete. The inventory consists of 120 items which are equally distributed amongst the five areas of adjustment. Each of the item in the questionnaire has three response alternatives from which the subject selects any one answer i.e. yes, no and sometimes. Scores on each of these subscales can range from 0-40 and a combined score of subscales can range from 0- 240. Low scores indicate better adjustment. The test has high validity and reliability.

Variables:

- Independent variable - Hostel Students and Day-scholars
- Dependent variable- Five dimensions of Adjustment.

Hypotheses:

- There is a significant difference in the emotional adjustment of adolescents based on their place of residence.
- Hostel students and day scholars significantly differ in their family adjustment.
- A significant difference exists in the health adjustment of hostel students and day scholars.
- Adolescents show significant differences in occupational adjustment based on their place of residence.
- Hostel students and day scholars significantly differ in their social adjustment.

Statistical treatment:

Initially, the data was subjected to Mean and SD and for inferential purpose, one-way ANOVA was employed.

RESULT ANALYSIS

The first objective of the study was to assess the adjustment levels of hostel students and day scholars across five dimensions. Adjustment was analyzed in five levels ranging from excellent, good, average, poor and unsatisfactory. The frequency and percentage of levels of adjustment of adolescent girls is displayed in table no 1-

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Table no 1: Frequency and Percentage of levels of adjustment

Levels of Adjustment		Emotional		Family		Health		Occupation		Social	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Excellent	Hostel students	0	0%	9	18%	8	16%	29	58%	37	74%
	Day scholars	2	4%	26	52%	14	28%	39	78%	44	88%
Good	Hostellites	15	30%	26	52%	14	28%	19	38%	12	24%
	Day scholars	32	64%	19	38%	18	36%	9	18%	5	10%
Average	Hostellites	29	58%	9	18%	18	36%	2	4%	1	2%
	Day scholars	12	24%	4	8%	15	30%	2	4%	1	2%
Poor	Hostellites	6	12%	2	4%	6	12%	0	0%	0	0%
	Day scholars	4	8%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Unsatisfactory	Hostellites	0	0%	4	8%	4	8%	0	0%	0	0%
	Day scholars	0	0%	0	0%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%

Table no 2: Mean and SD of the five areas of adjustment

Area of Adjustment	Place of Residence	Mean	SD
Emotional	Hostellite	20.7	4.1
	Day scholars	17.84	5.4
Family	Hostellite	14.24	6.6
	Day scholars	9.96	5.3
Health	Hostellite	12.52	5.4
	Day scholars	10.34	4.6
Occupational	Hostellite	11.76	2.7
	Day scholars	8.78	3.9
Social	Hostellite	22.84	4.4
	Day scholars	20.24	6.7

From the above table it is seen that there are differences in the mean values of hostellites and Day scholars with respect to the five measures of adjustments. However, it is not possible to infer confidently whether the two groups differ significantly or not only on the basis of descriptive statistics, hence the data was subjected to one-way analysis of variance. The results are displayed in the following tables.

Table no 3: Summary of one-way ANOVA for the measure of emotional adjustment

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	204.49	1	204.49	8.9**	0.0035	6.98
Within Groups	2247.22	98	22.93082			
Total	2451.71	99				

***Significant at 0.01 level*

From table no.3 it is seen that the factor hostellites vs Day scholars brought about F value **8.9** (for df 1 and 98) which is larger than the table value at 0.01 level. This means the factor of place of residence influenced the emotional adjustment. From the mean values of hostellites and Day scholars it can be stated that Day scholars made significantly better emotional adjustments than girls. It is but natural that when girls stay with their families, they feel more secured and well taken care of. When they face any issue /crises at home/school/ neighbourhood the family members come to their help and guide them. Hence their emotional adjustment is better as compared to the hostellites. The next adjustment

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studied was family adjustment. Family adjustments are adjustments made with the family members, income etc. The results are displayed in table no.4:-

Table no 4: Summary of one-way ANOVA for the measure of family adjustment

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	457.96	1	457.96	12.77**	0.0005	6.98
Within Groups	3513.04	98	35.84735			
Total	3971	99				

***Significant at 0.01 level*

From the above table it is seen that the factor hostellites vs Day scholars brought about (**F=12.77** for df 1&98). This value is significant at 0.01 level. Hence it can be stated that hostellites and Day scholars differed significantly with respect to family adjustments. Day scholars have made significantly better family adjustments than hostellites. When adolescents or young adults leave the comfort of home and go to hostels for further education, they start realizing the value of studying at home. The outside world makes them resilient and tough as well also more understanding and adjusting to their own family members. The third adjustment investigated was health adjustment. Health adjustment refers to both physical and mental health. The results for health adjustments are displayed in table 5.

Table no 5: Summary of one-way ANOVA for the measure of health adjustment

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	118.81	1	118.81	4.71*	0.032	3.93
Within Groups	2469.7	98	25.20102			
Total	2588.51	99				

**Significant at 0.05 level*

The computed value of **F= 4.71** (for df 1&98) is significant at 0.05 level for the factor of hostellites and Day scholars. This means hostellites and Day scholars differed significantly with respect to health adjustments. The mean score of hostellites is (M=12.52 SD= 5.4) is smaller than Day scholars mean score (M=10.34, SD= 4.6). Therefore, it can be stated that hostellites made significantly better health adjustments than Day scholars. Staying in a hostel, the hostilities become more responsible their outlook broadens. They realize that for small issues, their parents cannot be available to them and so they make conscious adjustments especially with respect to their health. The next adjustment analysed was school/occupational adjustment. The results are displayed in table no 6.

Table no 6: Summary of one-way ANOVA for the measure of occupational adjustment

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	222.01	1	222.01	9.74**	0.002	6.98
Within Groups	2233.7	98	22.79286			
Total	2455.71	99				

***Significant at 0.01 level*

The significant **F-value (9.74, df 1,98)** provides strong statistical evidence that day scholars and hostellites differ in occupational adjustment, with day scholars being better adjusted. This result suggests that environmental and lifestyle differences between the two groups

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play a role in their ability to adjust to occupational demands. The fifth dimension of adjustment is social. The results of social adjustment are displayed in table 7-

Table no 7: Summary of one-way ANOVA for the measure of social adjustment

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	169	1	169	5.26*	0.023	3.93
Within Groups	3143.84	98	32.08			
Total	3312.84	99				

*Significant at 0.05 level

Observation of the above table depicts that the factor hostellites vs Day scholars brought about ($F=5.26$ for df 1&98). This value is significant at 0.05 level. Hence it can be stated that Day scholars have made significantly better social adjustments than hostellites. The significant difference in social adjustment between hostellites and day scholars can be explained by factors such as family support, long-term social networks, freedom of social interaction, emotional stability, and conflict resolution skills. Day scholars benefit from a stable and supportive environment, leading to better social adjustment than hostellites, who may struggle with social adaptation due to environmental constraints, homesickness, and limited exposure to diverse social settings.

Adjustment is a lifelong process. The process of individuals adjustment varies from situation to situation. The home adjustment is influenced by child rearing practices, parent's acceptance of the child, type of family; size of family, etc. The emotional adjustments are influenced by child rearing practice and temperamental traits of the individual etc. Results show that hostellites and Day scholars significantly differed in emotional, family, health, social, and occupational adjustment. Day scholars have shown better adjustment than hostellite students. Previous research of Wing and Love (2001) are supporting these findings. Shah (1989) also found that Day scholars had better adjustment than Hostlers. Similar results have been studied by Sujatha, Gaonkar, khadi and Katarki (1993) found significant differences in the adjustment of Day scholars and Hostlers. Gupta (1990) also found that, adolescent girls studying in Day Scholar schools were significantly better in their social adjustment as compared to girls in Hostlers schools. Bronfenbrenner, (2007)) Enochs and Roland (2006) have found that Day scholars had significantly higher overall adjustment levels than hostlers.

CONCLUSIONS

From the statistical interpretation of the data, the following conclusion was drawn: The Day scholars significantly revealed better adjustment with respect to all five dimensions of adjustment viz.- emotional, family, health, occupational and social adjustment.

Suggestions:

1. Impact of self-esteem and LOC on adjustments can be studied.
2. Adjustments amongst students of different faculties can give interesting results.
3. Large sample size can yield interesting results.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations and strategies will help hostellite girls adjust better leading to overall well-being and success.

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- Encourage regular family communication, mentorship programs, and peer bonding activities.
- Promote social interaction by organizing group events and inter-hostel meets to strengthen friendships.
- Support psychological well-being by providing counseling services, stress management workshops, and self-expression activities.
- Develop life and independence skills by offering training in time management, conflict resolution, and personality development.
- Create a supportive hostel environment and ensure approachable hostel staff, balanced rules, and a safe, comfortable living space.

Limitations:

- The study was restricted to a sample of only girls.
- Only one variable – place of residence was studied.
- Sample size was only 100.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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