

A Study of the Educational Adjustment of Students Studying at the Secondary Level

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ABSTRACT

Education is a continuous process of the intellectual, emotional, social, moral, and physical development of an individual, whereas educational adjustment refers to the ability of students to effectively adapt to the school environment, curriculum, teachers, classmates, academic tasks, examinations, and other educational situations. The secondary level is a very important stage for students because during this period, physical, mental, emotional, and social changes associated with adolescence occur rapidly, while educational expectations and examination-related pressure also increase. Therefore, proper educational adjustment is essential for students' learning, participation in school activities, achievement, and overall development. The need for the present study was felt because students differ considerably in their educational background, family circumstances, social and economic conditions, study habits, interests, and individual characteristics. A review of related literature also indicates that educational adjustment may be associated with achievement, achievement motivation, life skills, study habits, cognitive abilities, and various demographic factors. In the present study, 400 secondary-level students from Lucknow District were included as the sample, and the simple random sampling method was used. The study examined the educational adjustment of students on two major bases, namely gender and locality. Overall, the study concluded that gender may be an important basis associated with the educational adjustment of students, whereas no significant difference was found on the basis of locality.

Keywords - Secondary Level School, Students, Educational Adjustment

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INTRODUCTION

The ultimate purpose of education is not limited to the acquisition of knowledge or achievement of good marks; rather, it aims to develop a balanced personality capable of adapting successfully to different situations. In the educational process, adjustment occupies an important position because students constantly interact with teachers, classmates, parents, school authorities and the wider social environment. The

ability of a student to understand these situations, respond appropriately to their demands and maintain a healthy balance between personal needs and environmental expectations is an essential component of successful educational development. Educational adjustment therefore refers to the manner in which students adapt themselves to the academic requirements, school environment, teaching-learning process, relationships, rules and responsibilities associated

with their education. Secondary education represents an important stage in the educational development of an individual. It generally follows elementary or upper-primary education and prepares students for higher education, vocational opportunities and responsible participation in society. At this stage, students experience significant changes in their intellectual abilities, emotional responses, social relationships and personal expectations. They begin to develop greater independence in thinking and decision-making, while simultaneously facing increasing academic responsibilities. The curriculum becomes more extensive and subject-specific, examinations become more significant, and expectations regarding academic achievement often increase. Students are required to manage homework, classroom activities, examinations, co-curricular activities and relationships with peers and teachers. These circumstances make educational adjustment particularly important at the secondary level. The secondary school period is also associated with adolescence, which is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. During this period, students undergo rapid physical, psychological, emotional and social changes. Their interests, attitudes, aspirations and self-concepts may change considerably. They may become more sensitive to criticism, comparison and academic success or failure. Peer relationships become increasingly important, and students may experience pressure to conform to the expectations of their friends and social groups. At the same time, parents and teachers expect them to demonstrate greater responsibility and maturity. The interaction of these factors may create adjustment difficulties for some students. On the other hand, students who experience difficulty in understanding lessons, managing their time or preparing for examinations may develop anxiety, frustration, lack of confidence and negative attitudes towards education. Continuous academic difficulties may affect attendance, classroom participation and overall educational progress. Thus, appropriate educational adjustment is essential for enabling students to respond positively to academic demands. The relationship between students and teachers also has an important influence on educational adjustment. Teachers are not only responsible for imparting subject knowledge but also contribute to the development of students' attitudes, confidence and learning behaviour. Conversely, fear of teachers, excessive criticism, lack of individual attention or an unsupportive classroom atmosphere may create barriers to

adjustment. Therefore, the quality of interaction between teachers and students is an important dimension of educational adjustment at the secondary level. Peer relationships are another significant aspect of students' adjustment. Secondary-level students spend a considerable amount of time with classmates and friends, and peer groups can influence their attitudes, behaviour, motivation and academic engagement. Positive peer relationships may provide emotional support, cooperation, encouragement and opportunities for social learning. However, negative peer pressure, competition, rejection, bullying or conflicts may create stress and interfere with educational adjustment. Students who are unable to establish healthy relationships with their classmates may experience loneliness, insecurity or reluctance to participate in school activities. Hence, social adjustment within the school environment is closely connected with educational adjustment. Family environment also plays an important role in shaping students' educational experiences. Parents provide emotional support, guidance, encouragement and resources that can influence students' attitudes towards education. A positive family environment can help students develop confidence, discipline and motivation to study. In contrast, family conflicts, excessive academic pressure, lack of parental support or unfavourable economic circumstances may create difficulties for students. The expectations of parents regarding academic achievement may sometimes become a source of pressure, particularly when students feel unable to meet those expectations. Therefore, the educational adjustment of secondary-level students is influenced not only by the school environment but also by the conditions in which they live and receive support at home. Individual differences among students also have considerable significance in educational adjustment. Students differ in intelligence, personality, motivation, learning style, interests, emotional maturity, self-confidence and aspirations. Some students may easily adapt to changes in curriculum and school expectations, whereas others may require additional guidance and support. Similarly, differences in gender, locality, type of school, family structure and socio-economic background may be associated with different educational experiences. Understanding these differences is important because a uniform approach to all students may not adequately address their individual needs. Schools therefore need to create flexible and supportive educational environments

that enable students with different abilities and backgrounds to adjust successfully. Educational adjustment is closely associated with academic achievement and overall educational development. Adjustment difficulties, on the other hand, may be reflected in absenteeism, poor concentration, lack of motivation, behavioural problems, examination anxiety, low achievement and withdrawal from school activities. If such difficulties remain unidentified, they may adversely affect students' educational progress and future aspirations. Early identification of adjustment problems can therefore help teachers, parents and educational institutions provide appropriate guidance and intervention. The study of educational adjustment at the secondary level is also important from the perspective of teachers and educational administrators. Knowledge regarding students' adjustment can assist teachers in developing appropriate teaching strategies, classroom practices and guidance programmes. School administrators can use such information to improve the school environment, counselling services, co-curricular opportunities and student-support systems. Parents can also benefit from understanding the factors that influence their children's adjustment and can provide more appropriate emotional and academic support. Thus, research on educational adjustment has practical significance for students, teachers, parents and educational institutions.

Need and Significance of the Study

The secondary level of education is an important stage in the educational development of students because it prepares them for higher education, vocational opportunities and responsible participation in society. At this stage, students experience significant physical, intellectual, emotional and social changes, which directly influence their learning behaviour and adjustment in school. Educational adjustment refers to the ability of students to adapt themselves effectively to the academic demands, school environment, teachers, classmates, curriculum, examinations and other educational situations. When students are unable to adjust properly, they may experience academic stress, lack of concentration, low motivation, examination anxiety, irregular attendance, poor academic performance and difficulties in maintaining healthy relationships with teachers and peers. Therefore, understanding the educational adjustment of secondary-level students has become an important concern for

teachers, parents, school administrators and educational researchers. The present study is needed because students at the secondary level differ considerably in their family background, socio-economic conditions, learning abilities, interests, personality characteristics and educational experiences. These differences may affect the manner in which they respond to school-related demands. In addition, increasing academic competition, examination pressure, changing family structures, technological influences and expectations for future careers may create additional adjustment difficulties among adolescents. A systematic study of educational adjustment can help identify the nature and extent of such difficulties and provide a basis for appropriate educational intervention. The findings may help teachers understand the adjustment-related problems of students and adopt suitable teaching methods, classroom practices and supportive strategies. The study may also assist school administrators in developing a positive, democratic and student-friendly educational environment in which learners can participate confidently and effectively. For parents, the findings may provide useful information about the academic and emotional needs of adolescents and encourage them to provide appropriate guidance and support at home. The study may further help students recognize their own adjustment difficulties and develop better study habits, time management, interpersonal relationships and coping strategies. From the perspective of educational planning, information regarding students' educational adjustment can assist policymakers and educational authorities in designing programmes aimed at reducing academic stress and promoting students' overall development. The study is also significant for researchers because it may provide a basis for further investigation into educational adjustment in relation to variables such as gender, locality, type of family, socio-economic background, academic achievement and school environment. It can contribute to creating conditions in which students are able to adjust effectively to academic demands, develop positive attitudes towards learning and achieve their educational potential. Consequently, the present study is justified by the need to understand the adjustment experiences of secondary-level students and to provide evidence-based suggestions for improving their educational development and successful adjustment within the school environment.

Review of Related Research Literature

- **Bhatt & Chothani (2021):** Studied school adjustment problems among Gujarati- and English-medium students. The study suggested that the **medium of instruction and school environment** may affect students' adjustment.
- **Pathak (2022):** Studied **school adjustment and achievement motivation** among 100 secondary students. A **significant relationship** was found between the two variables.
- **Bala, Kumari & Meenu (2023):** Examined **metacognition and educational adjustment** among 100 secondary students. A **positive relationship** was found, and girls showed better adjustment than boys.
- **Rajput & Bala (2023):** Studied **educational adjustment and academic achievement** among 100 secondary students. Girls showed better adjustment, and educational adjustment had a **positive relationship with achievement**.
- **Ansary (2023):** Investigated **school adjustment and academic achievement** among 1,009
- **umar (2024):** Examined **emotional and educational adjustment** among 100 secondary students with reference to gender. Gender was considered an important factor in students' adjustment.
- **Lovely (2025):** Studied the influence of **demographic factors on educational adjustment**. Parental education and residential conditions emerged as important predictors of students' adjustment.

Statement of the Problem

A Study of the Educational Adjustment of Students Studying at the Secondary Level.

Definition of Variables

- **Educational Adjustment:** In the present study, educational adjustment refers to the level of adjustment of secondary-level students in various educational situations. It will be measured through the scores obtained by the students on the Educational Adjustment self used by the researcher. A higher score will indicate a higher level of educational adjustment, while a lower score will indicate a lower level of educational adjustment.
- **Secondary:** In the present study,

higher secondary students. A significant relationship was found, with variations across educational and social conditions.

- **Lodhi (2024):** Compared school adjustment among 159 government and private school students. A **significant difference** was found between the two school groups.
- **Jyoti & Neha (2024):** Examined **educational adjustment and life skills** among adolescents. A **positive relationship** was found between adjustment and important life skills.
- **Rajkumari & Malik (2024):** Studied **educational adjustment and life skills** among senior secondary students. The study highlighted the role of life skills in helping students manage educational challenges.
- **Singh & Singh (2024):** Studied **school adjustment, study habits and English achievement** among senior secondary students. The findings showed the importance of adjustment and study habits in academic performance.

secondary-level students refer to students studying at the secondary stage of school education. For the purpose of the present investigation, the students selected from the specified secondary schools and included in the sample of the study will constitute the secondary-level students.

Objectives of the Research Study

1. **A Study of the Educational Adjustment of Secondary-Level Students on the Basis of Gender.**
2. **A Study of the Educational Adjustment of Secondary-Level Students on the Basis of Region.**

Hypotheses of the Research Study

1. There is no significant difference in the educational adjustment of secondary-level students on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the educational adjustment of secondary-level students on the basis of locality.

Tools for Data Collection

For measuring Educational Adjustment Related Test: Self-Constructed Questionnaire was used.

Sampling

In the present research study, the population consists of secondary-level students of Lucknow district in Uttar Pradesh. Since it is not practically feasible to study all the students in the population, a representative sample will be

selected from the population for the purpose of the study. In this research, 400 secondary-level students will be included as the sample. The sample has been selected using the simple random sampling method.

Analysis and Interpretation of Hypotheses

Table No. 01 Status of Educational Adjustment among Male and Female Students at the Secondary Level\

Group	N	M	S.D.	df and level of significance	C.R.	(Hypothesis)
Male Student	200	88.42	11.85	$t = 398 (.05)^*$	2.54	Rejection (Significant)
Female Student	200	91.31	10.76			

Analysis of Data: It is evident from the above Table 4.01 that the mean score of educational adjustment of 200 male students at the secondary level was 88.42, with a standard deviation of 11.85, whereas the mean score of 200 female students was 91.31, with a standard deviation of 10.76. The obtained t-value was 2.54. This value is greater than the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance, indicating that a statistically significant difference exists in the educational adjustment of the two groups.

Discussion of the Result: One possible reason

may be that female students tend to follow school rules more consistently, demonstrate greater responsibility and discipline toward their studies, and are better able to establish coordination with teachers and classmates. Family support, regular study practices, and active participation in school activities may also positively influence their educational adjustment. On the other hand, the comparatively lower level of educational adjustment among male students may be attributed to greater competitive tendencies, behavioural variations, or greater involvement in co-curricular activities.

Table No. 4.02 Status of Educational Adjustment among Urban and Rural Students at the Secondary Level

Group	N	M	S.D.	df and level of significance	C.R.	(Hypothesis)
Urban Student	200	90.54	11.24	$t = 398 (.05)^*$		Accepted (Not Significant)
Rural Student	200	89.21	11.35			

Data Analysis: It is evident from the above Table 4.02 that the mean score of educational adjustment of urban students (200) studying at the secondary level is 90.54, with a standard deviation of 11.24, whereas the mean score of rural students (200) is 89.21, with a standard deviation of 11.35. The obtained t-value is 1.18,

which is lower than the value required for significance at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the difference between the two groups was not found to be statistically significant.

Discussion of Results: The findings indicate that, at present, there has been considerable convergence between urban and rural areas in terms of educational opportunities, school facilities, curriculum, and teaching-learning processes compared with the past. The availability of information and communication technology, digital resources, government educational schemes, and a relatively similar educational environment in schools has enabled students in both areas to have comparable educational experiences. As a result, no notable difference was observed in the educational adjustment of students on the basis of residential area. The findings further suggest that educational adjustment depends not merely on

the area of residence but is more strongly influenced by other factors such as students' individual characteristics, family support, school environment, study habits, and motivation.

Main Findings

- **A significant difference was found in the educational adjustment of secondary-level students on the basis of gender.**
- No significant difference was found in the educational adjustment of secondary-level students on the basis of region.

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