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Original Research Article

Impact of Family Dynamics on Home Adjustment among Higher Secondary Students: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract: Home adjustment (HA) is crucial for creating a supportive, comfortable, and thriving environment that positively influences various aspects of an individual's life. This study aims to contribute to the existing literature by exploring how HA is affected by family dynamics among higher secondary (HS) students. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 400 students (237 girls and 163 boys) from the Mathabhanga-II subdivision within the Coochbehar District, West Bengal, India. Data were collected purposively using the 'Bell's Adjustment Inventory (BAI-o),' which was developed by Dr. R.K. Ojha (1971) and translated and adapted into Bengali by Kirtania and Mohakud (2019). The researchers used descriptive statistics, such as Frequency, Mean, and Standard Deviation (SD), to analyze the data and used inferential statistics, such as independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA in SPSS version 20 to test hypotheses. The findings consistently indicate that age, gender, residence, family type, family size, father's education and occupation do not significantly impact, but family income plays crucial roles in the home adjustment ability of HS Students. Therefore, when developing targeted interventions to support adolescents in their home environments, it can be helpful to consider the impact of these factors on HA.

Keywords: Home Adjustment, Adjustment, Higher Secondary, Family Dynamics, Cross-Sectional Study, School Students.

INTRODUCTION

The term 'adjustment' is frequently used interchangeably with accommodation and adaptation, encompassing the continuous process of attaining a balance between individual needs and fulfillment (Kumar & Singh, 2017). This state of balance is established by aligning one's lifestyle with the demands of their circumstances, reconciling requirements with the capacity to meet them. It gives individuals the strength and capability to initiate desired changes in environmental conditions. Moreover, it is defined as an ongoing behavioral process in which individuals alter their conduct to cultivate a more harmonious relationship between themselves and their surroundings (Singh, 2021). This process entails acquiring specific behavioral strategies to cope with and adapt to situations, ultimately attaining harmony within the social milieu (Singh *et al*., 2017). Bhat and Basu (2021) depict adjustment as a process wherein an individual adapts their behavior to establish a balanced relationship with their immediate environment, responding to the social milieu's demands and pressures (Kumar & Singh, 2017). According to Good (1959), adjustment is discovering and adopting behaviors appropriate for the environment or changes in the environment. This environment and home are intimately related, with the home environment impacting many different parts of life. In this context, home adjustment (HA) is crucial for creating a supportive, comfortable, and thriving environment that positively influences various aspects of an individual's life. It refers to the adaptation that an individual establishes within the confines of their home. This type of adjustment has been elucidated as the quality of human interactions, particularly from a child's perspective (Mishra & Sahoo, 2022). It involves tailored behavior in response to various home conditions, including the atmosphere within the home, family financial dynamics, relationships with siblings, parental marital attitudes, and the adolescent's social life (Ghatak, 2018). It reflects an individual's capacity to

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adapt and align their behavior with the specific aspects of their domestic environment.

The literature review for this study is grounded in the diverse and sometimes contradictory findings obtained from various investigations in the field of home adjustment. The research conducted by Ghatak (2018) highlighted notable differences in the home adjustment of male and female adolescents and disparities between those residing in rural and urban areas. In contrast, the study by Muthukumar and Lal Kumar (2015) revealed no statistically significant differences in high school students' home adjustment based on gender, urban or rural living, school type, parental income, or family structure. Furthermore, Mishra and Sahoo (2022) suggested that students with working mothers exhibited superior home adjustment. Prajapati (2021) reported that female high school students demonstrated better home adjustment than their male counterparts. Ngente *et al*. (2020) uncovered 'Unsatisfactory' home adjustment among High School students in Aizawl, and Bhagat (2016) suggested that girls generally outperformed boys in overall adjustment. Conversely, Kumar and Singh (2017) found no significant distinctions between boys and girls in terms of adjustment and self-concept, and Makwana and Kaji (2014) indicated no significant differences in home, school, and emotional adjustment between male and female secondary school students.

The findings of the previous studies could not provide a comprehensive result because these results are inconsistent. The literature review illustrated numerous factors such as gender, residence, socioeconomic status, and more that can impact the HA of higher secondary (HS) school students. The present study aims to contribute to the existing literature by exploring how HA is affected by family dynamics among HS Students. Therefore, the objective is to provide valuable insights through a comprehensive analysis of family dynamics, considering key variables like gender, age, residence, family type, family size, father's education and occupation, and family income. This study aims to determine if there are any significant variations in HA among HS students based on their family dynamics. Based on the objectives above, null hypotheses were formulated for evaluation, which contend that there is no significant difference in the HA of HS students based on their family dynamics, including gender, age, residence, family type, family size, father's education and occupation, and family income.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The target population for this study comprises all higher secondary students in Coochbehar District, West Bengal. Specifically, the participants included students enrolled in Class XI and XII, ranging in age from 14 to 18 years. Applying a cross-sectional survey design, the researchers purposively selected 400 students (237 girls and 163 boys) from the Mathabhanga-II subdivision within the Coochbehar District, West Bengal, India—this purposive selection aimed to explore HA patterns among HS students in the specified geographical region.

Measure

This study employed a personal information sheet and the Bell's Adjustment Inventory (BAIo) of R. K. Ojha (1971) for data collection. The original english version of the BAIo contained four sub-scales, each with 35 items: Home Adjustment, Health Adjustment, Social Adjustment, and Emotional Adjustment. This study only utilized the Home Adjustment (HA) sub-scale, which Mohakud and Kirtania (2019) translated and adapted into Bengali culture through a pilot study on a smaller representative group. The content validity of the tool was ensured through experts' judgment. There were two options for each item: "Yes" or "No," with a score of 1 for "Yes" and 0 for "No." The measure's internal consistency reliability was excellent. A higher score on this scale indicates increased challenges in adjustment, leading to lower levels of home adjustment; conversely, a lower score indicates more favorable home adjustment.

The Procedure of Data Collection

The researchers administered a cross-sectional survey among the participants to measure their home adjustment abilities. At first, the researchers identified the target population and then divided the terete population into subdivisions. After that, the researcher selected one subdivision using the mentioned sampling procedure. The researchers then visited the participants, explaining the purpose of the research and all legal research procedures and asking for voluntary participation. When they agreed, the researchers instructed the procedures clearly and then administered the personal information sheet and the Home Adjustment Sub-Scale. They organized the filled-in instruments for further screening and scoring after the survey and stored the data in an Excel worksheet on the personal computer for final analysis. Finally, the researchers used descriptive statistics, such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation (SD), to analyze the data and used independent sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA in SPSS version 20 to test hypotheses.

RESULTS

According to Tayebi and Polycarpou (2004), a set of data is considered normal if its Skewness (Sk) and Kurtosis (Ku) have values of zero (0) and 0.263. Therefore, social science researchers empirically set a range to consider data normality. In the present study, the distribution of HA scores among the participants is considered normal as the Sk is .451 with a Standard Error (SE) of .122 and the Ku is .097 with a SE of 247 which lies within the range considered by Curran *et al*.

(Sk < 2, Ku < 7) and Kline (Sk < 3, Ku < 10) (Curran *et al*., 1996; Kline, 2005).

Age and Home Adjustment

Table 1 revealed the home adjustment of higher secondary students based on age. Our analysis revealed that students in the 14–15-year age group have more adjustment difficulties, which leads to poorer home adjustment (HA). However, students older than 16 show less difficulty adjusting and have higher HA. The t-test results reveal that the differences are not statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.968, greater than the 0.05 significance level. Consequently, we accept the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant difference in home adjustment ability among higher secondary students based on age.

Table- 1: Age-wise Home Adjustment

Age of student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Mean Difference	Sig. (*p*)	Std. Error Difference	Remarks
14-15 Years	166	12.28	4.514	0.40	398	0.018	0.968	0.452	NS* (*p*>.05 level)
16- Above Years	234	12.26	4.404						

Gender and Home Adjustment

Table 2 shows an analysis of home adjustment among higher secondary students based on gender; it is evident that male students face more significant adjustment difficulties, leading to lower home adjustment (HA) scores than their female counterparts. Conversely, female students in higher secondary exhibit lower adjustment difficulties and higher HA scores. However, the t-test results indicate that these differences are not statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.865, exceeding the 0.05 significance level. Consequently, we accept the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant difference in home adjustment ability between male and female higher secondary students.

Table- 2: Gender-wise Home Adjustment

Gender of student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Mean Difference	Sig. (*p*)	Std. Error Difference	Remarks
Male	163	12.23	4.537	0.169	398	0.077	0.865	0.453	NS* (*p*>.05 level)
Female	237	12.30	4.389						

Residence and Home Adjustment

Table 3 shows the home adjustment of higher secondary students based on residence. Higher secondary students in rural areas need help adjusting, meaning they have the lowest HA. On the other hand, students living in urban areas face the lowest adjustment difficulty, which means the highest HA. However, the t-test result is statistically not significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance (p=0.451>0.05), therefore accepting the null hypothesis. Hence, HA ability is the same among HS students concerning residence.

Table 3: Residence-wise Home Adjustment

Residence of student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Mean Difference	Sig. (*p*)	Std. Error Difference	Remarks
Rural	273	12.4	4.489	0.744	398	0.364	0.451	0.482	NS* (*p*>.05 level)
Urban	127	11.93	4.345						

Family Type and Home Adjustment

Table 4 focused on the home adjustment of the higher secondary students concerning their family type. Our analysis revealed that students belonging to joint families face high adjustment difficulties, meaning they have the lowest HA. Conversely, unitary family students have lower adjustment difficulty and better HA. The t-test shows that the result is statistically not significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance (p=0.688>0.05), therefore accepting the null hypothesis. Hence, there is no significant difference in home adjustment ability among higher secondary students concerning their family type.

Table- 4: Family Type wise Home Adjustment

Family Type of student	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Mean Difference	Sig. (*p*)	Std. Error Difference	Remarks
Unitary	293	12.22	4.408	0.396	398	0.202	0.688	0.503	NS* (*p*>.05 level)
Joint	107	12.42	4.560						

Family Size and Home Adjustment

Table 5 shows the home adjustment of higher secondary students based on family size. Analysis revealed that students in small families with 1–4 family members have low adjustment difficulties, leading to better HA. However, students in large families (family

members of more than 5) show high adjustment difficulty and poor HA. The t-test results reveal that the differences are not statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.968, greater than the 0.05 level of significance (p=0.451>0.05). Consequently, we accept the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant difference in home adjustment ability among higher secondary students based on age.

Table 5. Family Size-wise Home Adjustment

Family Size	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Mean Difference	Sig. (*p*)	Std. Error Difference	Remarks
Small (1-4 Members)	117	12.53	4.342	0.744	398	0.364	0.451	0.482	NS* (*p*>.05 level)
Large (Members 5 Above)	283	12.17	4.489						

Father's Education and Home Adjustment

Table 6 shows an analysis of home adjustment among higher secondary students based on their father's education. The HS students whose father's educational qualification is higher secondary lead to the highest adjustment difficulty, meaning they have the lowest HA, followed by illiterate and higher education. On the other hand, students whose fathers' educational qualification is elementary level or secondary level face the lowest adjustment difficulty, which means the highest HA. Further, the one-way ANOVA result shows that the result is statistically not significant as the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance (p=0.74>0.05). Therefore, there is no significant difference in home adjustment among students concerning their father's education.

Table 6. Father Education wise Home Adjustment

Descriptive Statistics				
Father Education	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error**
Illiterate	56	12.54	5.142	0.687
Elementary Level	197	12.04	4.258	0.303
Secondary Level	87	12.25	4.152	0.445
Higher Secondary Level	35	13.09	5.101	0.862
Higher Education	25	12.44	4.417	0.883
Total	400	12.27	4.444	0.222

ANOVA						
Source of variable	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig. (*p*)**	**Remarks**
Between Groups	38.354	4	9.589	0.483	0.74	NS* (*p*>.05% level)
Within Groups	7842.943	395	19.856			
Total	7881.297	399				

Father Occupation and Home Adjustment

Table 7 shows an analysis of home adjustment among higher secondary students based on the father's occupation. The HS students whose fathers are service holders lead the highest adjustment difficulty, meaning they have the lowest HA, followed by business people. On the other hand, students whose fathers are farmer and have other occupations face the lowest adjustment difficulty, which means the highest HA. Further, the one-way ANOVA result shows that the result is statistically not significant as the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance (p=0.27>0.05). Therefore, there is no significant difference in home adjustment ability among higher secondary students concerning their father's occupation.

Table 7: Father Occupation Wise Home Adjustment

Descriptive Statistics				
Father Occupation	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error**
Farmer	311	12.05	4.250	0.241
Service	27	13.41	5.583	1.075
Business	52	12.98	4.909	0.681
Others	10	12.50	4.275	1.352
Total	400	12.27	4.444	0.222

ANOVA						
Source of variable	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig. (*p*)**	**Remarks**
Between Groups	77.022	3	25.674	1.303	0.27	NS* (*p*>.05% level)
Within Groups	7804.276	396	19.708			
Total	7881.297	399				

Family Income and Home Adjustment

Table 8 analyzes home adjustment among higher secondary students based on family income. The HS students whose family monthly income is up to 3000 INR lead to the highest adjustment difficulty, meaning they have the lowest HA, followed by 9001-Above and 6001-9000 INR. On the other hand, students whose family monthly income is 3001-6000 INR face the lowest adjustment difficulty, which means the highest HA. However, the one-way ANOVA result (table-8B) shows that the result is statistically significant as the p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance ($p=0.000<0.05$). Hence, there is a significant difference in home adjustment ability among higher secondary students concerning their father's monthly income.

Table 8. Family Income Wise Home Adjustment

Descriptive Statistics

Family Income	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
0-3000	94	13.49	4.628	0.477
3001-6000	224	11.67	4.165	0.278
6001-9000	37	12.46	4.227	0.695
9001-Above	45	12.60	5.114	0.762
Total	400	12.27	4.444	0.222

ANOVA

Source of variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (*p*)	Remarks
Between Groups	227.931	3	75.977	3.931	0.000	S* (*p*<.01% level)
Within Groups	7653.367	396	19.327			
Total	7881.298	399				

DISCUSSION

This study's findings demonstrated no significant disparity in home adjustment abilities among students of different age groups. This finding is corroborated by Kirkendall, L. (1937) and Gaur, A. (2013). However, it contradicts the findings of Hatzichristou and Hopf (1996) and Basil, N. (2011). This finding indicated that age may be pivotal in influencing home adjustment. It was also found that there is no statistically significant difference in HA between male and female HS students. This finding aligns with Mahmoudi's (2010) and Makwana and Kaji (2014) results. However, the results of Prajapati, H. (2021) contradicted this finding. This finding contributes to the growing body of literature emphasizing students' equal cognitive and adaptive capacities irrespective of gender. This study also highlighted that the residence of HS students does not play a significant role in determining their HA abilities. This finding is corroborated by Prajapati (2021), Muthukumar *et al.* (2015), and Elliott and Punch (1991). however, it contradicts the findings of Sonber and Dewangan (2020) that urban students are more able to adjust themselves than rural students. The study finding revealed that types of family don't significantly differ in the HA of HS students. This finding is supported by Alnajjar, N. (2017), Muthukumar *et al*. (2015), and Prajapati, H. (2019). However, Mathur, N. (2020) concluded that the adjustment of adolescents living in joint families is higher than those in nuclear families. Families size shared living arrangements may benefit students' social and psychological development (Mohakud, 2017). The analysis also revealed that the HA abilities of HS students are not significantly influenced by the highest educational qualification of their fathers. These findings align with prior research (Çelik & Çırak, 2020; Gaur, 2013). however, it contradicts the findings of Devi *et al*. (2017), who found that the father's educational qualification significantly influences the home adjustment abilities of higher secondary students. The study's findings also revealed that their father's occupation does not significantly influence the HA abilities of HS students. This finding is corroborated by Paramanik *et al*. (2014) and Muthukumar *et al*. (2015). No study was found to contradict this finding. However, Devi *et al.* (2017) found that mothers' occupation significantly influences the home adjustment abilities of higher secondary students. These findings suggest that while a father's occupation and educational attainment are often considered influential in shaping the family environment, these factors may not play a crucial role in determining the home adjustment abilities of higher-secondary students. It challenges conventional assumptions about the direct impact of the Father's occupation and educational background on adolescents' psychological and social adjustment within the home setting. The study's findings also revealed that family income is a significant factor for HA among HS students. Chauhan, S. (2013) corroborates this finding, as do Swami *et al*. (2009). However, it contradicts the findings of Muthukumar *et al*. (2015) and Gaur, A. (2013). This finding suggests that economic stability contributes significantly to creating a supportive and conducive home environment for higher secondary students (Mohakud & Mukhopadhyay, 2015). Adequate financial resources may facilitate access to educational materials, extracurricular activities, and various experiences that positively impact adolescents' emotional and social adjustment.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides insightful information on the factors affecting HS students' home adjustment (HA) abilities. While specific findings support earlier studies, others refute assumptions and advance a more complex view of adolescent development in the family setting. This study systematically examined various socio-demographic factors influencing home adjustment ability among higher secondary students. The findings consistently indicate that age, gender, residence, family type, family size, Father's education, and occupation do not play a crucial role in the home adjustment ability of HS students. However, a noteworthy exception is the significant impact of father's income on the home adjustment of higher secondary students. This insight suggests the importance of economic factors in shaping the overall home environment for students at this educational level. Further exploration and consideration of socioeconomic variables could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing home adjustment in higher secondary students.

Teachers and legislators should be aware of these results. When developing targeted interventions to support adolescents in their home environments, it can be helpful to consider the impact of these factors on HA. Learning about these elements can help educators develop curricula that meet the wide range of demands of their pupils.

Future research should examine how different factors influence how well a person adjusts to their new house, considering the complex interactions between age, gender, family structure, parental occupation and education, and socioeconomic level. Research with a longitudinal design could provide insight into how home adjustment changes during adolescence. Qualitative research may also thoroughly investigate teenagers' subjective experiences and family dynamics, deepening our comprehension of the intricacies involved.

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