

# Family Type and Adjustment Level of Adolescents: A Study

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Family is the most important primary group in society and immediate social environment to which a child is developed and exposed. A child learns to adjust in various fields of life according to the values & virtues provided by his or her family. So a family type affects a child's adjustment level at a large extent and differently in girls and boys. **Aims and Objectives:** to analyze the effect of family type on adjustment level in social, emotional and educational areas of adolescents of school in Ghaziabad. **Materials & methods:** The present cross-sectional study was carried out in schools of Ghaziabad. The sample was made through stratified random sampling method. The sample included 80 boys and 80 girls, aged between 14-18 years, which were further categorized in the group of 40 boys & 40 girls for both Joint and Nuclear Family. A 2x2 factorial design and ANOVA were used for statistical treatment of data. The tool used for the study was AISS-ss constructed by A.K.P. Sinha and R.P. Singh (1971). **Results:** The F-ratio for family type and gender were found statistically significant at  $P < 0.05$ . **Conclusion:** Adolescents of joint family were found more adjusted. The girls were found better adjusted than boys. Counseling programs and better family environment in nuclear family can be helpful for adolescents to increase their adjustment level.

**KEYWORDS:** Adjustment, Adolescents, Family type

## INTRODUCTION

The word "Adjustment" is often used as a synonym of adaptation to the environment. It is a process of altering behavior in harmonious way. The concept of adjustment was firstly given by Darwin.<sup>1</sup> According to him it may be defined as an adaptation to survive in the physical world. It may be classified in well-adjustment and maladjustment. Adjustment process is very complex in adolescence as adolescence is a stage of "storm and stress". All type of changes take place in this period of life and affect the adolescent at a very large extent. Emotional, social and educational all the fields life are changed in adolescence. So it is very necessary to have a very good social, emotional and educational environment to achieve the optimum state of adjustment.<sup>2</sup>

Various factors affect the adjustment mechanism in adolescence including family types, peer group, school environment, diet, and good guidance. Among them a family plays the most important role in the adjustment and adaptation process of a person at every stage of life. A family is the most primary and immediate environment in which a child exposed. It is the basic unit of a society.<sup>2,3</sup> A child learns the strategy of dealing various situations in his life from his family. In present days many types of family have come in existence such as joint family, nuclear family, divorced and single parent. The environment of a family affects a child's life at a large extent. This adjustment process also includes the aspect of gender. In various studies it has been found that both boys and girls have better adjustment levels in

different areas.<sup>2,4</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This cross-sectional research was carried out in school of Ghaziabad. Duration of the study was between the months of February to May 2013. The size of the sample size was based on previous literature. Total 160 subjects were included in the study. Further the sample was divided in four groups of 40 subjects in each. Total 40 boys and 40 girls were included from Joint family and remaining 40 boys and 40 girls from Nuclear family. All the subjects were aged between 14-18 years.

### Inclusion Criteria:

- Individuals in between the age groups of 14-18 years and 80 boys and 80 girls were considered.
- Those students who agreed to give their consent were included in the study.
- Those who belong to joint family and nuclear family.
- Those who study in schools.
- Those who belongs to Ghaziabad District were included in the study.

### Exclusion Criteria:

- Individuals physically handicapped or students with special needs.
- Individuals who disagreed to give their consent
- Individuals below average academic record were excluded from the study.
- Individuals belongs to divorced or single parent family.

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- Individuals below class IX were excluded from the study.

The demographic record of the students were taken before starting the study like the name, age, class, address and family type they belong to. Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS-ss) of A.K.P Sinha and R.P. Singh (revised in 2005) was used to measure the adjustment level of adolescents in social, emotional and educational areas. There were 60 questions related to emotional, social and educational areas of adjustment. The stratified random sampling method was used for sampling. All the students were divided in four groups of 40 students in according to 2x2 factorial designs. The inventories were collected separately for each group. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for statistical analysis of data. The score of F-ratio at  $P < 0.01$  and  $P < 0.05$  were considered statistically significant.

	B1 BOYS	B2 GIRLS
A1 JOINT FAMILY	-----	-----
A2 NUCLEAR FAMILY	-----	-----

Table No. 1: 2x2 Factorial Design of Variables

## RESULTS

Out of 160 individuals who included in the study 40% are from 14-15 years age group, 40% from 16 years age group and 20% were from 17-18 years age group. According to the manual of AISS-ss of Sinha and Singh (2005), high scores show low level of adjustment. In the emotional adjustment area the girls of both joint and nuclear family were found better adjusted than boys of both joint and nuclear family and the girls of joint family were more emotionally adjusted than girls of nuclear family. In the same way the girls were found better adjusted in social area also. In the field of educational adjustment the girls were also better adjusted than boys. The mean scores of total adjustment of boys and girls of both family type shows that the adolescents of joint family were found better adjusted the adolescents of nuclear family. Over all the girls of joint family were found better adjusted than other adolescents. (Table No. 2)

EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT				
	JOINT FAMILY		NUCLEAR FAMILY	
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS
MEAN SCORES	2.65	2.225	4.225	2.975
SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT				
MEAN SCORES	5.8	5.625	5.925	5.55
EDUCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT				
MEAN SCORES	4.675	3.6	5	5.4
TOTAL ADJUSTMENT				
MEAN SCORES	13.125	11.45	15.15	13.925

Table No. 2: Mean Scores Based on Family Type and Gender

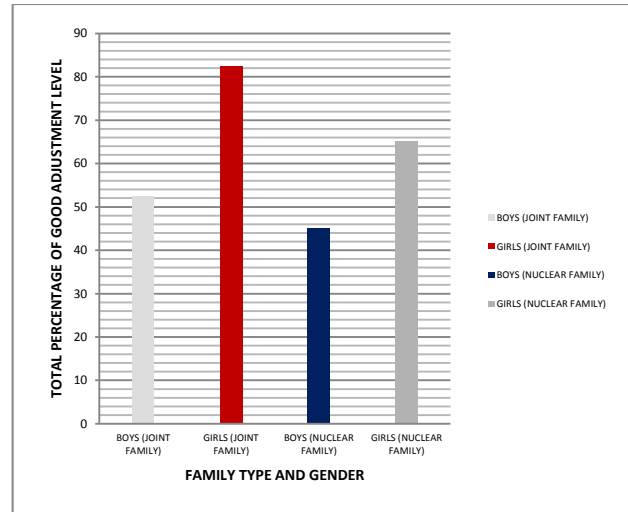


Figure 1: Bar Diagram showing percentage of good adjustment of adolescents

The above Bar Graph (fig.1) is showing the overall adjustment of adolescents at good level according to AISS-ss. Total 52.5% boys of joint family were found having good adjustment level in emotional, social and educational areas, 82.5% girls of joint family have good adjustment level in all areas, 45% boys and 65% girls of nuclear family were found good in all areas of adjustment.

Variables	Emotional	Social	Educational
A (Family Type)	8.23**	5.59*	0.023
B (Gender)	9.09**	1.59	1.14
AxB (interaction effect)	0.54	5.29*	0.01

Table No. 3: F-ratio scores in Emotional, Social & Educational Areas of Adjustment. \*\*  $P < 0.01$ , \*  $P < 0.05$

The above F-ratio scores table (no.3) shows that F-ratio for factor A is 8.23 and found statistically significant at  $P < 0.01$ , which means emotional adjustment is affected by family type. The F-ratio for factor B is 9.09, was also found statistically significant at  $P < 0.01$ , which shows significant effect of gender on emotional adjustment of adolescents. In social adjustment area the F-ratio for factor A is 5.59 and F-ratio for interaction effect of AxB is 5.29 respectively, which were found statistically significant at  $P < 0.05$ . This shows that interaction of family type and gender affects the social adjustment of adolescents. In the educational area no F-ratio was found statistically significant, which means that in this area the family type and gender do not have a significant effect on the educational adjustment of adolescents.

The table (no.4) of ANOVA shows that variable A (family type) has the F-ratio 5.4, that was found significant at 0.05 level of significance. It shows that the family type affects the adjustment level of adolescents and the adolescents of joint family were found better adjusted in emotional, social and educational areas of adjustment. In the summary table of ANOVA, the

variable B (gender) has the F-ratio 5.54, which was also found significant of 0.05 level of significance. That shows the significant effect of gender on adjustment level in adolescence. In the present study, the girls of both family types were found better adjusted in all areas of adjustment than the boys of both family types. Interaction effect of A and B was found insignificant.

Source of variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F-ratio
A (Family)	135.0625	1	135.0625	5.4*
B (Gender)	138.7625	1	138.7625	5.54*
AB	15	1	15	0.6
Within treatment	3904.375	156	25.029	
TOTAL	4193.2	159		

Table No. 4: Summary Table of ANOVA of Total Adjustment.  
\*denotes  $P < 0.05$  (significant at 0.05 level of significance)

## DISCUSSION

Adolescents depend on their families, their communities, schools, health services and their workplace to learn a wide range of important skills, which can help them to cope with the pressures; they face and make the transition from childhood to adulthood successfully. Parents, members of community, service providers and social institutions have the responsibility to promote adolescents' development and adjustment. They intervene effectively, when problems arise. In this transitional period the gender role also affects the adjustment mechanism of adolescents. The aim of the present study was to find out the effect of family type on the adjustment level of adolescents.<sup>3,4</sup> The results of the present study also support the facts that there is a significant correlation between the family type and adjustment of adolescents in emotional, social. This study also reveals the association between the gender and adjustment. Joint family's adolescents have better emotional adjustment than the adolescents of nuclear family.<sup>1</sup>

The above findings are supported by researches done by various psychologists and researchers. The findings of the researches done by Dudley<sup>5</sup> and Buchanan et al.<sup>6</sup> revealed that adolescents who spend time with their grandparents, are generally emotionally and socially better and have fewer behavioural problems.

Dhyani et al.<sup>7</sup> and Deepshikha et al.<sup>8</sup> found in their study that educational adjustment components from biological nuclear families were found non-significant and girls were found significantly more socially, emotionally and compositely adjusted than their counterparts. Jewell et al.<sup>9</sup> have also find out relation between family environment and adolescents' psychological adjustment. The results revealed that there is significant effect of family environment on the psychological adjustment of adolescents. Wissink et al.<sup>10</sup> study's findings revealed that a conflicting family environment is associated with adolescents' insecurity and psychological distress, as well

as aggressive behavior and conduct disorders, which affect their adjustment in different areas of life.

The above studies support the findings of the present study. The impact of family environment, structure and role of grandparents help in the psychological development of adolescents in an adaptive and balanced environment, which are learned by them, but in a nuclear family, there is a limited number of family members, i.e. parents and brothers & sister, who have found less capable to develop the adjustment skills in them in the comparison of the adolescents of joint family. On the other hand the gender plays a prominent role in the difference of adjustment level between boys and girls. There are a lot of physical and mental changes and development take place in the adolescence, but the girls gain maturity more rapidly than boys. Girls are flexible in nature and always taught by the family and society to be adjustable in the society and other areas of life. So they have potential to deal with the circumstances in the much better form than boys. Some non-significant differences have been found in educational areas. But all the percentage tables show that girls are better adjusted in life than boys or male adolescents.

## CONCLUSION

The present study report shows the significant effect of family type and gender on the adjustment level of adolescents in emotional, social and educational areas. The girls have reported better adjustment skills than boys. The role of grandparents also helps to development adjustment skills with their proper guidance to adolescents. Proper guidance and counseling to the adolescents of nuclear family should be given. Need and attention should be paid towards the increasing role of joint family as the grandparents act as pillars in problematic situations and provide better guidance to adolescents. The boys should also develop their adjustment skills for better adaptation in this world. Further studies are required in this field to understand more aspects of adjustment.

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