

ACADEMIC ANXIETY AND ADJUSTMENT : A STUDY ON ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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ABSTRACT

The Present Investigation was aimed to study “Academic Anxiety and Adjustment: A Study on Adolescent Girls.” Sample of 100 adolescent girls was taken from Jaipur, Rajasthan. 50 adolescent girls belonging to working mothers & 50 adolescent girls belonging to non working mothers with age range of 15-18 years were selected for this research. Academic Anxiety scale by S.K. Pal, K.S. Mishra, K. Pandey (1985) and Adjustment scale by the Reynolds (Adolescent Adjustment Inventory, RAASI) were used to collect data. Mean, SD, t-test and correlation were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that children of working mothers have more academic anxiety than children of non-working mothers ($P < 0.01$). Significant difference found between both the groups on adjustment ($p < 0.01$). Further, Negative Correlation found between Academic Anxiety & Adjustment among the sample ($P < 0.01$).

Key Words : Adolescence, Employment of Mother, Academic Anxiety, Adjustment

Adolescence is a transition stage generally occurring between puberty and legal adulthood, but largely characterized as beginning and ending with the teenage stage. All transitions have their movement of difficulty and their participation crisis, but no period is too complicated and confusing as adolescence.

Adolescence may be defined as the period within the life span when most of a person's biological, cognitive, psychological, and social characteristics are changing from what is typically considered child-like to what is considered adult-like (**Lerner and Spanier, 1980**). For the adolescents, this period is a dramatic challenge, one requiring adjustment to changes in the self, in the family, and in the peer group.

A second peak period of parent-child conflict occurs during adolescence, when 15-20% of families report severe levels of parent-child conflict (**Rubenstein and Feldman, 1993**) and the quality of

problem-solving interaction declines (**Vuchinich, Angelelli and Gatherum, 1996**). Puberty appears to be the peak time of parent-child conflict and mothers and children are the most likely to see increased animosity (**Steinberg, 1987**).

Certain specific behaviour patterns and high levels of aggression exhibited in preschool and kindergarten are not just correlated, but are highly predictive, of violent, delinquent and criminal behaviours in middle school, later adolescence and adulthood. According to **Kumpfer (1982)**, there is evidence that family with poor parenting skills have disproportionately high risk of having children who use alcohol and other drugs. Student life coincides with adolescence, and stress can manifested in children as reactions to the changes in life in addition to academic pressure & adjustment problems.

In Indian settings, many factors like Social, Emotional, Personal, Family atmosphere, Parental attitude, Impact of Peer group, Mother's involvement and especially working status of mother affecting adjustment, behaviour and attitude of a child. Adolescence is a stage where advantages as well disadvantages associated which requires proper parental attention and support. Stress among adolescents can be disadvantageous and have involuntary side effects such as poor academic performance, and other physical and mental consequences, Therefore, role of mother can't be ignored.

Vinita (2018) stated the adolescents of working and non-working mothers are not differing in academic stress. It means both have equal academic stress & concluded as the adolescents of working and non-working mothers experience equal academic stress as a whole.

Women have primary responsibility for the health of infants and small children and this is considered to be the women's work. They rarely have a choice of which they marry, how many children they have, and whether they work. This patriarchal structure greatly limits the possibilities for women to be Active outside the home. Two indicators of low family status India are limited participation of women in economic activities outside the home and a high percentage of illiterate women (**Sathar et al., 1988**).

But Employment of Women is now common in our Indian Society. It is because of rapid Social Change as never before. Education played a major role in this social change. Now women are getting not only academic degrees but also using their knowledge and skills in earning money for their own identity & status. This helps in developing their self esteem and self reliance. But on the other side when woman enters in married life ,life become a complete package of twenty four by seven hours responsibilities with so many unwritten rules and regulations. They become pendulum which moves only between domestic responsibilities and official responsibilities At a certain stage they lack in giving proper attention to their children, this happens more in nuclear families. Children of working women sometimes deprived from proper care physically as well mentally.

Some researches seems to incline that the working mother is having detrimental effects on the child, however new research is showing no such result. Working mothers found extremely difficult to juggle their jobs and their home life. They often felt overwhelmed and impatient with those around them, especially their children(**Babita Choudhary,2018**).

As maternal employment becomes increasingly common, it is less likely that differences between children of mothers who work at home and those who work elsewhere detected in research (**Orthner, 1990**). **Sprinthall et al (1995a)**, further discussed Orthner's finding that, when most children have experienced a set of circumstances, the advantage and disadvantage will be more common throughout the society, and even with non employed mothers may be affected by the behavioural and attitudinal trends of families of the two-career majority.

A potentially positive effect implied by some research on the impact of maternal employment is that both sons and daughters of working mothers have less stereotyped views of masculine and feminine gender roles. Perhaps seeing both their fathers and mothers fill both earner and caregiver roles encourage more flexible vies of appropriate roles for males and females (**Hoffman, 1984**).

Academic Anxiety can be a significant problem affecting adolescents physiological responses such as a rapid heartbeat, elevated blood pressure and shallow breathing. The body prepares itself to deal with stress by reacting in predictable ways. Behavioural patterns may affect their performance as well as thought so they cannot focus on the task at hand. Student life coincides with adolescence,

and stress can manifested in children as reactions to the changes in life in addition to Academic pressures, Children become More self-aware and self- conscious, and their thinking becomes more critical and complex. At the same time, children often lack in academic motivation and performance, as their attention is divided among a lot many things, especially creating an identity for them.

Academic anxiety in students leads to low academic progress. Home & School both affects the development & behaviour of child. According to **Choudhary (2018)** there is significant difference in children of working and non-working mothers regarding conflict and total academic stress. Children of working mothers are found to have more academic stress. A mother understands the needs of her child in the best way. Because if mother will not give adequate time and attention to their children, they can become maladjusted insecure and will not be able to adjust with their environment and their studies, which will affect their studies negatively. Adolescents with working mothers were found to be more anxious ($p < 0.01$). Results also show that a substantial proportion of the adolescents perceived they did not receive quality time from fathers (32.1%) and mothers (21.3%). A large number of them also did not feel comfortable to share their personal issues with their parents (60.0% for fathers and 40.0% for mothers).

Adjustment is the behavioural process by which humans and other animals maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and obstacles of their environment. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied.

English & English (1958) defines adjustment as a condition of harmonious relation to the environment where in one is able to obtain satisfaction for most of well the demands of physical and social nature. So the adjustment is the ability of humans to survive in stressful environment by non genetic means. And also a change in something that makes it better, more accurate, or more effective.

Adjustment is a built — in mechanism for coping with the problematic or other realities of life. Adjustment has been considered as an index to integration; a harmonious behaviour of the individual by which other individual of society recognise person is well adjusted (**Pathak, 1990**).

Most of the problems centring adolescents are physically appearance, health and physical development, marks scored, relationship with members of their families, their teacher, and peer of both sexes and home adjustment. This maladjustment may lead to absenteeism, truancy, low achievement and other unworthy habits of children (**Subramanyam, 1986**).

The impact of gender and working parents on adjustment was studied by **Sonawat and Jain (1994)**. The results revealed that no difference among the gender in adjustment, whereas the working condition of the parents had a greater impact. Adolescents with both parents working faced more problems than adolescents with mother working part time or house wife.

The students of housewives showed higher social adjustment than the students of working mothers. The Achievement motivation of the students of working mothers was greater than that of the students of housewives. (**Zabol Mahdieh Azh Asarani & Seyed Reza Balaghat, 2015**).

According to **Sinha and Singh (1984)**, girls of non employed mother adjusted significantly well than that of employed mother and no difference was found among the boys of employed and non employed mothers.

According to a study by **Mythili et al. (2004)**, adolescents of educated parents were better adjusted while occupation of mother had negative impact.

Adolescence is the period in human development during which several dramatic changes at biological, social, psychological and cognitive levels take place. school children of non working mothers' (11.7%) had slightly more psychosocial problems than working mothers' (8.3%). Male respondents of non working mothers experienced more psychosocial problems (29.4 %) than female (4.7%). Prevalence of psychosocial problems was found among school children of both working and non working mothers but there is no association between the psychosocial problems and employment status of mothers. Thus maternal employment status is not the exclusive reason behind the development of psychosocial problems among school children. (**P Koirala, R Subba1 & M Lopchan, 2016**).

Purpose of the Study- The present study was aimed to see the relationship between Academic Anxiety & Adjustment in Adolescent Girls belonging to Working and Non Working Mothers as it was presumed that working status of mother can affect on her child's emotions and academics both.

Definition of Terms-

Working Mothers : Mothers having Children works outside the home.

Nonworking Mothers: Mothers having children stay at home not in job..

Academic Anxiety: negative emotional state related to Academic performance shown by teen age children in absence of Mothers for a specific time on daily.

Adjustment- Problem in coping with environment shown by teen age children in absence of Mothers for a specific time on daily.

Methodology- The methodology or the research design forms the core of all the research studies. The present study was conducted in Jaipur City of Rajasthan state within municipal limits to ensure optimum personal contacts for data collection.

Objectives-

- To find out the level of Academic Anxiety & Adjustment among adolescent girls.
- To see difference between both the groups (adolescent girls of working & non working mothers) regarding Academic Anxiety & Adjustment.
- To see the interrelationship between both the variables under study i.e. Academic Anxiety and Adjustment.

Selection of sample - Sample of 100 adolescent girls was taken from Jaipur, Rajasthan. 50 adolescent girls belonging to working mothers & 50 adolescent girls belonging to non working mothers. Adolescent girls with age range of 15-18 years were selected for this research. Performance regarding their address & general information were field and tools were administered, also assured them that their data will be kept confidential and will be used only for research purpose.

Description of the tools- Standardized tools were used to collect the data as mentioned earlier. The variables selected for the study were (a) Academic Anxiety (b) Adjustment

Academic Anxiety — The Academic Anxiety Scale by **S.K. Pal, K.S. Mishra, Kalplata Pandey (1985)** was used which was designed to measure fear of failure as perceived by the students due to perceived inability to perform better in an academic front.

Academic Anxiety Scale contains 35 items. The instruments require pupils to tell their agreement about a particular behaviour as perceived by him/her or not. There is no time limit for this tool. This scale can be administered in individual or group setting. While starting, Students were acknowledged with the nature and purpose of the measurement of academic anxiety. They were told to put ☒ on any yes or no response whichever expressed their perception about the particular behaviour.

Reliability -The reliability of the test scale was established by test-retest method. Product moment correlation was applied for finding out the reliability. The value of correlation was 0.66.

Validity - The concurrent or criteria related validity could not find out due to unavailability of any parallel form of the test. Only face validity could be found out by validation of the contents of ten experts.

Scoring — The response are to be given in the booklet itself. Against each item of the scale, two alternatives are given in the form of agreeable and disagreeable response 1 mark was given to yes response and 0 to no response.

Response Alternatives	Scores
YES	1
NO	0

Adjustment scale — The **Reynolds Adolescence Adjustment Screening Inventing (RAASI)** consists 32 items, brief screening measure of adjustment for use with adolescents age 12-19 years. It

provides adjustment total score and scores on four factorially derived scales including Antisocial behaviour (AB), Anger control problem (ACP), Emotional Distress (ED), and positive self (PS). Subject are required to endorse response that best describe how they have been feeling in the past 6 months, on a 3 point Scale, ranging from never or almost never to nearly all the time. It include six reverse scored items worded in positive manner, so that reversing the score represents grater mal adjustment and to allow validity through items endorsement pattern. Number of items on anti social behaviour and anger control problems consists of 8 items. Thus half of items constitute RAASI adjustment total score are included on scale of internalizing problems and half represents problem that are externalizing in their symptoms expression. Items of positive self are worded in positive; these items are reversed worded in positive; these items are reversed scored, so that high score on this scale or indicative of low sense of self esteem and limited social involvement.

RAASI is reported to have adequate psychometric properties. It has high internal weeks test retest reliability (.89) for total development sample. High internal consistency reliability co-efficient were found for RAASI scale ranging from (.71-.88) and test retest ranging from (.83-.86). strong evidence are reported to support the content validity of RAASI adjustment total scores as 9 measure of psychological adjustment in adolescents; scale also appear to adequately sample their respective domains of psychological adjustment. RAASI is reported to have strong evidence of having criterion related validity, construct validity, convergent validity and discriminate validity in clinical sample, only minimum relationship found between RAASI scales and social desirability supporting discriminate validity of scales.

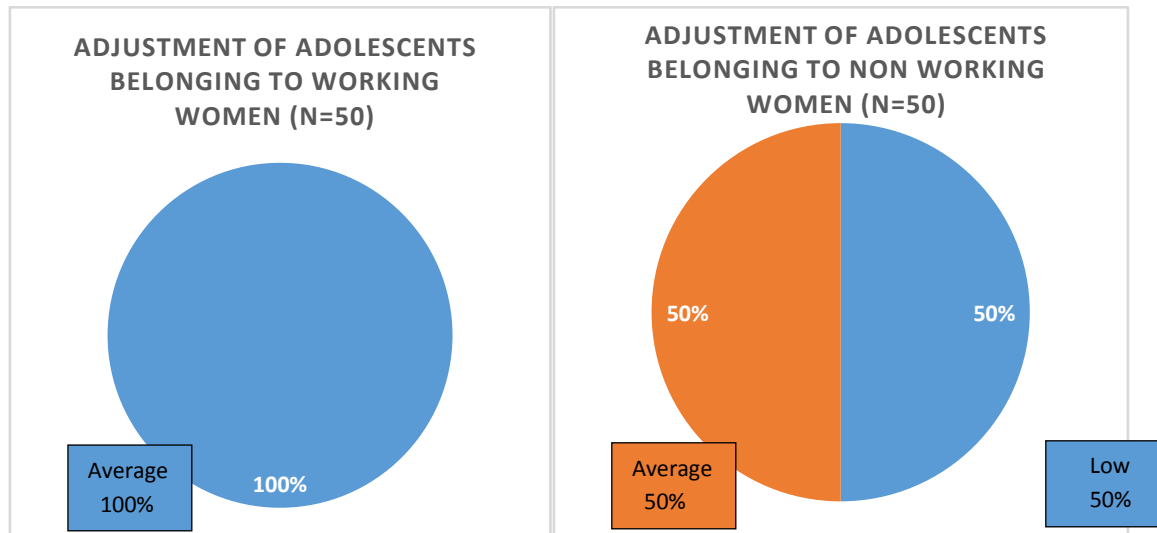
Data Analysis- Data was analysed by using appropriate statistical techniques. Mean,Percentage Score t- test, Correlation were used.

Results & Discussion- The data obtained in the course of study on the basis of statistical analysis, yielded raw scores on the two variables i.e. Academic Anxiety & Adjustment in adolescents of working and non working mothers.

AWM- Adolescent girls belonging to Working Mothers

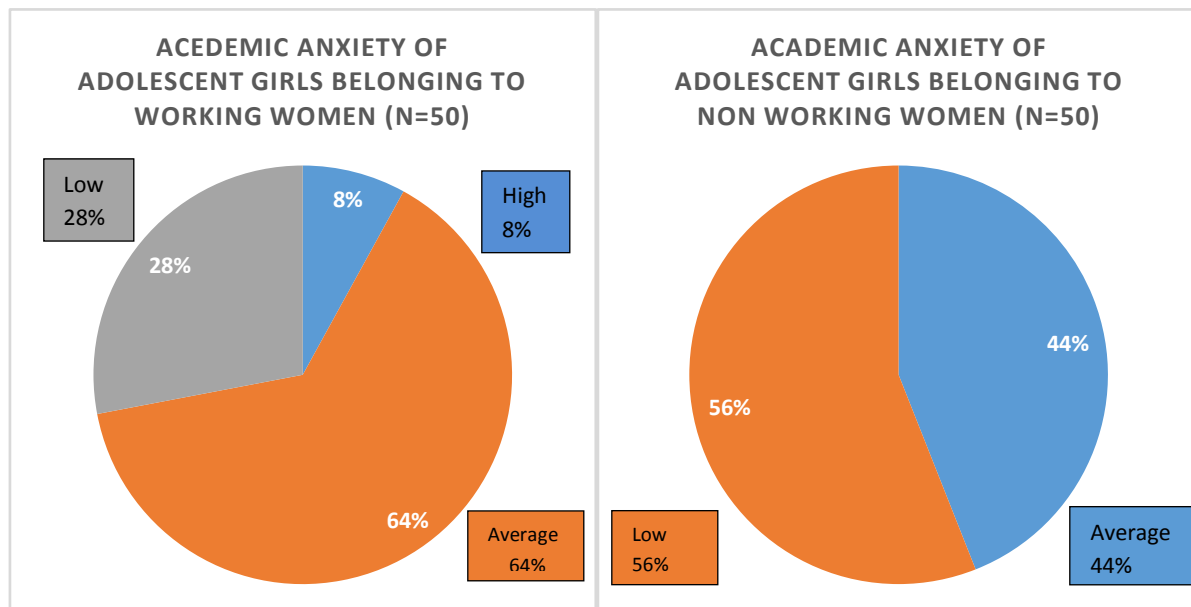
ANWM- Adolescent girls belonging to Non Working Mothers

1. Percentage Score- Graph 1 indicates Average or Moderate level of Adjustment in Adolescents belonging to Working Mothers ,Whereas in case of Non Working Mothers 50% of the sample falls in Average level of Adjustment and 50% of the sample falls in Low level of Adjustment.



(Graph 1- Level of Adjustment in percentage)

Graph 2 indicates 28% of the sample falls in low level of Academic Anxiety, 8% in High level and 64% in average level of Academic Anxiety in case of Adolescent girls belonging to Working Mothers ,Whereas in case of Non Working Mothers 44% of the sample falls in Average level of Academic Anxiety and 56% of the sample falls in Low level of Academic Anxiety.



(Graph 2- Level of Academic Anxiety in percentage)

2. T-test - Table 01 shows mean score of Academic Anxiety of adolescent girls belonging to working mothers (15.82) and mean score of adolescent girls belonging to non-working mothers (9.30), which is significant. ($p < 0.01$). This suggests that teen agers of working mothers have more academic anxiety than teen agers of non working mothers.

Women has been an equal partner of men besides her biological and social roles right through history. In modern times due to socio cultural change, industrialization, ' expansion of education, high cost of living etc. Middle class women is included and compelled to engage in work for better livelihood. Undoubtedly, it resulted into economic independence and developed self esteem, but her traditional roles are deeply influenced. Confronting with –constraints of time, a working mother has comparatively lesser time for child care as compared to non- working mother.

Adolescents stage of child in which many psychological and physiological changes occur needs intensive care and guidance from the part of parents, especially the mothers. In spite of the fact that each member of the family contributes significantly in development process of the child, the role of mother is of paramount importance. Maternal employment put psychological effect on mothers who find it difficult to engage supportive interaction with children (Mc Loyd 1989).

Table - 1

Mean, S.D. and level of significance for Academic Anxiety of Adolescent Girls of Working (n=50) and Non- Working Mothers (n=50).

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	Level of significance
Academic anxiety	AWW	50	15.82	7.50	0.01**
	ANWW	50	9.30	4.07	

**** (p>.001)**

Adolescents of mothers who enjoy their work and remains committed to parenting show very favourable adjustment, a higher sense of self- esteem, most positive family and peer relations, less gender- stereotyped beliefs and better grades in school. Girls especially profit from the image of female competence. African American adolescents girls whose mothers worked during the daughters early years are more likely to stay in school (**Welfare & Moen, 1996**).

Table2 shows mean score of overall adjustment of adolescent girls belonging to working mothers is 55.66, whereas mean score of adolescent girls belonging to non- working women is 72.62, which shows difference between both the groups is significant. (p<0.01). Children of working & non- working mothers differ significantly on all dimensions of adjustment .i.e. Antisocial. behaviour, Anger control problem, Emotional distress, Positive self.

Table 2 shows significant difference on antisocial behaviour (15.44 Vs. 17.80), anger control problem (14.58 Vs. 18.44), emotional distress (12.84 Vs. 17.96) and positive self (12.80 vs. 18.42) dimensions of adjustment of teen age girls of working and non-working mothers. Mean scores are higher in adolescent girls of non-working mothers than their counter parts.

Table- 2

Mean, S.D. and t-values for adjustment and its dimensions with Adolescent Girls of Working Mothers (n=50) and Non Working Mothers (n=50).

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	Level of significance
Anti social behaviour	AWM	50	15.44	2.04	0.01*
	ANWM	50	17.80	2.82	
Anger control problem	AWM	50	14.58	1.66	0.01*
	ANWM	50	18.44	2.27	
Emotional distress	AWM	50	12.84	1.63	0.01*
	ANWM	50	17.96	2.27	
Positive self	AWM	50	12.80	1.56	0.01*
	ANWM	50	18.42	2.55	
Total	AWM	50	55.66	3.46	0.01*
	ANWM	50	72.62	6.45	

Syed Ambreen (2017) found that children of working and non-working mothers differ significantly so far as their adjustment is concerned. It has also been found that children of nonworking mothers possess better social, emotional and home adjustment than children of working mothers. It has also been found that children of working mothers have better financial adjustment than children of non-

working mothers. The study further revealed that there is a significant difference between children of working and non-working mothers on composite score of adjustment.

With the current socio economic changes & with more women attaining education the number of working women is going to increase rapidly. Most of the working women are of child bearing age and have both preschool and school aged children. While women have to work, it is becoming rather difficult for them to get good substitutes for child bearing. Poor child rearing has been associated with poor child development. The children of working women are either left in creches or in care of nurses and maids, yet they cannot replace the love and care of a mother. The guidance which a mother can provide to her growing children cannot be substituted by anything else. Therefore adolescents of working women have more anger control problem, anti social behaviour, Emotional distress and positive self.

3. Correlation- Table 3 revealed negative correlation between Academic Anxiety and Adjustment of Adolescent (n=100). This indicates within increase of Adjustment there will be decrease in academic anxiety. Therefore, Adolescent Girls with high Adjustment will have low Academic Anxiety.

Table -3

Co relational matrix of the variables under study for Adolescent Girls belonging to both Working and Non-Working Mothers (n=100)

Variables	Adjustment	Academic Anxiety
Adjustment	1.00	
Academic Anxiety	0.01**	1.00

(**P<0.01)

Significant relationship found between Academic Anxiety and Mental Health of Adolescent Boys and Girls of secondary schools at 0.01 and 0.05 levels of significance and they are negatively correlated (Munni Kumari ,2018).

Conclusion- Presence of mother is very important for children in sensitive age like teen age. But it does not mean that females should not enter in work force. In our Indian society men are privileged in terms of domestic responsibilities. Therefore, working status of females has been a favourite topic of debate whether a mother should remain at home or she could move towards job. It's a cause of increasing stress and inner conflicts in women those wanted to use their knowledge and skills to get economic stability as well self satisfaction. In this era of social change equal distribution of domestic work and responsibilities will come with positive results. This will help men and women both to spare more time and balancing domestic & office front. Spending quality time with teen age children will not only minimize gap but also strengthen the bonding between parents and their teen age children and will help to control over negative emotions & behaviour.

SUGGESTIONS- The Present study can be replicated on a large sample. Academic Anxiety and Adjustment could have been tested with other factors like sex (male vs female), type of family (Joint vs Nuclear) and socio economic status (High/Middle/Low income group). Counselling session could have been arranged for children scored high on Academic Anxiety and low on Adjustment. Case study could have been done for in-depth study.

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