PERSONALITY OF ADOLESCENTS
IN RELATION TO THEIR ADJUSTMENT
AND DECISION - MAKING

SYNOPSIS

- Introduction and Conceptual Background

Human life has two aspects, biological and sociological. The biological aspects of human life is maintained and transmitted by nutrition and reproduction. The social aspect of human life is maintained and transmitted by education. Education contributes significantly to national development. Education is necessary for the survival of the society and therefore must also cater to the complete development of man and to make him a well adjusted person in the world. Education aims at the harmonious development of an individual.

Education contributes significantly to national development. Education is necessary for the survival of the society and therefore must also cater to the complete development of a man and to make him a very well adjusted person in the world. Education should aim at harmonious development of an individual. A harmonious balance should be kept between feeling, knowing and doing.

As proposed by the Gandhi ji, “Education is an all round drawing out the best in the child and man - body, mind and spirit”. Gandhi also upheld the value of physical labor and gave it the central place in his scheme of education. To Gandhiji, work was the central principle of life and of education. He held that useful manual labor, intelligently performed, is the means par excellence for developing the intellect. Knowledge is not a special activity divorced from the total life process. It is not just whatever can be clothed in verbal language. Knowledge and experiences are inextricably woven together. Experience should always precede and not follow verbal knowledge. All round development is possible only
when it proceeds simultaneously with the education of the physical, mental and spiritual faculties of the child.

**Jiddu Krishnamurti** states that education is to have a holistic outlook, free from all prejudice. Man is part of nature, and if nature is not cared for, it would boomerang on man. He said that only right education and deep affection between people is needed everywhere to resolve many human problems. It should be practiced as a way of life and not as a mere philosophical endeavor.

✧ **Conceptual Background of the Study**

**Personality**

The broader aim of education is preparing the learners for harmonious living. There are a number of factors like Physique, Physical attractiveness Family Relationships: Parental Dominance, Heredity Culture Home Factors, School factors, Social factors that have been found important in the personality development and the personality of adolescent learners. Some of these are important in childhood and continue to be important in adolescence. Others that were relatively unimportant in childhood become more important in adolescence, while still others that were important in childhood are of less importance in adolescence.

**Adjustment**

Adjustment is a very important factor, for better academic achievement and for effective educational procedure. Secondary school students are in a stage of adolescence, a very crucial period.

A number of physical and psychological changes occur in all dimensions of development. All the aspects of the growth and development, physical, intellectual, emotional, social, moral etc., are closely linked. The process of adjustment starts from the birth of the child and continues till his death. The
concept of adjustment is as old as human race on earth. Thus it is considered that proper adjustment is very essential for normal behavior of adolescent.

**Decision Making**

Adolescence is the period of maximum growth with regard to cognitive mental functioning. Intellectual powers like long term memory, logical thinking, abstract reasoning, problem solving and decision making abilities are developed.

The cognitive development takes a fast pace during the adolescence. Teenagers accumulate general knowledge and start applying the learned concepts to new tasks. Interest in learning life skills, such as cooking, fixing things, driving and so on, from adults at home and elsewhere, is also seen during these years. In terms of school, there is a great transition for the budding adult. From being the top-notch position in the junior school, kids become the youngest, smallest and least powerful in middle or high school. A sense of ego and personal uniqueness also creep in the youngsters, who start thinking independently. Every person is called upon to make decisions throughout the course of his/her everyday life. Some of these decisions are truly significant; they have far reaching influences on one’s own, as well as on others. At times many decisions are trivial; their effects are unimportant even at the moment they are made. Decisions thus come in many forms and sizes.

Hence the researcher felt that a study on personality, adjustment, decision making of adolescents with regard to certain selected variables would go a long way in answering some of the questions raised.

❖ **Need for the study**

The study is undertaken because of the universal importance given to adolescents. School and society in this period play a vital role in shaping and moulding the personality of the adolescents. Adjustment is a very important factor
for better academic achievement and for effective educational pursuit. The psychological misery that stems from inadequate adjustment is reason enough to study the problem in the hope that adjustment failures can be understood and prevented or successfully treated when they do occur.

The cumulative effect of millions of decisions determines the outcome of people’s lives. Decision-making is a critical component of not only personal life but also academic life in many professions.

In pursuance of the commitments and recommendations of various international organizations and committees, the year 2003 has been declared as the year of ONE BILLION ADOLESCENTS in India, indicating the importance of adolescents in the development of the nation. The document has made several recommendations of which specialized studies to understand the nature of changes in the growth and development of the personality is one. This helps to ensure the well being of adolescents as recommended by UN agencies. As on March 2001, 22.8% of the population of India constitutes adolescents. Any study on the major chunk of the population helps in the overall planning for the development of the country.

Hence, there is dire need for teachers, parents to focus attention on the personality, adjustment and decision making of the adolescents.

✧ **Scope of the Study**

The present study is confined to the personality, adjustment level and decision making of adolescents. The researcher has taken IX class students as sample for the investigation. The study is limited to the selected variable such as gender, locality, medium, type of school, economic background, no. of children in the family, home environment and Academic achievement.

✧ **Review of Related Literature**
In the present study, the review of related literature was presented in three sections.

1. Studies on Personality

2. Studies on Adjustment

3. Studies on Decision Making


❖ **Title of the Study**

“**Personality of Adolescents in Relation to their Adjustment and Decision Making**”.

**Operational Definitions of the Key Terms**

The operational definitions of the key terms used in the present study are :

**Personality** : Personality is the particular combination of cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral response patterns of an individual reflecting in the following dimensions - Competition, Creativity, enthusiasm, innovation, leadership, maturity, mental health, morality, self control, sensitivity, self sufficiency, and social warmth.

**Adolescent** : For the purpose of this study a student, boy or girl studying class IX in any recognized or private school is considered an adolescent.

**Adjustment** : The harmonious relationship between the individual and his or her human environment is taken as “Adjustment”.
**Decision Making** : The process of selecting one course of action from among the alternatives available is taken as decision making ability of adolescents.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the level of personality of adolescents and classify it.
2. To find out the personality of adolescents in different dimensions.
   a) Competition  
   b) Enthusiasm  
   c) Innovation  
   d) Leadership  
   e) Maturity  
   f) Mental Health  
   g) Morality  
   h) Self-Control  
   i) Sensitivity  
   j) Self-sufficiency  
   k) Social Warmth  
   l) Validity  
3. To find out the influence of the following variables on the personality of adolescents.
   a) Gender  
   b) Locality  
   c) Medium of Instruction  
   d) Type of School  
   e) Nature of Home Environment  
   f) Order of Birth  
   g) Economic Background.
4. To find out the level of adjustment of the adolescents and classify it.
5. To find out the influence of the following variables on the adjustment of the adolescents.
   a) Gender  
   b) Locality  
   c) Medium of Instruction  
   d) Type of School  
   e) Nature of Home Environment  
   f) Order of Birth  
   g) Economic Background.
6. To find out the level of the decision making of adolescents and classify it.
7. To find out the influence of the following variables on the decision making of adolescents.
   a) Gender  
   b) Locality  
   c) Medium of Instruction  
   d) Type of School  
   e) Nature of Home Environment  
   f) Order of Birth  
   g) Economic Background.
8. To find out the association between personality and adjustment of adolescents.
9. To find out the association between personality and decision making of adolescents.
10. To find out the association between adjustment and decision making of adolescents.
11. To find out the association between personality and academic achievement of adolescents.
12. To find out the association between adjustment and academic achievement of adolescents.
13. To find out the association between decision making and academic achievement of adolescents.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

There would be no significant influence of the following variables on the personality of adolescents.

a) Gender would not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.
b) Locality would not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.
c) Medium of instruction would not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.
d) Type of school would not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.
e) Nature of home environment would not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.
f) Order of birth would not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.
g) Economic background would not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.

Hypothesis 2
There would be no significant influence of the following variables on the adjustment of adolescents.
a) Gender would not influence significantly the adjustment of adolescents.
b) Locality would not influence significantly the adjustment of adolescents.
c) Medium of instruction would not influence significantly the adjustment of adolescents.
d) Type of school would not influence significantly the adjustment of adolescents.
e) Nature of home environment would not influence significantly the adjustment of adolescents.
f) Order of birth would not influence significantly the adjustment of adolescents.
g) Economic background would not influence significantly the adjustment of adolescents.

Hypothesis 3

There would be no significant influence of the following variables on the decision making of adolescents.
a) Gender would not influence significantly the decision making of adolescents.
b) Locality would not influence significantly the decision making of adolescents.
c) Medium of instruction would not influence significantly the decision making of adolescents.
d) Type of school would not influence significantly the decision making of adolescents.
e) Nature of home environment would not influence significantly the decision making of adolescents.
f) Order of birth would not influence significantly the decision making of adolescents.
g) Economic background would not influence significantly the decision making of adolescents.

**Hypothesis 4**

There would be no significant association between the personality and adjustment of adolescents.

**Hypothesis 5**

There would be no significant association between personality and decision making of adolescents.

**Hypothesis 6**

There would be no significant association between adjustment and decision making of adolescents.

**Hypothesis 7**

There would be no significant association between personality and academic achievement of adolescents.

**Hypothesis 8**

There would be no significant association between adjustment and academic achievement of adolescents.

**Hypothesis 9**

There would be no significant association between decision making and academic achievement of adolescents.

❖ **Delimitations**

The study was limited to adolescents studying IX class only during the school year 2009-2010.
The study was limited to Krishna and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh only.

The study was confined to 12 of the 20 dimensions of the personality of teenagers tool.

Only 3 levels of income range was considered as peoples had to identify their economic class as poor, middle class and rich classes leaving lower middle, upper middle and the very rich.

For academic achievement of the adolescents, half – yearly marks were taken.

Geographical Area of the Study

Out of the 23 districts in the state of Andhra Pradesh, Krishna and Guntur Districts are randomly selected for this study.

Population for the Study

The population for the study consisted of adolescents studying 9th class in high schools of Krishna and Guntur districts.

Sample Distribution

The researcher has randomly selected a sample of 1000 adolescents from rural and urban schools of Krishna and Guntur districts using stratified random sampling technique.

Tools Used in the Study

The researcher used three standardized questionnaires.

Multi–dimensional Assessment of personality service form–T (for teenagers) by psy - com services New Delhi was used.

Indian Adaptation of Bells Adjustment Inventory standardized by Dr. Lalitha Sarma.
The Decision making tool constructed by Dr. C.G. Venkatesh Murthy of Regional Institute of Education, Mysore was adopted.

 Tattoo Findings

- Adolescents differ in their levels of personality. It is observed that 15.4% have low levels of personality, 71.5% have moderate levels of personality and 13.1% have good levels of personality.

- In the personality dimension, leadership adolescent boys are found having significantly better than that of adolescent girls; whereas the adolescent girls are significantly better in their mental health and maturity when compared with their counterparts.

- In the dimension, social warmth urban adolescents are found significantly better than their rural counterparts. It is observed that locality does not make a significant difference in the other personality dimensions of adolescents.

- In the dimensions, self sufficiency and morality English medium adolescents have significantly better score compared to Telugu medium adolescents; whereas in the dimensions innovation, sensitivity, enthusiasm, social warmth, leadership and mental health. Telugu medium adolescents have significantly better score compared to English medium adolescents.

- Out of the eleven personality dimensions type of school is found having significant influence on the personality of adolescents in all the dimensions except in the dimension, sensitivity.

- In the dimensions competition and mental health government school adolescents are found having significantly better score compared to their private school counterparts; whereas private school adolescents are found
having better score in the dimensions, self sufficiency, innovation, enthusiasm, social warmth, maturity, morality, self control and leadership.

• Out of the eleven personality dimensions nature of home environment is found having significant influence on the personality of adolescents in all the dimensions except in the two dimensions, sensitivity and enthusiasm.

• In the dimensions self sufficiency, competition, Social warmth and morality, it is seen that adolescents from encouraging home environment are found having significantly better scores compared to their counterparts from neutral home environment where as adolescents from neutral home environment are found having significantly better scores in the dimensions maturity, self control, leadership and mental health.

• In the dimensions sensitivity, social warmth, self control and mental health lower middle income group adolescents have a significantly better score compared to poor group, poor group have a significantly better score compare to rich group, in the dimension social warmth compared to middle income group, lower middle income group has a significantly better score, compared to poor lower and middle income group have a significantly better score in social warmth, self control and mental health.

• Rural adolescents were found better than urban adolescents, adolescents of birth order 3 and above were better than their counterparts, and adolescents from encouraging home environment were better than those from neutral homes in their personality. The other variables like gender, medium of instruction type of school economic background did not influence the personality of adolescents.

• Adolescents differ in their levels of adjustment. It is observed that 15.5% of adolescents have low level of adjustment, 69.5% of adolescents have moderate level of adjustment and 15% of adolescents have good adjustment.
• Gender, locality, medium of instruction, type of school, nature of home environment, order of birth and economic background did not have a significant influence on the levels of adjustment of adolescents.

• Adolescents differ in decision making. It is seen that 14.3% of adolescents have low level of decision making, 70.4% of adolescents have moderate level of decision making and 15.3% of adolescents have good levels of decision making.

• Type of the school management had significant influence on the decision making of adolescents. The adolescents of government schools were significantly better than the private school adolescents. Gender, locality, medium of instruction, nature of home environment, order of birth and economic background did not have significant influence on the decision making of adolescents.

• Personality factors of adolescents influenced their adjustment behavior and decision making process.

• There is a significant association between the adjustment and decision making of adolescents and vice versa.

• There is no significant association between the personality and academic achievement of adolescent and vice versa.

• There is no significant association between the adjustment and academic achievement of adolescents and vice versa.

• There is no significant association between the decision making and academic achievement of adolescents and vice versa.

Education Implications

1. As adolescents need support in personality dimensions like self control, leadership and mental health there is need to introduce support programs to develop self control, leadership and to preserve mental health. Leadership
qualities can be developed by involving the adolescents more in decision making process and introducing self governance programmes in schools and colleges.

2. The knowledge of the dimensions of the adolescent personality would help the teachers, parents and school administrators to get specific traits or characteristics adopted into the personality of the adolescents and simultaneously discourage the poor features and reinforce the good features.

3. As nature of home environment, type of school management and medium of instruction are seen as most significant causative factors in influencing the personality dimensions of adolescents, home practices are to be made more conducive in helping the adolescents to acquire desirable personality traits through proper hygienic child rearing practices. This could be achieved by organizing effective parent educational programmes at school level in particular and through mass media in general. School practices, are to be revalidated and reviewed to make them more effective and influential in molding the personality of adolescents.

4. This study once again emphasizes the need to look into child rearing practices pertaining to girls particularly, as boys have better score in the personality dimensions considered. Similarly, the adolescents from urban areas, those from neutral home environment, those from government schools, those with birth order one and those from affluent families too need additional support in the desired personality areas compared to their counterparts.

5. As adolescents belonging to poor communities, those belonging to middle income group and those belonging to rich group do not differ in adjustment, the present educational system is not biased with respect to gender, caste, socio-economic status etc. The present school environment can be continued
and further all types of discriminatory rules, procedures and regulations may be dispensed with. Further, the learning material and text books must be made free from all kinds of biases mentioned above.

6. The low score of adolescents of private management schools suggest the need to modify the day to day school practices to help adolescents from those schools to be better decision makers.

7. As there is a strong association between personality, adjustment and decision making of adolescents, school practices and procedures are to be ascertained for the holistic development of adolescents.

8. The knowledge of the dimensions of the adolescents’ adjustment would help the teachers, parents and school administrators to support them to overcome their limitations in the adjustment process.

9. The knowledge of the dimensions of the adolescents’ decision making skills of adolescents would help the teachers, parents and school administrators to enrich decision making capacities by introducing stimulating activities.

✧ **Suggestions for Further Research**

1. There is a need to study the impact of course material particularly material related to culture, religious practices, ancient texts, etc., in promoting the desired personality traits in the young adolescents.

2. Research may look into studies related to school practices that are conducive for personality development.

3. Further studies on adolescent’s personality may focus on dimension wise analysis and influences of the dimensions on the personality of adolescents.
4. Further studies may focus on inter-dimensional influences and intra-dimensional influences on the personality development of adolescents.

5. Future studies also may focus on decision making process of young adolescents in critical areas like educational choices, vocational choices, interpersonal and intra personal relations and matters related to marriage etc.,

6. The typical adjustment styles of adolescents in hostels, in boarding schools, school environment towards socio-economic and political changes can be included in the future research projects.

7. Future studies may focus on how teachers, parents, principals, hostel wardens perceive the adjustment styles of adolescents.

8. Future studies may focus on the role of electronic media particularly the entertainment sector on the personality, decision making and adjustment of adolescents.

ധ Conclusion

The study has been undertaken to gain new insights into personality, adjustment and decision making of adolescents with regard to certain selected variables like gender, locality, medium of instruction, type of school, nature of home environment, order of birth, economic background and academic achievement. It is found that individuals differ in personality dimensions in levels of adjustment and in decision making. However, the difference is not significant enough with regard to most of the variables selected for the study, except in case of type of school, order of birth and economic background with regard to adjustment and decision making.

Further, the second major finding of the study is that adolescents showed significant association between personality and adjustment, personality and
decision making, adjustment and decision making but all the three do not have significant association with academic achievement. It indicates that the present academic environment is not conducive enough to promote an integrated and holistic personality in adolescents. Various commissions on education reforms strongly recommended an integrated curriculum that would promote all-round development in adolescents. Even though many steps have been taken towards that end, from the study it is seen that much vacuum is left and so, more proactive measures are needed to develop a holistic personality in adolescents through education. This study once again emphasizes the need for better evaluation of curriculum, educational practices, and school systems, formal and non-formal educational practices, student and parent counseling practices, pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes to achieve the desired goals through education. Type of school management exerts maximum influence on the personality dimensions of adolescents followed by nature of home environment and medium of instruction where as order of birth, locality of living and gender have least effect.

The better score of boys compared to girls in respect of leadership dimension of personality is to be understood in the light of the superior position given to boys at home, better opportunities in academic aspects and better treatment given to boys at home, in school and in the society. Similarly high score of rural adolescents compared to their urban counterparts are to be understood in light of the less tense and more peaceful rural environment. The close knit rural family background too could be a causative factor. The better score of Telugu medium students is to be understood in the light of well trained experienced teachers available to those students compared to their counterparts. Similarly the better score of private schools adolescents compared to their counterparts may be because of the enriched opportunities available to them. Finally, the better score of adolescents from enriched home environment
compared to neutral home environment could be due to the positive parental attitude of such homes. Order of birth did not influence significantly the personality of adolescents. Economic background did not influence significantly the personality of adolescents.

It can be inferred that Adolescents have grown up significantly to meet the challenges of adjustment problems. This development could be due to the influence of spread of literacy, mass media and similar other factors. The instant access to day to day events might have helped the adolescents to acquire the needed skills and strategies to meet the day to day adjustment problems.

Gender, locality, medium of instruction, nature of home environment, order of birth and economic background did not have a significant influence on the decision making of adolescents. This could be because of small family norms adopted. However, type of school makes a significant difference in the decision making of adolescents. In schools under government management, less importance is given to spoon feeding methods where as in schools under private management students get few opportunities to think independently and arrive at suitable decisions on their own.

Personality factors of adolescents influence their adjustment behavior. It could be because the adjustment modes adopted by individuals in their day to day life situations have their foundation in the personality makeup.

Personality factors of adolescents influence their decision making process. It is because the decision making styles adopted by individuals have the foundation in the personality makeup of the individual.

A significant association between the adjustment and decision making of adolescents and vice versa is also seen. Many adjustment behaviors in day to day life go a long way with the decision making process. Hence the significant association between adjustment and decision making is relevant and meaningful.
There is no significant association between the personality and academic achievement of adolescent and vice versa this could be because of the present educational system which is highly independent of personality factors as it stresses more on rote memory and reproduction skills at examination situations rather than all-round development of personality.

There exists no significant association between the adjustment and academic achievement of adolescents and vice versa. This could be because of the present educational system which gives little scope for development of adjustment skills.

No significant association between the decision making and academic achievement of adolescents and vice versa is seen. It may be because of the present education system which is highly structured towards academic excellence alone and better grades at the final academic results. Hence the decision-making skills and academic achievements naturally function independent of each other.

It can be understood that the gap in the personality factors that are seen before 80s are gradually disappearing and at present adolescents are uniform in their personality factors irrespective of order of birth and economic background. The present status of uniformity in adolescent behavior patterns that is noted in the present study must be because of the enhanced educational opportunities and the influence of mass media particularly the electronic media that has revolutionized the access for information during the past two decades.

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