Social Adjustment and Academic Achievement of Primary Graders

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Abstract:
The present study was focused on social adjustment, and academic achievement of primary graders in Quetta city. The main objective of the study was to determine the relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement of primary level students. The population of this study was primary sections of Urdu Medium Government High Schools of Quetta City. Sample consisted of two hundred and fifty seven children (68% boys and 32% girls). The sample was selected by using purposive sampling technique. Self-developed Social Adjustment Rating Checklist (SARC) was constructed to measure the level of social adjustment 5th grade children. To assess the academic achievement of students, the test-papers of the academic subjects developed by the District Education Authority Quetta for 5th grade promotion examination were used to assess academic achievement. The subject-wise and aggregate scores obtained by the students were used to measure their academic achievement. Before the instruments were administered to the students, a pilot testing study was conducted, involving the 5th grade children studying in Government High School Jinnah Town, Quetta. To analyze the data, Pearson correlation and regression analysis was done. The results revealed a positive relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement of students.

Keywords: Social Adjustment, Academic Achievement, Primary Graders

I. Introduction

There is variability in the modern dynamic society environments. To cope with the changing environments, an individual has to seek adjustment by establishing harmonious relationship by managing adaptation with the social environment. Social adjustment being a varying process can be managed approximately. There may be adjustment, then maladjustment and readjustment. Social adjustment allows a person to adjust with his/her group members and with other groups and people in a society and outside the society. Social adjustment requires a person to learn social skills and ability to deal cautiously...
with peers, friends and strangers to get their favorable attitudes towards him. They will want to accept him as he/she has developed good social attitudes.

Siantz de Leon (1997) has defined social adjustment as a person’s skill to involve friends, family and adults in a sociable and supportive way and to be creative and achievement oriented. So, it is a person’s ability to adjust socially with his/her family, peers, teachers, and class-fellows. A well adjusted child possesses intellectual capabilities to the maximum in chase of academic achievement because he/she exhibits good behavior, confidence, relaxed mood, happy feelings, and sharing with class-mates. In contrast, a maladjusted child demonstrates lack of interest in studies, shows violent behavior and falls short to make the best utilization of his/her mental powers to learn. To be socially adjusted in a group, a student may have to establish various peer relationships by adapting social environment in harmonious way by confirming the expectations of his/her social group. This socialization process starts from home, neighborhood, community etc and then shifted to school. The dependency of children on each social group determines their attachment with that group i.e. they may be more associated with family, they may be more associated with school and peers etc. normally, children are more social and comfortable with their age mates and they are supposed to turn out to be better regulated to social life every year. The frequency with which a child adapts the approved patterns of his/her social group confirms his social adjustment in that group and his acceptance by the peers of that group. This occurs because our society doesn’t accept deviated individuals from social group norms.

Kupersmidt, Coie, & Dodge (1990) say that peer relationship is crucial in student’s school adjustment. Poor peer-relationship results in poor social adjustment and good peer relationship results in good social adjustment. Academic achievement is also related with social competence and peer acceptance. There are some studies which suggest that academically competent children are mostly to be accepted by peers and prove to be more sociable and skillful (Chen, Rubin and Li, 1997; Wentzel and Asher, 1995).

Classroom activities, as well as activities outside class room are crucial for development of social adjustment skills among students. Social interaction with peers, friends, parents, siblings, relatives, and others are key elements for social adaptation and change. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The degree to which a pupil forms positive peer relationship can lead towards broader social adjustment (Bukowski, Newcomb, & Hartup, 1996; Parker & Asher, 1987). Class environment provides pupils, opportunities which expand and promote their social and academic capabilities because they usually share and talk about the subject matter to clarify ambiguities in the lecture notes. They also share different stationary items and compare their grade with each other. So, peer relationships can powerfully influence a students' emotional and motivational response to school (Wentzel, 1991). For this reason, educational counselors/mentors more emphasize social adjustment as it is closely related with the development of students’ social skills, social behavior and academic performance because school being a fertile environment is considered more responsible institution to train more competent and conscientious personalities (Parker and Asher, 1987; Wentzel, Weinberger, Ford, Feldman, 1990). There is ample amount of research focusing on the direction of effects from social competence to academic performance (Wentzel, 1991). Different researchers and psychologists have explored relationship between social competence and academic
achievement. (Green, Forehand, Beck and Voak, 1980; Wentzel, 1991; Chen, Rubin & Li, 1997; Chen, Chang & He, 2003; Bernner, Beaudin, Kinder & Mooney, 2005).

Research by Nelson & Low (2003) has showed that some skills i.e. time management, communication, and stress management skills are predictors of academic success. An extensive empirical research studies have exposed that social skills and academic performance are correlated and both equally influence each other (Wentzel, 1993; Kupersmidt, Coie, & Dodge, 1990; Parker & Asher, 1987; Green, Forehand, Beck & Vosk, 1980). Researchers have also explored reciprocal relations of social and academic competencies to discover the impact of competency in social skills on academic success and vise versa. (Semeroff and chandler, 1975; Coie & Krehbiel, 1984; Chen, Rubin and Li, 1997).

There is a longitudinal study by Coie & Krehbiel, (1984) who observed the relationship between social and academic effects. Their study revealed relationship between academic outcomes and a child's social skills. In another study by Rotheram (1987) children were trained to gain social competencies. Study revealed that socially trained children exhibited improved academic grades after a year. Welsh, Parke, Widaman and O'Neil (2001) also conducted a research to test the links between social and academic competencies of pupils. They found a direct relationship between social competency and academic performance of students. In another study by Rotheram (1987) the relationship between children's social and academic competence was examined. The aim of the study was to evaluate “Interpersonal Problem Solving” (IPS) ability, assertiveness and self-esteem. Sample was comprised of 128 boys and 113 girls in fourth and sixth grades and their competence with their peers, teachers and success in academic subjects was assessed. The findings of the study highlighted considerable positive relationship between social skills and academic competence. Chen, Chang and He (2003) observed the contextual effects of the peers on relation between academic achievement and social functioning in Chinese children. Their study revealed academic achievement and social adjustment were associated at the within-group individual level and the group level.

The literature has shown that there may be positive or negative relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement of students. This dimension is explored by many researchers in many ways. So, it is an exciting and challenging area of research to be explored.

II. Problem Statement:

It is accepted view among academicians as well as non-academicians that quality education has deteriorated at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in Pakistan. The quality teaching-learning at primary schools may ensure the improvement of the standards of education at secondary and tertiary levels. The situation of primary education in urban areas is satisfactory to some extent, but teaching learning conditions at the primary schools located in rural areas are not much praiseworthy. A substantial population, being rural, a great number of talented children is deprived development of its abilities. The development of children's social skills and competencies has been demonstrated to be critical requisites to academic and interpersonal success. In Pakistan, the primary school children, particularly belonging to rural areas does not get ample
opportunities for social learning. They feel shy of expressing themselves. After completion of secondary education, on their entrance into urban areas to seek education at Colleges and Universities, they confront with the problem of social adjustment. Thus there is an immense need to reform primary education the most neglected area in Pakistan. Keeping in view the existing situation, the study was focused to find out the relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement of primary graders at primary schools in Baluchistan/Pakistan.

**Objectives:**
Objective of the study was to ascertain the relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement.

**Hypotheses:**
- **H0:** There will be no relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement of students.
- **H1:** There will be a relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement of students.

**Definition of Terms:**
- **Social Adjustment:**
  Jain (2012) defines social adjustment as an effort made by an individual to cope with standards, values and needs of a society in order to be accepted. It can be defined as a psychological process. It involves coping with new standard and value. In the technical language of psychology "getting along with the members of society as best one can" is called adjustment.

- **Academic Achievement:**
  Academic achievement is defined by Crow and Crow (1969) as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instructions in a given area of learning i.e., achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill and knowledge has been imparted to him.

**Methodology:**

**Population:**
The population for this study was 5th grade students of Urdu Medium Government Primary Schools in Quetta city Pakistan.

**Sample:**
Two hundred and fifty seven children (173 Boys and 84 Girls) enrolled in 5th grade participated in this study. This study was conducted in primary section of the following Urdu Medium Government High Schools in Quetta city:

- Lady Sundamon Government Girls High School, Patel Road Quetta.
- Government Boys High School, killi shekhan, Arbab Karam Khan Road Quetta.

The ages of the participants ranged from 10 to 12 years old. Most of the students (about 80%) were from lower middle-class socioeconomic status families. Assuring appropriate representation of genders (boys and girls), cultural diversity, socioeconomic status, and abilities (high, average and low achievers) the following factors were taken
into consideration while sample selection:

- Selected schools are well established and have been functioning before Pakistan came into existence.
- Selected schools have got maximum enrollment.
- The students of the selected schools are appropriate representative of all cultural groups.
- The teachers' turnover is very low in these schools. The teachers are very senior and they stay over period to conduct the classes in the school.
- The instructions (quality and level) remain same throughout academic session.
- The teachers are very punctual and regular in conduct of classes in these schools.
- The government schools follow uniform academic policy and the curricula.

**Sampling Technique:**

Purposive sampling was used.

**Research Instrument:**

To measure social adjustment, self-developed checklist was developed. Various researchers on social adjustment were reviewed to identify key attributes of socially adjusted children. These identified attributes were discussed with the research supervisor to examine their appropriateness to measure creativity and social adjustment level of 5th grade students of primary schools. These attributes were operationalized and defined. Based on their operational definitions, the instrument on Social Adjustment Rating Checklist (SARC) was developed to measure the level of social adjustment of 5th grade children.

To measure academic achievement, the District Education Authority (DEA), Quetta was contacted to provide the researcher Academic Achievement Tests (AATs) as it conducts 5th grade promotion examinations. The researchers obtained the test-paper of five subjects (Urdu, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Islamiat) set for 5th grade promotion examination by the DEA, Quetta. These test-papers were used to assess academic achievement of the 5th grade children. The subject-wise and aggregate marks obtained by the students were used to measure their academic achievement.

**Pilot Testing:**

Before the instrument was administered, a pilot testing was conducted, involving 49 students of the 5th graders studying in Government High School, Jinnah Town Quetta. A team of five teachers of the 5th grade of the school was selected to assist the research scholar to conduct the pilot testing. The research scholar trained the teachers how to administer the Social Adjustment Rating Checklist (SARC) and the Academic Achievement Tests (AATs).

The concerned subject teachers conducted their academic achievement test in the class room of 5th grade. The 5th grade Class Incharge-Teacher with assistance of the research scholar administered the SARC to rate the students. The collected data was processed and tabulated. The pilot testing identified certain minor flaws in administering the instruments which were adequately addressed by the research scholars. The pilot testing was successfully completed within five days.
Validity of the Instrument:

The results of pilot testing were incorporated in the instruments to make the research tools more valid and useful.

Data Collection Procedures:

The researchers organized a one-week workshop on “Social adjustment and their measure”. The objectives of the workshop were:

- To train the teachers to administer the instruments in a consistent and an accurate manner.
- To enhance the teachers’ understanding of "social adjustment" and their "measures".
- To enable the teachers to identify and describe attributes of socially adjusted children.

Total five teachers participated in this workshop. Three of them were males each being Incharge of 5th class-section A, B and C from Government Boys High School, Killi Shekhan, Quetta. Two of them were female teachers of Lady Sundamon Girls High School, Quetta. Each of them was Incharge of 5th class section A and B.

Administration of the Research Tools:

The Social Adjustment Rating Checklist (SARC) was explained to the teachers (administrators) by the researchers. The teachers rated their students. They filled out a Social Adjustment Rating Checklist (SARC) individually for each student of their 5th class. A high score indicated a high level of social adjustment whereas a low score indicated low social adjustment.

An academic session of the school in Quetta terminates by the end of November. The entire prescribed syllabus of each subject is covered by the end of October. An annual promotion examination takes place in first or second week of November. The researchers personally assessed academic achievement of the student during examination sessions. The examination of 5th grade children studying in Government Boys High School, Killi Shekhan and Lady Sundamon Government Girls High School was conducted in the last week of October, 2005, just one week before the commencement of an annual promotion examination of 5th grade children. The schedule of the examination was given to the examinees, five days before the date of commencement of examination specified in the schedule. The date/day and the subject test to take place on that date/day were clearly stated in the schedule. The students had enough time to prepare themselves for the test.

The students were examined in each of the subjects, namely Mathematics, Urdu, Islamiat, Science and Social Studies. An examination hall was arranged to conduct the test in each of the schools. All the students of 5th class of the each school were properly seated in the examination hall. The researchers along with three teachers of the school invigilated the test. Besides the researchers themselves evaluated the answer transcripts of the students. The subject-wise and aggregate scores achieved by each student were computed in percentage to measure his/her academic achievement.
**Data Analysis:**

The researchers coded the collected data for quantitative analysis. The choices to items given on the Social Adjustment Rating Checklist (SARC) were assigned the scale scores given as: 5 = Very high, 4 = High, 3 = Moderate, 2 = Low, 1 = Very Low

The class teacher rated each student on the Social Adjustment Rating Checklist (SARC) by assigning score to each subscale items. The scores assigned to each subscale items were aggregated to determine the social adjustment score of each student.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the date analysis. First, Pearson Correlation Coefficients were calculated to investigate relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement as a whole.

A regression equation was also computed to estimate the casual relation between Social adjustment and academic achievement as a whole. Then regression was done between social adjustment and academic achievement in each subject Mathematics, Urdu, Science, Social Studies, and Islamiat. Ordinary least square (OLS) method was used to estimate the regression equations.

**III. Results**

Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to test the hypotheses.

*Table 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Adjustment</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Urdu</th>
<th>Islamiat</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Study</th>
<th>Total Marks (r)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Adjustment</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>.55*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.49*</td>
<td>.78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.63*</td>
<td>.60*</td>
<td>.69*</td>
<td>.82*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamiat</td>
<td>.63*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.66*</td>
<td>.80*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>.67*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.75*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Study</td>
<td>.83*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Marks (r)</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p ≤ 0.01

The above table indicates relationship between achievement in mathematics and social adjustment is positive but is low as it is evident from the value coefficient correlation between achievement in mathematics and social adjustment (.22*). The value is significant at 99 percent level of confidence level. The coefficient of correlation between social adjustment and academic achievement in Urdu is positive but the value of coefficient of correlation is (0.30*) which is low but significant at 99 percent level of confidence. There is positive correlation between achievement in Islamiat and social adjustment (.38*) but the value of coefficients is low similar to values of correlation-coefficients between social adjustment and achievement in other subjects but it is also significant at 99 percent confidence level. The coefficient of correlation between social adjustment and achievement in science is (.33*) which is positive and significant at 99
percent confidence level but the value of coefficient is low.

Social adjustment and achievement in social studies are positively correlated but the relationship is low similar to all other relationships among social adjustment and other variables. The coefficient of correlation between social adjustment and achievement in social studies is (.24*) which is low but significant at 99 percent confidence level. There is found positive relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement as a whole as indicated by the positive value of coefficient correlation which is (.34*). The value is significant at 99 percent confidence level but is low, same as all other values are low.

The value of all the coefficients of correlation between social adjustment and achievement in different subjects is below than 0.5 although positive and significant at 99 percent confidence level. The value of correlation coefficient between social adjustment and aggregate academic achievement is also less than 0.5, although positive and significant at 99% confidence level. This depicts that there exists positive but weak relationships among social adjustment and academic achievement in the subjects and overall academic achievement.

The coefficients of correlation among all variables used in the study are positive and significant. Regression equations were computed to estimate the casual relationship among achievement in various subjects and social adjustment which leads to high academic achievement as considered theoretically and believed by many educationist.

Table 2
Coefficient of Regression And Coefficient of Determination for Social Adjustment with Academic Achievement in the Various Subjects as Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Coefficient of regression</th>
<th>Coefficient of determination</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>0.559</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamiat</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>0.578</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Study</td>
<td>0.512</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Marks</td>
<td>3.415</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mathematics and Social Adjustment:
The value of coefficient of regression is 0.796 which is significant at 0.001 levels. This shows that social adjustment and achievement in mathematics have positive relationship. But the coefficient of determination R2 is equal to 0.050 which is very low. This means only 5 percent variation in achievement in mathematics is explained by social adjustment whereas 95% variation in achievement in mathematics can be explained by some other variables.

Urdu and Social Adjustment:
Social adjustment has a positive impact on achievement in Urdu as the coefficient
regression is 0.559 and is significant at 0.000 levels. The value of R2 is very small i.e., 0.096 which reflects that social adjustment explains only ten percent of variance in achievement in Urdu and the rest of 90 percent variation in achievement in Urdu requires to be explained by some other variable.

Islamiat and Social Adjustment:
As the coefficient of regression is equal to 0.000 and is significant at 0.079 levels so social adjustment leads to positive change in achievement in Islamiat. The value of R2 is 0.145 which is very low which means social adjustment explains just fourteen percent variance in achievement in Islamiat, whereas some other variables can explain the remaining 86 percent variance in achievement in Islamiat.

Science and Social Adjustment:
The coefficient of regression is 0.57 and significant at level 0.000. This shows that achievement in science is positively related with social adjustment. The value of coefficient of determination is equal to 0.113 which means that social adjustment explains only 11 percent variance in achievement in science and some other variables can explain the remaining 89 percent variance in achievement in Science.

Social Study and Social Adjustment:
Social adjustment leads to positive change in achievement in social study as the coefficient of regression is equal to 0.512 which is significant at 0.000 levels. But a very small value of R2 0.063 indicates that only six percent variance in achievement in social study is explained by social adjustment and there are other variables to explain the rest of 94 percent variance in achievement in social study.

Overall achievement and Social adjustment:
Social adjustment has a positive impact on total achievement as it is evident from the value of coefficient regression i.e., 0.3415 which is significant at 0.000 level. The value of coefficient of determination is very small i.e. 0.116, similar to the values of coefficient of determination as in the case of individual subjects.

IV. Conclusion:
The study findings revealed the conclusion that social adjustment and academic achievement are significantly related with each other. So, a significant positive relationship was found between these two variables.

V. Recommendations:
On the basis of the results of the present study, the following recommendations are offered for further study. But such suggestions cannot as exhaustive and complete:

i. The present study was conducted using a sample of two hundred fifty seven children of 5th grade of two Urdu medium schools in Quetta city. A replication study taking a large sample of male and female children and schools in Baluchistan is needed to get more accurate and reliable results.

ii. This study was aimed at for students of 5th grade of primary educational level. A replication study for secondary school students is desirable. The present study
was confined to Urdu medium schools. A study should be conducted to compare students of Urdu medium and English medium schools with respect to creativity, social adjustment and academic achievement.

iii. The study revealed that substantial variance in academic achievement remains unexplained by social adjustment. A replication study including some other variables such as class environment, teaching-methods, teacher's qualification and experience is proposed.

References


