



## Academic Achievement and Adjustment in Context of Familial Factors

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### ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted on 150 female adolescents of Patna to compare their academic achievement and adjustment in the light of familial factors (family relationship, size of the family and sibling distance). It was hypothesized that (i) sound and poor family relationship groups of respondents, (ii) small and large sized family groups of respondents and (iii) short and long sibling distances groups of respondents will differ significantly in terms of academic achievement and adjustment. For the verification of hypotheses, the respondents were administered FRI and PDS. The obtained data were treated using t-test. The results supported the hypotheses. It was found that sound family relationship, small size of the family and large sibling distance all were conducive to high academic achievement and sound adjustment. Thus, it was concluded that family relationship, size of the family and sibling distance all are significant contributor to both academic achievement and adjustment.

### KEY WORDS

Achievement, Adjustment, Family.

### INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement and adjustment are pivotal aspects of an individual's development, particularly during their formative years in educational settings. These elements are shaped by a multitude of factors, among which familial influences play a significant role. The family is often the first environment where children are exposed to the values, norms, and expectations that influence their educational journey. Familial factors encompass a wide range of variables, including socio-economic status, parental education levels, parenting styles, family structure, and home

environment, all of which can significantly impact a child's academic achievement and their ability to adjust to the demands of school life.

Academic achievement refers to the extent to which a student successfully meets the academic goals set by educational institutions, typically measured through grades, test scores, and overall performance. However, it is not merely the product of intellectual ability or individual effort but is profoundly influenced by external factors, particularly the family. A child's ability to succeed academically is often intricately linked to the resources, support, and expectations provided by the family unit. In this regard, academic achievement goes beyond the immediate cognitive abilities of the student and incorporates a broader socio-cultural context.

Adjustment, on the other hand, refers to the process by which individuals adapt to and cope with the challenges posed by their environment. In the context of education, adjustment involves the emotional, social, and psychological adaptations students make in response to the academic and social demands of school life. Effective adjustment includes the development of skills such as emotional regulation, social interaction, time management, and resilience. Students who are well-adjusted tend to perform better academically, exhibit higher levels of engagement, and demonstrate better coping strategies in the face of stress or adversity.

The family plays a central role in shaping both academic achievement and adjustment. The concept of familial influence on a child's academic life is multidimensional; encompassing direct and indirect factors that affect the child's learning experiences and school-related behaviors. Various familial factors can either facilitate or hinder a child's educational journey, shaping their academic success and emotional well-being in distinct ways.

One of the most prominent familial factors influencing academic achievement and adjustment is socio-economic status (SES). Families with higher socio-economic status typically have access to better educational resources, including private tutors, advanced technology, extracurricular activities, and enriching learning environments. They are also more likely to have a higher level of parental education, which often correlates with better academic outcomes for their children. These families may also place greater emphasis on academic success, creating an environment that fosters motivation and high academic standards. In contrast, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds may face numerous challenges, including limited access to educational resources, financial stress, and a lack of parental involvement due to work obligations or limited educational backgrounds. These challenges can hinder both academic achievement and emotional adjustment, as children may experience stress, low self-esteem, or feelings of inadequacy.

Parental involvement and parenting styles also play a critical role in a child's academic success and adjustment. Research has consistently shown that children whose parents are actively involved in their education tend to perform better academically. Parental involvement can take many forms, from helping with homework to attending parent-teacher conferences or encouraging participation in school events. Additionally, the manner in which parents engage with their children academically can vary depending on their parenting style. Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, support, and clear expectations, is generally associated with better academic outcomes and healthier adjustment. In contrast, authoritarian parenting, marked by strict discipline and low emotional support, can lead to academic stress and emotional difficulties. Conversely, permissive parenting, with its lenient approach and lack of structure, may result in lower academic motivation and poor adjustment due to a lack of boundaries and expectations.

Family structure is another important factor in the academic achievement and adjustment of children. The presence of both parents in the household, the quality of parental relationships, and family dynamics all play crucial roles in shaping a child's school experience. Children from two-parent households may benefit from the emotional and financial support provided by both parents, potentially leading to better academic performance and emotional stability. However, family structures such as single-parent households or families experiencing divorce can pose unique challenges. Children from single-parent families, for example, may experience financial strain, limited access to resources, or emotional stress related to the absence of one

parent, which can affect their academic achievement and adjustment. It is important to note that while family structure can present challenges, it is the overall quality of familial relationships, rather than structure alone, that most significantly influences a child's well-being and academic outcomes.

The home environment, including the physical and emotional climate of the household, is another crucial factor affecting academic achievement and adjustment. A supportive home environment, characterized by open communication, encouragement, and a focus on education, can enhance a child's academic performance and emotional resilience. On the other hand, a home environment marked by neglect, conflict, or instability can create barriers to both academic success and emotional well-being. Children who grow up in homes with high levels of conflict or dysfunction may struggle with anxiety, depression, or behavioral problems, which can interfere with their academic engagement and adjustment to school life. Furthermore, children from homes that prioritize education and encourage reading, intellectual curiosity, and learning are more likely to perform well academically.

Cultural factors also intersect with familial influences, as family values and expectations regarding education can vary significantly across different cultural contexts. For example, in some cultures, academic achievement is viewed as a collective family goal, with high levels of parental involvement and expectations for success. In other cultural contexts, there may be less emphasis on formal education, and children may receive less support in terms of academic encouragement or resources. Understanding the cultural background of a child's family can provide important insights into their educational experiences and adjustment.

In conclusion, familial factors are crucial determinants of both academic achievement and adjustment. The socio-economic status of the family, parental involvement, family structure, parenting styles, home environment, and cultural factors all play significant roles in shaping a child's educational experience. While these factors can provide important resources and support, they can also present challenges that hinder a child's academic success and emotional adjustment. As such, a comprehensive understanding of how familial factors interact with a child's academic life is essential for educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals working to foster positive educational outcomes and emotional well-being for students.

## Review of Literature

Sirin, S. R. (2005) reviewed the impact of socio-economic status (SES) on academic performance, emphasizing how SES affects the resources available to children, their exposure to academic opportunities, and their ability to cope with school stressors. The review concludes that children from higher SES families tend to have better academic outcomes due to better access to resources and parental support. Jeynes, W.H. (2005) synthesized over 70 studies that examine the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. The review found a strong positive correlation between parental involvement and academic success. It highlights the importance of both emotional and academic support from parents, particularly in middle and high school years. Amato, P. R. (2001) explored how different family structures (e.g., two-parent families, single-parent families, divorced families) influence academic outcomes. The study concludes that children from two-parent families tend to perform better academically, but the quality of the family environment (e.g., conflict levels) is a more important determinant than family structure alone. Baumrind, D. (1991) categorized parenting styles into four main types: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Her review indicates that authoritative parenting—characterized by warmth, structure, and clear expectations—is most beneficial for children's academic achievement and social adjustment. The review found that children of authoritative parents tend to have better academic outcomes and fewer behavioral issues. Conger, R. D., & Conger, K. J. (2002) discussed how the quality of family functioning, including emotional support, communication, and conflict resolution, affects children's adjustment to school and social environments. The review suggests that dysfunctional family environments, characterized by conflict and poor emotional support, contribute to poor academic performance and emotional difficulties. Eccles, J. S., & Harold, R. D. (1993) reviewed highlights the complex relationship between family factors and both academic achievement and

social adjustment. They argue that family members, particularly parents, influence children's achievement expectations, academic attitudes, and the resources available to them. The study emphasizes how parents' beliefs about education and their involvement in their child's academic life are crucial for success. Chao, R. K. (1994) reviewed focuses on the role of cultural context in parenting practices and their subsequent effects on children's academic performance. Chao's study compares Chinese and Western parenting styles and finds that while Western cultures emphasize independence and autonomy, Chinese parenting tends to emphasize control and academic diligence. Both cultural approaches can lead to academic success, though they may affect emotional adjustment differently. Haveman, R., & Wolfe, B. (1995) reviewed the literature on how parental education influences children's academic achievement. The authors argue that parents with higher education levels are more likely to provide an intellectually stimulating environment, set higher academic expectations, and be more involved in their child's education, which leads to higher academic performance. McLoyd, V.C. (1998) reviewed focuses on how economic stress within families affects children's academic performance. Families experiencing economic hardship often face additional challenges, including lower educational expectations, less emotional support, and fewer academic resources. This economic strain can hinder children's ability to adjust socially and emotionally and can significantly lower their academic achievement. Cummings, E. M., & Davies, P.T. (2002) reviewed explores the impact of family conflict on children's adjustment in school and their academic performance. The study found that children exposed to high levels of conflict within the family often struggle with emotional regulation and have more difficulty concentrating on their studies, leading to lower academic achievement and increased behavioral problems in school. Lamb, M. E. (2010) reviewed examines the growing body of research on the role of fathers in child development and academic achievement. While mothers are traditionally viewed as the primary caregivers, this study underscores the importance of fathers' involvement in their children's academic life. It concludes that fathers who are actively engaged in their children's education positively influence their academic success and social adjustment, particularly in middle childhood and adolescence.

It is clear that academic achievement and adjustment amongst students have not been extensively studied in context of variables under reference especially in context of Patna (Bihar). So, the study.

## Objective

The present study intends to compare academic achievement and adjustment of students in terms of familial factors (family relationship, size of the family and sibling distance).

## Hypothesis

- H<sub>1</sub>** Sound and poor family relationship groups of respondents will differ significantly in terms a academic achievement and adjustment.
- H<sub>2</sub>** Small and large sized family groups of respondents will differ significantly in terms of academic achievement and adjustment.
- H<sub>3</sub>** Short and long sibling distances groups of respondents will differ significantly in terms of academic achievement and adjustment.

## Method of Study

### Sample

The sample comprised of 150 female adolescents selected from among + 2 high school of urban Patna based on incidental-cum-purposive sampling technique. Other than the required condition, they were matched so far as practicable in respect of sex, inhabitation etc.

### Tools Used

1. Personal data sheet was used to seek the personal information about the respondents.
2. Family Relationship Inventory by G.P. Sherry and J.C. Sinha was used to measure family relationship

of the respondents.

3. Hindi Adaptation of Bell’s Adjustment Inventory by Mohsin and Shamshad was used to measure adjustment.
4. Academic Achievement was taken as the average of two successive annual school examination’s results.

## Results and Interpretations

**Table 01:** Comparison between respondents of sound and poor family relationship groups on the measure academic achievement and adjustment

Variables	Family Relationship				t-values (df=148)	P
	Sound (N=68)		Poor (N=82)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Academic Achievement	67.72	5.46	59.75	6.39	8.22	<.01
Adjustment	54.16	5.39	67.14	6.51	8.23	<.01

The results based on the table-01 clearly revealed the significant influence of family relationship on academic achievement and adjustment respectively. The means on academic achievement (Mean = 67.72) by sound family relationship group of female adolescent respondents was higher than the mean on academic achievement (Mean = 59.75) by poor family relationship group of female adolescents. The t-value between the means was found significant (t=8.22; df=148; P<.01). Students belonging to sound family relationship group excel in academic achievement over those from poor family relationship group because supportive and positive family interactions provide emotional security, motivation, and guidance. This nurturing environment fosters better concentration, confidence, and encouragement, all of which contribute to higher academic performance. Further, Mean on adjustment (Mean = 54.16) by sound family relationship is comparatively lower than the mean (Mean = 67.14) by poor family relationship group of female adolescent. The t-value between the means was found significant (t=8.23; df=148; P<.01). Students belonging to sound family relationship group excel in adjustment over those from poor family relationship group because supportive, trusting family bonds provide emotional security and effective communication. This nurturing environment helps students develop better coping skills, self-confidence, and social competence, enabling smoother adaptation to challenges compared to students from conflicted or unsupportive families.

**Table 02:** Comparison between small and large size family groups of students on the measure academic achievement and adjustment

Variables	Size of the Family				t-values (df=148)	P
	Small (N=105)		Large (N=45)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Academic Achievement	66.82	6.15	59.77	3.06	9.40	<.01
Adjustment	56.29	5.98	63.38	3.04	9.40	<.01

The significance of influence of size of the family (familial factor) on academic achievement and adjustment has been displayed in results table-02. It is clear that small (N=105) and large (N=45) sized family group of female adolescents differed significantly in terms of academic achievement and adjustment respectively. The mean on academic achievement (Mean = 66.82) by small family sized group of adolescents is higher than the adolescents (Mean = 59.77) belonging to large sized family group. The t-value between the means was found significant (t=9.40; df=148; P<.01). Students from small families excel in academic achievement over those from large families because smaller families often provide more parental attention, resources, and support per child. This focused environment promotes better learning opportunities, guidance, and encouragement, while larger families may face resource dilution and divided attention, affecting academic performance. Further, female adolescents belonging to small sized family group excelled with lower mean (Mean = 56.29) over large

sized family group of female adolescents group with higher mean (Mean = 63.38) in terms of manifesting sound adjustment. The t-value between the means was found significant ( $t=9.58$ ;  $df=148$ ;  $P<.01$ ). Students from small families excel in adjustment over those from large families because smaller family sizes often allow for more parental attention, resources, and emotional support. This focused care fosters better communication, guidance, and stability, helping students develop stronger coping skills and social adjustment compared to those in larger families where resources and attention may be divided.

**Table 03:** t-value visualizing the difference between means of short and long sibling distances groups of respondents on the measures academic achievements and adjustment

Variables	Sibling Distances				t-values (df=148)	P
	Short (N=95)		Long (N=55)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Academic Achievement	61.19	6.13	66.05	4.18	5.78	<.01
Adjustment	63.76	6.03	56.35	4.02	8.72	<.01

It is clear from the result table-03 that sibling distance has significant influence on both academic achievement and adjustment respectively. The mean on academic achievement (Mean = 61.19) by short sibling (N=95) distance group of female adolescents groups is lower than the academic achievement (Mean = 66.05) of female adolescents belonging to long sibling distance group. The t-value ( $t=5.78$ ;  $df=148$ ;  $p<.01$ ) sharing the significance of difference between the means was found significant. Thus, long sibling distance boosted up and short sibling distance interferes with academic achievement Adolescent students with long sibling distances excel in academic achievement over those with short sibling distances because wider age gaps often reduce sibling rivalry and competition, allowing for more individual attention from parents. This can create a supportive learning environment and fewer distractions, helping older siblings focus better on their studies. Further, it is clear from the same table-03 that female adolescents belonging to long sibling distance group manifested sound adjustment with mean (Mean = 56.35) as compared to female adolescents belonging to short sibling distance with higher mean (Mean = 63.76). The t-value showing significance of difference between means of the two groups was found significant ( $t= 8.72$ ;  $df=148$ ;  $p<.01$ ). Adolescent students with long sibling distances excel in adjustment over those with short sibling distances because greater age gaps often reduce sibling rivalry and competition. This allows for more individual attention from parents and opportunities to develop independence, leading to better emotional regulation and social skills compared to closely spaced siblings who may face more conflicts and shared pressures.

## CONCLUSIONS

- (i) Family pathology is significant contributor to academic achievement. Sound family relationship is conducive to high academic achievement and vice-versa.
- (ii) Family relationship significantly contributes adjustment. Sound family relationship leads sound adjustment among female adolescents.
- (iii) Small size of the family leads higher academic achievement and vice-versa.
- (iv) Small size of the family contributes significantly to sound adjustment among female adolescents.
- (v) Long sibling distances among female adolescents lead high academic achievement.
- (vi) Large sibling distance leads sound adjustment among female adolescents.

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