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## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF IMPHAL URBAN AREA

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### Abstract

To determine the level of adjustment of college going adolescents of Manipur from the perspective of two dimensions – social and emotional is the main aim of this paper. Adolescents are compared among rural, urban and urban exposed based on the location of their permanent address. Overall adjustment index indicates that there is no high difference between the three groups. However, it reveals that almost 80 percent of them are unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory in adjustment. No case of excellence in adjustment is observed in both rural and urban exposed in the overall dimension. Some important background characteristics of respondents such as their religion, age, sex, family income, duration of stay at the present address are taken into consideration while comparing. These indicators are assumed to be potential factors in adjustment of individuals.

In the present study, 1071 students studying in 2nd semester of their graduation in seven different colleges situated in Imphal urban were sampled. Data collection was done by using the Adjustment Inventory for College Students (AICS-SS). To ascertain the level of adjustment as excellent, good, average, unsatisfactory, very unsatisfactory, structured questionnaire of Likert scale of five point scales has been used and accordingly adjustment index are calculated. Analysis of data is done mostly with percentage method and is supported by chi square test for significant testing.

**Keywords:** College students, Adolescent, Social adjustment, Emotional adjustment, Duration of Stay,

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### INTRODUCTION

The Webster dictionary meaning of the word *adjust* means “1. to adapt or conform oneself (as to new conditions); 2. to achieve mental and behavioral balance between one's own needs and the demands of others” ([www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary)). Carter V. Good (1959) had defined adjustment as the process of searching for and accepting modes of behaviour suitable to the environment as well as the changes that can come up in the environment while Shaffer (1961) described it as the process of maintaining a balance between some felt needs and the circumstances that may lead to the satisfaction of these needs.

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This adjustment has many dimensions. Some of the dimensions of adjustment worth mentioning are home, health, social, educational and emotional adjustment.

Social adjustment refers to the adaptation in social relationships with other people, as can be seen in the individual's attitudes and behaviour. Adolescents need to take part in various social actions in their socialisation process. They are deputed with several social roles and given social trainings usually by elders, parents, teachers or any members of the society through interaction and communication. Their adjustment increases when they are able to cope with social roles and various situational problems in their life. Emotional adjustment is the adaptation depicted by an individual in his or her relationships with other people as well as with himself or herself. This adjustment is mostly reflected in the individual's attitudes and behaviour.

Chen et. al. (2005) conducted a study that mainly focused on peer relationships, school

achievement, and psychological adjustment of the child. Findings of the study revealed that there were gender differences in social functioning and adjustment. Boys were more aggressive and faced more hindrance in social and school performance. Galambos & Leadbeater (2000), Larson et al (2002) and Steinberg & Morris (2001) are of the opinion that social relationships, from both within and beyond the family start exerting influence in the adolescents' developmental stage. In a study to find out whether perceived emotional intelligence is a predictor of psychological adjustment in adolescents, José M. Salguero et al. (2012) found that adolescents who score more in attention to feelings but score low in emotional clarity and repair exhibit deficient psychological adjustment, concretely, higher levels of anxiety, depression, and social stress and lower levels of general mental health. The findings also suggested that perceived emotional intelligence is a stable predictor of adolescent adjustment. Johnson, Vanessa et al. (2010) in a study reveals that emotion coping variables can be associated with college adjustment along with the family factors. It was also found that the relationship between family expressiveness and social adjustment to college is dependent on how they cope emotionally.

In the present era, adolescents are introduced to many modern technological amenities and facilities which sometimes can interfere with their social life and creates adjustment problems. But then again, they themselves are at that stage of life where confusion reigns. Petersen *et al.* (2009) asserted that adjustment to college environment is essential to have positive college outcomes. Similarly, Edward (2003) noted that student's inability to adjust to environmental changes, their inappropriate course choices, personal issues, and financial constraints were some of the symptoms of the students withdrawing from studies. This paper is an attempt to highlight the adjustment level of the college going student of urban Manipur, from the perspective of five dimensions – social, emotional, educational, home and health. A study of the variables such as gender, age, religion, area of residence etc and its possible relationship could help us in understanding the way a college student adjust to his immediate surroundings as well.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present study is a descriptive field survey type of research. One thousand and seventy one students studying in 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of their graduation in seven different colleges situated in Imphal urban area were the respondents. The colleges were D.M College of Arts, D.M College of Science, D.M College of Commerce, G.P Women's College, Imphal College, Manipur College and M.B College. Data collection was done by using the Adjustment Inventory for College Students (AICS-SS) originally developed by A.K.P Singh and R.P Singh. To ascertain the level of adjustment as excellent, good, average, unsatisfactory, very unsatisfactory, structured questionnaire of Likert scale of five point scales has been used and accordingly adjustment index are calculated. Data analysis was done through tables, percentages, chi square and graphical presentation.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

When adolescents reach college level of education, as they are slowly but steadily merged into the world of the adults, they are faced with a number of conflicts. The new environment and situations they often find themselves in create many new challenges for them to overcome. At this adolescence stage, these challenges can be quite intimidating as they struggle to overcome and adjust to the new situation. Those adolescents who could adjust to the changing circumstances readily can be said to be well adjusted and may find success in facing any new situations thrown on them.

Urban exposed students are those who are permanently from rural but are currently residing in any Imphal urban areas.

Table I reveals that many of the students with urban background score average social adjustment (30.6%) while students from rural area fall in very unsatisfactory category (28.3%). Again, students who are urban exposed have in unsatisfactory social adjustment. Majority of the males (35.8%) score more in unsatisfactory social adjustment while most females in very unsatisfactory social adjustment.

Satisfactory to very unsatisfactory social adjustment is observed as the age increases from 17 (31.9%), 18 (32.8%) to 19 (31.2%) years.

**Table I: Association of Social Adjustment with Residence, Gender, Age and Religion**

Respondents' Background	Social Adjustment					Total	X <sup>2</sup>
	Excellent	Good	Average	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory		
Residence							
Urban	4(1.8)	27(12.3)	67(30.6)	59(26.9)	62(28.3)	219(100)	9.574
Rural	2(0.3)	83(12.9)	186(28.8)	185(28.7)	189(29.3)	645(100)	
Urban exposed	3(1.4)	18(8.7)	56(27.1)	66(31.9)	64(30.9)	207(100)	
Gender							
Male	3(0.8)	66(17.9)	117(31.7)	132(35.8)	51(13.8)	369(100)	73.77* *
Female	6(0.9)	62(8.8)	192(27.4)	178(25.4)	264(37.6)	702(100)	
Age							
17	3(2.1)	17(11.8)	46(31.9)	37(25.7)	41(28.5)	144(100)	11.01
18	2(0.4)	54(11.8)	124(27.1)	150(32.8)	127(27.8)	457(100)	
19	4(0.9)	57(12.2)	138(29.5)	123(26.3)	146(31.2)	468(100)	
20	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(50)	0(0.0)	1(50)	2(100)	
Religion							
Traditional Religion of the Meeteis	4(1.4)	41(14.0)	84(28.7)	93(31.7)	71(24.2)	293(100)	18.32
Hindu	4(0.7)	58(10.5)	171(31.0)	156(28.3)	162(29.4)	551(100)	
Islam	0(0.0)	9(17.3)	16(30.8)	13(25.0)	14(26.9)	52(100)	
Christian	1(0.6)	20(11.4)	38(21.7)	48(27.4)	68(38.9)	175(100)	
Total	9(0.8)	128(12)	309(28.9)	310(28.9)	315(29.4)	1071(100)	

\*\*Significant at 5% level of significance.

Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

**Table II: Association of emotional adjustment with residence, gender, religion and family income**

Respondents' Background	Emotional Adjustment				Total	X <sup>2</sup>
	Good	Average	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory		
Residence						
Urban	2(0.9)	44(20.1)	100(45.7)	73(33.3)	219(100.0)	3.95
Rural	6(0.9)	115(17.8)	320(49.6)	204(31.6)	645(100.0)	
Urban exposed	2(1.0)	28(13.5)	105(50.7)	72(34.8)	207(100.0)	
Gender						
Male	8(2.2)	112(30.4)	184(49.9)	65(17.6)	369(100.0)	101.57**
Female	2(0.3)	75(10.7)	341(48.6)	284(40.5)	702(100.0)	
Religion						
Meitei Religion	2(0.7)	58	136	97	293(100.0)	9.54
Hindu	4(0.7)	101(18.3)	277(50.3)	169(30.7)	551(100.0)	
Islam	1(1.9)	8(15.4)	24(46.2)	19(36.5)	52(100.0)	
Christian	3(1.7)	20(11.4)	88(50.3)	64(36.6)	175(100.0)	
Family Income						
Below 50,000	0(0.0)	2(33.3)	1(16.7)	3(50.0)	6(100.0)	10.79
50,000 - 1 lakh	2(1.3)	27(18.1)	70(47.0)	50(33.6)	149(100.0)	
1 lakh - 6 lakhs	8(0.9)	148(17.4)	429(50.5)	265(31.2)	850(100.0)	
Above 6 lakhs	0(0.0)	10(15.2)	25(37.9)	31(47.0)	66(100.0)	
Total	10(0.9)	187(17.5)	525(49.0)	349(32.6)	1071(100.0)	

\*\*Significant at 5% level of significance.

Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

**Table III: Association of Overall Adjustment with Residence, Gender, Religion and Duration of Stay**

Respondents' Background	Overall Adjustment				Total	X <sup>2</sup>
	Good	Average	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory		
Residence						
Urban	3(1.4)	44(20.1)	88(40.2)	84(38.4)	219(100.0)	7.28
Rural	12(1.9)	96(14.9)	314(48.7)	223(34.6)	645(100.0)	
Urban exposed	2(1.0)	30(14.5)	100(48.3)	75(36.2)	207(100.0)	
Gender						
Male	10(2.7)	98(26.6)	192(52.0)	69(18.7)	369(100.0)	93.60
Female	7(1.0)	72(10.3)	310(44.2)	313(44.6)	702(100.0)	
Religion						
Meitei Religion	4(1.4)	57(19.5)	126(43.0)	106(36.2)	293(100.0)	10.83
Hindu	9(1.6)	78(14.2)	279(50.6)	185(33.6)	551(100.0)	
Islam	1(1.9)	10(19.2)	18(34.6)	23(44.2)	52(100.0)	
Christian	3(1.7)	25(14.3)	79(45.1)	68(38.9)	175(100.0)	
Duration of Stay						
Less than 1 year	0(0.0)	4(21.1)	6(31.6)	9(47.4)	19(100.0)	18.26
1 - 3 years	1(0.3)	45(15.0)	159(52.8)	96(31.9)	301(100.0)	
3 - 5 years	1(3.1)	6(18.8)	11(34.4)	14(43.8)	32(100.0)	
5 - 10 years	1(8.3)	3(25.0)	3(25.0)	5(41.7)	12(100.0)	
More than 10 years	0(0.0)	3(16.7)	9(50.0)	6(33.3)	18(100.0)	
Since birth	14(2.0)	109(15.8)	314(45.6)	252(36.6)	689(100.0)	
Total	17(1.6)	170(15.9)	501(46.9)	382(35.7)	1071(100.0)	

**\*\*Significant at 5% level of significance.**

*Figures in the parentheses are percentages.*

From the religion angle, majority of the Hindus (31%) and Muslims (30.8%) score in average while most of the students following the traditional religion of the Meeteis (31.7%) have unsatisfactory score. Majority of the Christians scored in very unsatisfactory social adjustment score.

An overview of Table II shows that most of the students irrespective of their area of residence score in unsatisfactory emotional adjustment - urban (45.7%), rural (49.6%) and urban exposed (50.7%). Again, majority of both the males (49.9%) and females (48.6%) also score under unsatisfactory emotional adjustment. This shows a significant difference of 101.57 at 5% level of significance.

This trend is also seen in case of religion - students following traditional religion of the Meeteis (46.4%), Hindu (50.3%), Islam (46.2%) and Christianity (50.3%) comes under unsatisfactory emotional adjustment.

In the case of family income, those with income of below Rs 50,000 (50%) and above 6 lakhs

(47%) have very unsatisfactory emotional adjustment, while those from Rs 50,000 - 1 lakh and 1 lakh to 6 lakhs rupees of family income come under the unsatisfactory category.

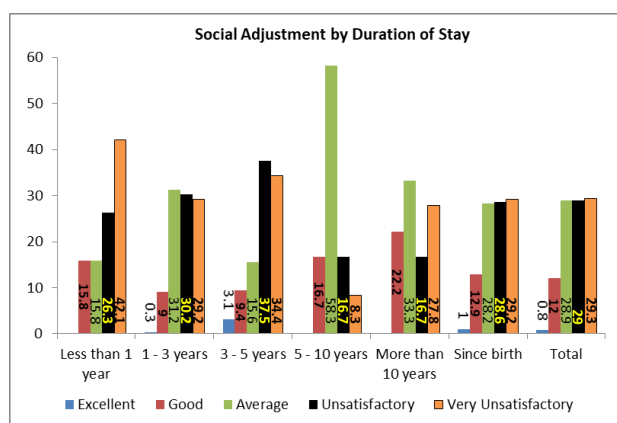
Table III depicts the association of overall adjustment with residence, gender, religion and duration of stay. Most of the students, irrespective of which area of residence they come from, have unsatisfactory overall adjustment urban (40.2%), rural (48.7%) and urban exposed (48.3%). Overall majority of the males (52%) score under unsatisfactory adjustment while many of the females (44.6%) come under very unsatisfactory overall adjustment.

In case of religion, many of the college students following the traditional religion of the Meeteis (43%), Hindu(50.6%) and Christianity (45.1%) have overall unsatisfactory adjustment while majority of the Muslim students have very unsatisfactory overall adjustment. College students who have relatively short duration of residing in their present area of residence score very unsatisfactorily less than 1 year (47.4%), 3—5 years (43.8%) and 5—10 years (41.7%),

while those who have comparatively longer duration of stay in their present area of residence score slightly better in unsatisfactory category—more than 10 years (50%) and since birth (45.6%). This may be due to the adjusting required in a new area or place of residence.

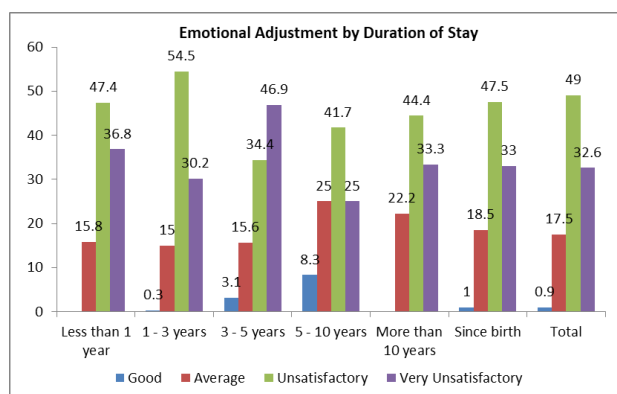
## DURATION OF STAY AT THE PRESENT ADDRESS AND ADJUSTMENT

From the another point of view, it is generally agreed that adjustment level is very much dependent of one's duration of stay at the present address irrespective of the place of residence, either urban or rural. Duration of stay has great role in adjustment and hence a resident in a place since birth usually has better mechanism socially or emotionally or culturally.



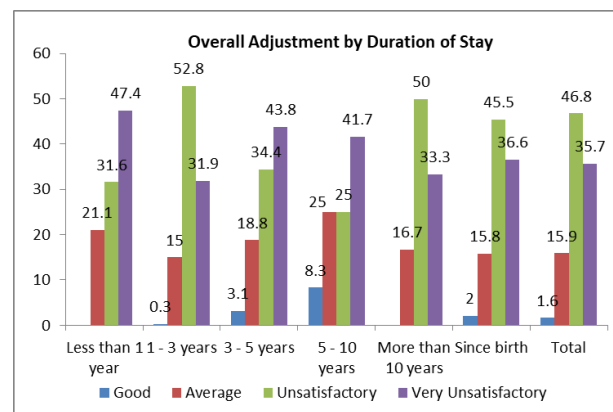
**Fig. 1: Social Adjustment and Duration of stay**

Fig 1 illustrates that majority of the students (42.1%) who are staying less than a year at their present address score under very unsatisfied social adjustment. Surprisingly, majority of the students (58.3%) who have stayed from 5 to 10 years at their present address score under average social adjustment.



**Fig. 2: Emotional Adjustment and Duration of stay**

Excellent level of emotional adjustment was not found in any of the section of the people. Good adjustment is mostly observed among those whose duration of stay at the present address is 5-10 years, since 8.3 percent of them were having good emotional adjustment. By looking at the overall scenario emotional adjustment is found to be very low and unsatisfactory.



**Fig. 3: Overall Adjustments and Duration of stay**

Fig 3 depicts the overall adjustment of the respondents and reveals that majority of them belonging to the duration of stay at the present address of 1 to 3 years (52.8%), of more than 10 years (50%) and since birth (45.5%) score under the average overall adjustment category. Most of the very unsatisfactory overall adjustment can be seen in those respondents who are staying for less than a year at their present address.

## CONCLUSION

The present study examines the nature and pattern of social adjustment with residence, gender, age and religion; emotional adjustment with residence, gender, religion and family income and also overall adjustment with residence, gender, religion and duration of stay. The study shows that very unsatisfactory level of social adjustment is observed significantly among the female students. From the religion point of view, the level of satisfaction is more among the Hindus and Muslims. However, no significant difference can be concretely observed. Urban exposed students are observed to be better adjusted as compared to its urban and rural counterparts. Adjustment level of average, unsatisfactory and very unsatisfactory are found to be in the teen age group students i.e., 17, 18

and 19 years respectively. Very less no. of students felt excellent and good adjustment among different age groups. Surprisingly, students who belong to traditional religion of the Meeteis and Christians felt high unsatisfactory and very unsatisfactory level of social adjustment. This trend of high level of unsatisfactory social adjustment among these indigenous students may be an area of future research. Not surprisingly, students who belong to Hindus and Muslims felt average social adjustment in their learning centres.

As for emotional adjustment, most of the students irrespective of their area of residence, their gender and also by their religion score high unsatisfactory level. By their family income, those with less income i.e., income of below Rs 50,000 and high income i.e., above 6 lakh have very unsatisfactory emotional adjustment, while those who belong to middle income i.e., Rs 50,000 - 1 lakh and 1 lakh to 6 lakh felt high unsatisfactory level of emotional adjustment.

In the case of overall adjustment, most of the students, irrespective of which area of residence they belong, have high unsatisfactory overall adjustment. Both male and female students have a trend of high unsatisfactory to very unsatisfactory overall adjustment in their learning centres.

In case of religion, many of the college students who belong to various religion like the traditional religion of the Meetei, Hindu, Christianity have overall unsatisfactory adjustment while majority of the Muslim students have very unsatisfactory overall adjustment. College students who have relatively short duration of residing in their present area of residence score very unsatisfactory level of overall adjustment while those who have comparatively longer duration of stay in their present area of residence score slightly better in unsatisfactory category.

Adjustment is significantly related with the duration of their stay at present address. Surprisingly, majority of the students who have stayed from 5 to 10 years at their present address score under average social adjustment. Good adjustment is mostly observed among those whose duration of stay at the present address is 5-10 years. By looking at the overall scenario emotional adjustment is found to be very low and unsatisfactory. Most of the very unsatisfactory

overall adjustment can be seen in those respondents who are staying for less than a year at their present address.

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