



Study of Adjustment among Adolescents of Different Type of Schools in respect of Use of Defense Mechanism

Dr Gurdeep Kaur, Assistant Professor, DAV College of Education, Abohar
Paramjeet Kaur, M.Ed. Student (2016-2018)

Abstract- Today the nature of adolescent problems varies with social and living conditions. The possibilities of frustration increase with maturity, the expansion of the needs and requirements of adolescents. The major source of frustration is cultural demands, the home situations, the social class status and the school. These sources do not operate separately. It is the combined influence of these and other forces in the adolescent's environment that operate to produce a well-adjusted or poorly adjusted adolescent. The success of adolescent partly depends upon what his environment has to offer.

Keywords: adolescent problems, Defense Mechanism, cultural demands

I. INTRODUCTION

According to **Hilgard (1957)** failure to resolve conflict or to overcome frustration by means of direct problem solving method may lead to a variety of attempts to adjust to the situation and to obtain relief from the tension state during the ensuing of the frustration, while the ways in which people meet frustrating situations are highly individual and complex. It is convenient to sort out certain desirable modes of adjustment that are used so frequently as to deserve names. They are called defense mechanisms because they protect the individual's self-esteem and defend him against excessive anxiety when faced with continuing frustration.

With reference to defense- mechanisms **Conger (1977)** observed that anxiety represents a painful state of heightened tension that markedly disturbs psychological equilibrium, when the pressure of anxiety is excessive and cannot be relieved by practical problem solving methods, the ego must use impractical methods called defense mechanisms. These mechanisms are primary and constitute the methods of adjustment used by everyone - by normal individuals 'as well as by those who are maladjusted. It may be further observed that feelings of guilt, hostility, depression and anxiety are destructive to positive self-concepts, much like germs which are destructive to bodies. Just as bodies have physiological defenses to combat bacterial invasion, so do have psychological forces to ward off self destructive tendencies. These psychological forces are called defense mechanisms.

They have the following principal characteristics :

- They deny, falsify or distort reality,
- They are ways of maintaining self-esteem in situations in which one feels inadequate or has already failed.
- They are ways of reducing feelings of anxiety, guilt, hostility and depression,
- They are ways of convincing people that they are really adequate and worthwhile.
- They operate unconsciously, so that person is never aware of them.

It can be said that mechanisms are concerned with managing in some way the impulses whose direct and natural expression gives rise to anxiety. Mechanisms are not only defenses against anxiety but also indicate the methods by which the impulses giving rise to anxiety are redirected. It should be further seen that defense mechanisms are neither good nor bad, constructive or destructive, to be approved or disapproved. They are necessary and neutral. Mechanisms are universal, found in every individual and may not be rejected as undesirable in a whole-sale fashion. The value which may be attributed to any mechanism depends upon the out-come of the operation of that mechanism, rather than on any absolute judgement which may be placed on the mechanism itself. The same mechanism can be judged as good or bad according to the use to which it is put and the social value of the out-come. Throughout the years, the list of defenses has grown bigger and in 1946, Freud's daughter Anna, who continued her father's work listed ten defenses. Since that time the list has grown longer and longer. So investigator will investigate fifteen defense mechanisms.

II. DEFENSE MECHANISM

The term defense mechanism was used for the first time in Sigmund Freud's paper, "The Defense Neuro-psychosis" where conflicts of the nature were shown to be the pathogenic agents. In this and some subsequent papers, "The Aetiology of Hysteria", "Further Remarks On The Defence Neuro-psychosis", the term was employed to describe the ego's struggle against painful or intolerable ideas and effects. Sigmund Freud (1894) proposed that actions or events that offend the super ego and do damage to one's self image result in anxiety in the ego. To keep this damage and anxiety to a minimum, a person develops and uses ego defense mechanisms as a way of protecting the self. Anna Freud (1946) continued the work of Sigmund Freud and described the defense mechanisms in detail. The Modern Encyclopedia (1968) defines defense mechanism as a psychoanalytic term which includes the various mental processes by which a painful and disturbing effect is kept out of consciousness, together with the ideas, memories and impulses to which it is attached, as in repression or detached from them. Arkoff (1968) defines defense mechanisms as certain patterns of behavior which are employed to protect oneself against threat or anxiety.

According to **The New Caxton Encyclopedia (2007)** defense mechanisms are unconsciously used, by which an individual protects his self confidence and self esteem from other people or what interpreted as a threat from other people or from subjective anxieties.

To summaries the definitions of the term, it may be said that defense mechanisms are activities of ego which come into play whenever the ego experiences a drive activity or its accompanying effect, as a danger. They work automatically, not accompanied by consciousness. For the ego to adopt a defensive attitude, the precise nature of the threat is immaterial. On the other hand, the particular type of danger against which defense is directed is important for determining which of the available mechanisms the ego will select. In the present research, following fifteen defense mechanisms were chosen to study their impact on the adjustment of adolescents .

- Displacement
- Regression
- Projection
- Denial
- Substitution
- Day-dreaming
- Aggression
- Attention getting
- Rationalization
- Identification
- Sublimation
- Withdrawal
- Compensation
- Self-punishment
- Reaction Formation

Thus the defenses described are ways, the psyche has to protect itself from internal or external tension. The defenses avoid reality, exclude reality, redefine reality or reverse reality. They place inner feelings on the outer world or withdraw from reality. According to Hall (1954) " They tie up psychological energy which could be used for more effective ego activity. When a defense becomes very influential it dominates the ego and curtails its flexibility and its adaptability. If the defenses fail to hold, the ego has nothing to fall back upon and is overwhelmed by anxiety".

III. ADJUSTMENT

Adjustment, in psychology, refers to the behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. Human beings are able to adjust to the physical, social and psychological demands that arise from having inter dependability with other individual. Adjustment, as a process describes and explains the ways and means of an individual's adaptation to his self and his environment without reference to the quality of such adjustment or its outcome in terms of success or failure. It is an organizational behavior in life situations at home, at school, at work in growing up and in ageing. It helps one to keep out basic impulses at tolerable levels, to believe in one's own abilities and to achieve desired goals. Thus, adjustment helps for self-initiated growth and development along intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and vocational

dimensions. Adjustment refers to the psychological process through which people manage or cope with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It connotes conformity, it deals with the way an individual adapts to his environment and demand of life. This includes how he relates to other (interpersonal) and how he deals with his responsibilities and inner feelings. Psychologically, adjustment helps the organism to cope with the demands and pressures of the outside world as well as the needs, desires and conflicts experiences from within.

In present, revolutionary changes are taking place in different fields and to cope up with such environment adjustment becomes necessary. To keep pace with the changing society, one has to make changes in our self or his environment. If the individual does not keep pace with the changing time, he is thrown back in the society. So the individual has to constantly make change in him to make the adjustment possible. All people have capabilities and needs that for many different reasons are never permitted or enabled to emerge. In this way the conditions under which everyone functions invariably produce frustrations, fears and other physical and psychological stresses. If the person, who mentally emerges is fairly healthy he is good composition of stable and enduring personality patterns that have been shaped by the constant challenging interaction with environment. Each obstacle and every stress has been met and in some way overcome or lived with. In short it can be described the give and take of living by saying that the person has adjusted and continues to adjust so long as he participates in the world. The adjustment may be described in terms of psychological stresses like frustration, anxiety and conflict on the one hand and the reaction to such challenges by responses such as aggression, the defense mechanisms or when the threats are too great by emotional disorder.

Symond (2016) defines adjustment from various points of views :

- i) Adjustment may be simply defined as a satisfactory relation of an organism to environment. It may also be defined as adaption to the demands of reality.
- ii) From the point of view of biology - adjustment is equivalent to survival.
- iii) According to the statistical concept of adjustment an individual is well adjusted in this sense, who approaches the group averages or norms and avoids deviations towards either extreme; the typical individual is the best adjusted, while the eccentric, queer, strange or deviant person is poorly adjusted.
- iv) According to the concept of values - adjustment is that which brings to a person and to his social group the good and protects him from the bad.

According to Kuhlman (2012) all people have psychological and physical needs which constantly or intermittently require satisfaction. The process by which they overcome obstacles to satisfy their needs is termed as the adjustment process. Adjustment is very important in the life. It is a process which maintains a balance between the needs and their satisfaction, by which the person varies his behavior to suit the conditions. It a relationship between an individual and his environment. Adjustment is a desire by the individual to fit into taste patterns, role patterns and the behavior codes of the group, within which he works or lives and readiness to submit his own striving and comforts to those of the group. Each person constantly strives to meet his needs and reach his goals. At the same time he is under pressure from the environment to behave in certain way. Adjustment involves the reconciliation of personal and environmental demands.

IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Bhatta, et. al, (1961) compared urban and rural adolescents on adjustment and reported that belongingness to some community and (urban/rural) residence area influenced the adjustment scores.

Qadri and Kaleem (1971) in their study on effect of parental attitudes on personality adjustment and self esteem of children, observed that children of accepting parents showed better adjustment and greater self esteem than those of rejecting parents.

Epstein (1978) in a study "Family and school interaction and main effects on effective outcomes", studied the effects on development of students of open and traditional family and school environment. He observed that the greater participation in family decision at all grades was associated with more positive personality development and school coping skills. On the other hand participation in class room decisions was related to more positive school coping skills. He further observed that higher family socio-economic status was important for higher aspirations.

Reddy (1979) attempted to provide an answer to the question, "Do the rich and poor differ in the levels of their adjustment" ? It was seen that the subjects from poorer families had more problems and were significantly less well adjusted than the rich or the middle class subjects.

Marjoribank's (1980) supported the Adlerian proposition that children's feelings of inferiority at school are associated with their perceptions of a school environment as an interrelated set of supportive community contexts.

Grzegolowaska and Helena (1980) found that it is not necessary that high reactive students should make greater use of defense mechanisms than low reactive students. But it was confirmed partially that defense mechanisms would be used more when level of activation was situationally elevated.

Narvo (1984) conducted a study, "The Relationship of Gender, Self-Esteem And Cognitive styles of ego Defense Mechanisms". He found that

- i) Males show a preference for the use of defenses of turning against object and projection whereas females showed preference for the defenses of turning against self and reversal.
- ii) High self esteem individuals tend to employ more reversal than low self-esteem. Low self-esteem tend to employ more turning against object and projection than high self-esteem individuals.
- iii) Field independent individuals tend to rely more on the differentiated defenses of turning against object and projection than the field dependent individuals. Field dependent individuals tend to rely more on the undifferentiated defenses of reversal than field independent individuals. The additional information points to no sex differences in self-esteem. Males were found to be more field independent than females. No statistically significant correlations were found between verbal intelligence, social class, birth order and religion to ego defense mechanisms. Some significant correlations were found between factors in parent child relationship to ego defense mechanisms.

Bhagia (2002) with the help of his School Adjustment Inventory surveyed school adjustment of Rajasthan pupils and observed that rural students excelled urban ones in school adjustment.

Morgan and Alwin (2010) observed a strong negative relationship of school size to rates of participation in the behavior setting of the school.

Bart (2010) observed that much of the problematic behavior among students was instigated by trouble making students in well known groups that had negative attitude towards school. He further observed that most students were not trouble makers. Most students indicated that students would tend tolerate independent student class room projects and agonistic students groups were small. He concluded that discipline should be coupled with serious instruction on effective communication.

Michael and Barbara (2011) in their study "The interaction of school and environment "found that the achievement of the society's higher status group was more sensitive to changes in the school atmosphere than that of the lower status group. Students revealing a strong internal locus of control appeared to be less affected by change in the environment than others.

Baumgarten (2013) on the basis of his study on the adolescent's evaluation of defensive responses concluded that defensive responses are perceived and evaluated differently by adolescent girls and boys.

EMERGENCE OF THE PROBLEM

Today's adolescent is growing up in a world different from that of his fore-fathers. The increased complexity of our social order has brought about a greater demand for guidance and training if growing boys and girls are to be able to meet satisfactorily the conditions they will face tomorrow. However growing up itself is accompanied by many problems. These relate to various aspects of the adolescent's life and are very real and significant to the individual concerned, though they may appear trivial to the mature adult. Studies showed that home and school problems loom larger in the lives of growing boys and girls. The consequences of these problems are important in connection with adjustments of adolescent, in various fields of life. As discussed earlier It is convenient to sort out certain desirable modes of adjustment that are used so frequently as to deserve names called defense mechanisms because they protect the individual's self-esteem and defend him against excessive anxiety when faced with continuing frustration. So investigator will study adjustment among adolescents of different type of schools in respect of use of defense mechanism.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Study of Adjustment among Adolescents of Different Type of Schools in respect of Use of Defense Mechanism."

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) To study the difference in adjustment among high and low level defense mechanism groups of adolescents.
- 2) To study the difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with high defense mechanism tendency.
- 3) To study the difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with low defense mechanism tendency.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- 1) There exists significant difference in adjustment among high and low level defense mechanism groups of adolescents.
- 2) There exist no significant difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with high defense mechanism tendency.
- 3) There exist significant difference of adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with low defense mechanism tendency.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

One of the most fascinating themes which form the subject matter of the present research programme embodies the multidisciplinary approach which attempts to decipher the adolescents behavior pattern by making a combined study of their problems, defense mechanisms they use and adjustments they show to environment. The present study is significant in view of the fact that subject matter of research has not been investigated so far in India. The study evidently is of pioneering nature, handicapped by the paucity of correlative data in the published literature on this multidisciplinary theme. The investigator has tried to investigate this problem in its diverse facets in order to identify the shades on the canvas whose identity could be sharpened on the basis of the data accruing from the present study. Therefore the present research programme was taken up to investigate the defense mechanisms used by adolescents in the face of the various problems and to discern the impact of the defense mechanisms on their adjustment to environment. Keeping in view the fact that different school environments influence adolescents in different manners the present study was conducted on the adolescents studying in different school environments.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

Study was conducted through normative survey method.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

A sample of 200 adolescents studying in 12th class were taken for the present study from different senior secondary schools of Fazilka district. Random sampling technique was employed for selection of sample.

TOOLS USED

- 1) Defense mechanism tool developed by Kaur (2013)
- 2) Adjustment inventory developed by Mangal (2007)

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES TO BE USED

- 1) K-S test was used to check the normality of data.
- 2) ANOVA and t-test was used to calculate the significant differences.

V. TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

The result have been discussed in the light of the hypotheses of the study as below.

Hypothesis - 1

“There exists significant difference in adjustment among high and low level defence mechanism groups of adolescents”

To verify the above hypothesis t-ratio was computed between mean scores of high and low level defence mechanism groups of adolescents. Table 1 given below shows the result.

Table 1
t-ratio between mean scores of adjustment among high and low level defence mechanism group of adolescents.

Sub Sample	N	Mean	SD	SE _d	t-ratio	Level of significance
High	76	163.86	3.89	5.62	1.61	Not significant
Low	74	154.78	4.06			

Table 1 shows that t-ratio between the mean scores of low and high level defence mechanism groups of adolescents is 1.61. The t-ratio in order to be significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level should be 1.96 and 2.58 respectively. Since obtained t-ratio is greater than this so it is not significant at .05 and .01 level of significance. Hence hypothesis 1 “There exists significant difference in adjustment among high and low level defence mechanism groups of adolescents” is rejected at .05 and .01 level of significance.

Hypothesis - 2

“There exists no significant difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with high Defence mechanism tendency.”

To verify the above hypothesis one way ANOVA was used to see significant difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with high Defence mechanism tendency. Table 2 given below shows the result.

Table 2
F- ratio in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with high Defence mechanism tendency.

S.No	Variables	N	F- ratio	Level of significance
1	Government	24	2.45	Not significant
2	Private	24		
3	Government aided	24		

Table 2 shows F-ratio in adjustment among Government, Private and Government aided school students is 2.45. F-ratio to be significant at .05 and .01 level should be 3.13 and 4.92 respectively. Since obtained F-ratio is less than this so it is not significant at .05 and .01 level of significance. It means that there is no significant difference in adjustment among Govt. Private and Govt. aided school students. Hence hypothesis -2 "There exists no significant difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with high Defence mechanism tendency." is accepted at .05 and .01 level of significance.

Hypothesis - 3

"There exists no significant difference of adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with low Defence mechanism tendency." To verify the above hypothesis one way ANOVA was used to see significant difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with low Defence mechanism tendency. Table 3 given below shows the result.

Table 3
F- ratio in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with low Defence mechanism tendency.

S.No	Variables	N	F	Level of significance
1	Government	24	1.24	Not significant
2	Private	24		
3	Government aided	24		

Table 3 shows F-ratio in adjustment among Government, Private and Government aided school students is 1.24. F-ratio to be significant at .05 and .01 level should be 3.13 and 4.92 respectively. Since obtained F-ratio is less than this so it is not significant at .05 and .01 level of significance. It means that there is no significant difference in adjustment among Govt. Private and Govt. aided school students.

Hence hypothesis -2 "There exists no significant difference in adjustment among government, private and government aided school students with low Defence mechanism tendency." is accepted at .05 and .01 level of significance.

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- 1) Study may be replicated on a large sample.
- 2) Study may be replicated with some other variables like anxiety, achievement, personality etc.
- 3) Some other types of defence mechanisms may be included in the study.
- 4) Study may be replicated on different sampling frame.

VII. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

From the present study on adolescents studying in different schools of Fazilka district, it has become evident that adolescents do not differ in their adjustment with respect to use of defence mechanism. These defence mechanisms sometimes help in their adjustments but many a time these adjustments are found to be disturbed. From this investigation conclusion could be drawn regarding the direct impact of defence mechanisms on adjustments and it can be said with some confidence that the adolescents use some defence mechanisms like identification, denial etc for their adjustments. Whether the adjustments are the results of defence mechanisms could not be ascertained in the investigation. It is therefore

required from the teachers and others who are concerned with the teaching and training of the adolescents that they should keep open minds regarding the use of various defence mechanisms by the adolescents. The present investigation helps in understanding the way in which the adolescents behave with respect to problems. Thus understanding is very much required by the teachers and the parents. Adolescents should be provided with better environments so that they may have better adjustments. Attitude of teachers towards students should be very friendly and sympathetic so that they may freely and comfortably repose confidence in them, thereby proper solution to their problems may be obtained. Similarly parents should treat their adolescent more on friendly basis and try to gain their confidence. It will help adolescent to express their own views and also listen to their parents and then mutually reach to some conclusions regarding their difficulties. This approach will help a great deal in reducing their anxieties and lead to better adjustments in various fields of life. It is important that parents should meet the teachers of their adolescents at least once in a month to know about each others views regarding their respective adolescents and then help them accordingly. Each individual case is to be examined in itself so far as the use of various defence mechanisms is concerned. Teachers and parents should pay personal attention to those adolescents who are found to use defence mechanisms in excess.

REFERENCES

1. **Arkoff, A. (1968).** *Adjustment and mental health.* University of Hawaii, Mcgraw Hill book company , U.S.A.
2. **Bart, W.M. (2010).** Attention structure, antisocial behavior and peer group regulation of behavior among adolescent students. *ADOLESCENT*16(62).
3. 433-442.
4. **Bhagia, N.M. (2002).** *Development school adjustment inventory.* Manas(1).
5. **Bhati , L.J. (1961).** Inquiry into psychology factors related to adolescent adjustment . Project report , M.S university of baroda.
6. **Baumgarten, F.W. (2013).** Adolescent 's evaluations of defensive reponses. *Dissertation abstracts international.* Pp.702 B.
7. **Conger, J. (1977).** *Adolescence and youth .* Harper international edition. Harper and row publishers. New York, Hagastown; sanfransisco; London.
8. **Epstein, J. L. (1978).** Family and school interaction and main effect on effective outcomes . *PSYCHOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS* ,60,887.
9. **Freud, A. (1937).** *The Ego and the mechanisms of defense,* London: Hogarth Press and Institute of Psycho-Analysis.
10. **Grzegolowaska, K. and Helena, J. (1980).** Use of defense mechanism as determined by reactivity and situational level of activation . *Polish psychological Bulletin* ,11(3), 155-158.
11. **Hall, G.S. (1954).** *A primer of Freudian psychology .*New York , Mentor books.
12. **Hillgard, E. R. (1957).** *Introduction to psychology .* 2nd edition ,standford university , Harcourt , Brace and company , New York.
13. **Kuhlan, R. G. (2012).** *The psychology of adolescent development .*Harper and Brother, New York.
14. **Morgn, D. L. and Alwin, D. F. (2010).** When less is more : school size and student social participation . *Social psychology quarterly* , 43(2),241-252.
15. **Marjoribank, K. (1980).** All alderian typology of school learning environments and children's feelings of interiority . *PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORTS.* 47(3),787-794.
16. **Michacl, C. and Barbara, F. (2011).** The interaction of school environment and students traits. *Educational research* 20(2),114-121.
17. **Narvo, D. (1984).** The relationship of gender, self esteem and cognitive styles of ego defense mechanism . *DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS INTERNATIONAL*, 44(8), 2599B.
18. **Qadri, A. J. and Kaleem, G.A.(1971).** Effect of parental attitudes on personality adjustmentand self-esteem of children. *Bahavioromentric*,1, pp.19-24.
19. **Symond, P. M. (2016).** *Dynamic of human adjustment .* Appleton- century crofts, Inc., New York , pp.1-666.