

The Relationship between Academic Performance and Socio-Economic Status on Students' Adjustment Problems: Basis for a Student Support and Development Program

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Abstract:

This study investigated the relationship between academic performance, socio-economic status, and adjustment problems among third-year and fourth-year high school students, focusing on seven areas of concern based on the Mooney Problem Checklist. Specifically, the research explored issues related to health and physical development, school, home and family life, money, work, future concerns, boy-girl relationships, social relationships, and self-centred concerns. A descriptive research method was employed, and data were collected using the Mooney Problem Checklist. The Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to determine any significant relationships between the variables. Results indicated that students were generally of average academic achievement and fell within the lower-middle socio-economic status. While students reported serious concerns in areas such as health, physical development, and family life, relationships with others were perceived as less problematic. Furthermore, no significant relationship was found between students' academic performance, socio-economic status, and adjustment problems. It was concluded that the students' adjustment problems were not influenced by their academic or socio-economic background, and they performed according to their intelligence quotient. The study recommends enhancing guidance services, providing opportunities for students to develop reasoning skills through clubs and organizations, and improving values education through peer counselling and teacher support.

Keywords: Adjustment Problems, Academic Achievement, Socio-Economic Status, Extracurricular Activities

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by rapid physical growth, emotional changes, and shifting social relationships. During this period, students often face various adjustment challenges as they work to establish personal identity and independence while managing academic pressures and social expectations. Common difficulties include peer pressure, identity confusion, emotional instability, and stress, which stem from a complex interplay of personal, familial, and environmental factors. These adjustment problems can negatively impact academic performance, an important indicator of student success and future potential. Therefore, understanding how such difficulties arise and their relationship to academic outcomes is essential for designing effective interventions that support adolescent development and learning.

Socio-economic status (SES) is a multifaceted concept that reflects an individual's or family's social position based on income, education, and occupation. According to Hossain et al. (2019), SES is measured by family income, parental education, occupational standing, and access to social resources. Beyond financial means, SES shapes a student's access to developmental opportunities, learning materials, extracurricular activities, and a supportive home environment. Turner and Flemming (2019) highlight that SES influences cognitive development, motivation, values, and social functioning through factors like parental involvement and cultural

exposure. Research from OECD (2019) and Udayakumar, Rajendran, and Rani (2022) confirms that students from higher SES backgrounds typically demonstrate stronger academic performance than those from disadvantaged contexts. These findings underscore the significant role SES plays in educational experiences and outcomes.

Research also indicates that students with better academic performance tend to face fewer adjustment problems. High-achieving students often possess effective time management, problem-solving skills, and coping strategies that help them balance academic demands and personal challenges. They also exhibit higher self-efficacy and resilience, which protect them against common adolescent stressors. However, the extent to which SES influences or moderates the link between academic performance and adjustment remains insufficiently explored, particularly among high school students who encounter complex academic and emotional challenges. This study aims to examine the interplay between academic performance, socio-economic status, and adjustment problems to provide deeper insights into how these factors collectively affect students' ability to adapt and succeed in school.

Understanding these relationships is vital for developing responsive support systems within educational settings. Identifying key contributors to adjustment difficulties can inform the design of targeted interventions such as enhanced guidance counseling, peer mentoring, and extracurricular programs focused on social skills and emotional well-being. Such initiatives foster a positive, inclusive school climate where students feel supported and empowered to overcome challenges. Moreover, collaboration among teachers, parents, and mental health professionals can strengthen these efforts. Ultimately, this study seeks to generate actionable knowledge to help school leaders, counselors, and policymakers create learning environments that promote both academic excellence and psychological wellness for all students.

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design to systematically examine variables and their relationships within the educational context. This approach enabled the collection of quantifiable data reflecting current conditions, behaviors, and attitudes without altering the environment (Creswell, 2017).

Research Setting

The study was conducted at Dumingag National High School, a public secondary school with 1,387 students across four year levels and 44 teachers, providing a representative environment for examining the research variables.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were 250 third and fourth-year students selected from a total population of 668 using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error. Representing 37.42% of the population, the respondents were proportionally drawn from each of the 12 sections through stratified random sampling using the lottery method to ensure fair representation across year levels.

Research Instrument

The study utilized the Mooney Problem Check List (Junior High School Form), a 210-item inventory designed to identify common student problems across seven areas. Due to the academic gap between American and Filipino students, the junior form was deemed appropriate for third and fourth-year students, with minor modifications to items 20 and 21. The frequency of checked items was recorded and ranked. Socio-economic status was assessed using an adapted NEDA questionnaire, considering parental education, occupation, number of children, and total family income, then categorized into six SES levels. Academic achievement was measured by the students' grade point averages in English, Filipino, Math, Science, and Social Studies for SY 1980–1981, classified as above average (82–85), average (77–81), or below average (72–76).

Data-Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, the researcher obtained formal permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Zamboanga del Sur and the principal of Dumingag National High School to ensure ethical compliance. Coordination with teachers helped schedule sessions that minimized disruption to academic activities. The researcher personally administered the Mooney Problem Check List, reading instructions aloud and clarifying doubts, allowing students to respond at their own pace. Responses were recorded directly on mimeographed booklets to simplify the process. The Socioeconomic Status questionnaire was also distributed as mimeographed copies, with students allowed to take them home for parental assistance if needed, ensuring accurate data. This careful procedure maintained data integrity while accommodating participants' needs.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher prioritized protecting participants' rights and welfare by adhering to strict ethical guidelines and obtaining formal permission from relevant authorities, including the Schools Division Superintendent and the school head, ensuring institutional support. Informed consent was secured by clearly explaining the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits, with participants given the right to withdraw anytime without penalty. Privacy was maintained through anonymous data collection, assuring participants their identities would remain confidential unless voluntarily disclosed. Participation was entirely voluntary, with respondents free to skip questions or stop participation without consequences. These measures ensured the study was conducted with integrity, respect, and full consideration for participants' dignity and autonomy.

Data Analysis

Frequency count was used to describe the demographic profile of respondents by tabulating categories such as age, sex, and grade level, providing a clear overview of the sample distribution. Mean computation summarized numerical data, including academic performance scores and the frequency of adjustment problems, reflecting average values for easier interpretation. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient assessed the strength and direction of relationships between students' adjustment problems, academic performance, and socioeconomic status, revealing whether these variables were positively, negatively, or not significantly correlated. This analysis helped identify key associations within the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 - Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Academic Achievement Profile

The academic achievement was based on the students' final grades in academic subjects. The grade point average arrived at were distributed according to categories namely: above average, average and below average.

Table 1 - Academic Students Achievement of Third and Fourth Year

Year Level	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Total	\bar{X}	D
Third Year	33	69	21	123	2.09	A
Fourth Year	23	65	34	122	2.51	A
Total	56	134	55	245	2.3	A

Legend/Ranges: 2.61 - 3.00 - Above Average; 1.81 - 2.60- Average; 1.00 - 1.80 - Below Average

The overall findings reveal that both third- and fourth-year students demonstrate average academic performance, with a combined mean score of 2.30. This indicates moderate achievement, meeting basic academic standards but leaving room for improvement.

Notably, fourth-year students have a higher mean (2.51), suggesting better overall performance. However, they also show greater variability, with 27.87% below average and only 18.85% above average. Third-year students have a slightly lower mean (2.09), but a higher proportion (26.82%) scoring above average and fewer below average (17.07%). This disparity suggests the need to focus on supporting lower-performing students, particularly among fourth-year cohorts.

These findings are consistent with Ayuso Fernández et al. (2022), who found average performance in high school science tests and highlighted the need for enhanced curricular exposure to improve learning outcomes. Similarly, the current results underscore the importance of strengthening instructional strategies to boost student academic achievement.

Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents

To determine the socio-economic profile of the third and fourth year students, the NEDA questionnaire was administered to them. It is divided into five categories namely: lower-upper, upper-middle, lower-middle, upper-lower, lower-lower.

Table 2 - Socio-Economic Profile of the Students

Year Level	Upper-Upper	Lower-Upper	Upper-Middle	Lower-Middle	Upper-Lower	Lower-Lower	\bar{X}	D
Third Year	-	5	10	62	6	40	2.47	LM
Fourth Year	-	7	8	59	10	38	2.30	LM
Total	-	12	18	121	16	78	2.39	LM

Legend: 5.01 - 6.00 - Upper-Upper - UU - 87 - 100 ; 4.21 - 5.00 – Lower Upper - LU - 72 – 86; 3.41 - 4.20 - Upper-Middle - UM - 57 – 71; 2.61 - 3.40 - Lower-Middle - LM - 42 – 56; 1.81 - 2.60 - Upper-Lower - UL - 27 – 41; 1.00 - 1.80 - Lower-Lower - LL - 12 – 26

The socio-economic profile of the respondents reveals that most third- and fourth-year students belong to the lower-middle class, with an overall mean of 2.39. This indicates that while students generally have access to basic needs, financial limitations may restrict their academic opportunities and access to supplemental resources. Schools should therefore consider targeted interventions to support students in overcoming these economic barriers.

Third-year students have a slightly higher mean of 2.47 compared to the fourth-year's 2.30, though both remain within the lower-middle class. This suggests that financial constraints may intensify as students approach graduation, potentially affecting their ability to meet academic demands. The lack of representation from higher socio-economic classes further highlights the need for inclusive programs that address the challenges of economically disadvantaged students.

These findings are supported by Moore et al. (2021), who emphasized that students from lower-income families often face educational disadvantages due to limited access to learning tools and opportunities. They advocate for institutional efforts to create equitable learning environments that help students succeed regardless of their socio-economic background.

Adjustment Problems Profile of the Students

There are seven problem areas under adjustment problems of the third and fourth year students' treated namely: Health and Physical Development; School; home and family life; money, work, the future; boy and girl relationship; relations to people in general and self-centered concerns.

Health and Physical Development

Table 3 - Mean Distributions of the Third & Fourth Years Students on Health and Physical Development

Indicators	Mean	Descriptions
1. Often have headaches	12.56	S
2. Don't get enough sleep	11.20	S
3. Have troubles with my teeth	14.60	S
4. Not as healthy as I should be	9.26	LS
5. Taking things too seriously	8	LS
6. Too short for my age	8	LS
7. Too tall for my age	9	LS

8.	Poor complexion or skin trouble	11.20	S
9.	Not good looking	22.20	VS
10.	Not eating the right food	13.14	S
11.	Often not hungry for my meals	10.11	S
12.	Underweight	12.10	S
13.	Not smart enough	14.10	S
14.	Often have a sore throat	12.30	S
15.	Catch a good many colds	10.22	S
16.	Often get sick	13.10	S
17.	Often get sick	14.29	S
18.	Often have pains in my stomach	12.24	S
19.	Can't hear well	21.10	VS
20.	Can't talk plainly	10.28	S
21.	Trouble with my eyes	12.13	S
22.	Nose or sinus trouble	11.65	S
23.	Trouble with my feet	13.45	S
24.	Bothered by physical handicapped	13.12	S
25.	Keeping myself neat and looking nice	8.20	LS
26.	Smoking	8.25	LS
27.	Poor memory	21.25	VS
28.	Getting tired easily	22.35	VS
29.	Being nervous	14.29	S
30.	Learning how to dance	12.20	S
Average Mean		13.30	S

Legend: 21 - 30 - Very Serious; 10 - 19 – Serious; 0 – 9 - Less Serious

The health and physical development of third- and fourth-year students reveal a range of concerns mostly classified as serious, with an overall average mean of 13.30. This suggests that students experience various health challenges, including physical symptoms, cognitive difficulties, and lifestyle issues that collectively affect their well-being and daily functioning.

The highest mean score was for "Getting tired easily" at 22.35, which is very serious and highlights significant struggles with energy levels. The lowest mean score was for "Taking things too seriously" at 8, classified as less serious but still impacting students' emotional well-being. This contrast shows that fatigue is a major health issue, while emotional sensitivity is a less severe but relevant concern.

Mastorci et al. (2021), who emphasize that adolescent health is multifaceted and directly influences academic performance and social development. Their research underscores the importance of comprehensive school health programs addressing physical care, mental health support, and lifestyle education to enhance student well-being and academic success.

School

Table 4 - Mean Distribution of the Third & Fourth Year on School

Indicators		Mean	Description
1.	Getting low grades in school.	11.20	S
2.	Afraid of tests.	10.55	S
3.	Being a grade behind in school.	10.20	S
4.	Don't like to study.	13.25	S
5.	Not interested in books.	9.25	LS
6.	Afraid of failing in school.	13.40	S

7.	Trouble with Arithmetic.	12.45	S
8.	Trouble with spelling and grammar.	13.42	S
9.	Slow in reading.	12.20	S
10.	Trouble in writing.	9.21	LS
11.	Can't keep my mind on my studies.	8.35	LS
12.	Worried about grades.	7.24	LS
13.	Restless to get out of school.	8.24	LS
14.	Don't like a school.	9.42	LS
15.	School is too strict.	8.42	LS
16.	So often restless in class.	7.46	LS
17.	Not getting along with the teachers.	8.94	LS
18.	Teachers not practicing what they preach	7.48	LS
19.	Choosing best subjects to take next term.	8.47	LS
20.	Deciding what to take after high school.	11.20	S
21.	Wanting an advice on what to do after high school.	8.49	LS
22.	Dull classes.	12.30	S
23.	Textbooks hard to understand.	14.22	S
24.	Trouble with oral reports.	12.50	S
25.	Trouble with written reports.	11.29	S
26.	Afraid to speak up in class.	19.26	S
27.	Too little freedom in class.	9.22	LS
28.	Not enough discussion in class.	7.21	LS
29.	Not interested in certain subject.	12.24	S
30.	Made to take subjects I don't like.	14.24	S
Average Mean		10.70	S

Legend: 21-30 - Very Serious; 10-19 - Serious; 0-9 - Less Serious

The overall results show that third- and fourth-year students face serious school adjustment challenges, with an average mean score of 10.70. These difficulties encompass academic, emotional, and future-planning concerns, indicating that many students struggle to cope effectively with school demands. Such challenges may negatively affect their academic performance and overall well-being.

The highest mean score was for "Afraid to speak up in class" with 19.26, highlighting a significant fear related to classroom participation. The lowest mean score was for "Worried about grades" with 7.24, reflecting less frequent but still relevant concerns. This contrast underscores how fear and anxiety related to academic performance and participation are major stressors for students, while other issues, although less intense, contribute to their overall school adjustment difficulties.

These findings are supported by Pianta and Hamre (2009), who stress the importance of emotional support and positive student-teacher relationships in promoting academic adjustment and motivation. Their work highlights the need for comprehensive strategies that address both academic skills and emotional well-being to help students succeed in school.

Home and Family Life

Table 5 - Mean Distribution of the Third and Fourth Year Students on Home and Family Life Fourth

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Being an only child.	8.42	LS
2. Not living with my parents.	11.20	S
3. Worried about someone in the family.	9.10	LS
4. Parents working too hard.	7.40	LS

5.	Never having any fun with mother and father.	8.20	LS
6.	Having a bicycle in the family.	7.20	LS
7.	Sickness at home.	12.20	S
8.	Dalts in the family.	5.50	LS
9.	Mother or father not living.	14.20	S
10.	Parents separated or divorced.	15.20	S
11.	Parents not understanding me	12.30	S
12.	Too much school work to do at home.	9.10	LS
13.	Being treated like a small child at home.	13.20	S
14.	Parents favoring a brother or a sister.	14.21	S
15.	Parents making too many decisions for me.	13.20	S
16.	Parents expecting too much of me.	12.31	S
17.	Wanting things my parents won't give me.	8.73	LS
18.	Being criticized by my parents.	7.24	LS
19.	Parents not liking my friends.	11.38	S
20.	Parents not trusting me.	10.21	S
21.	Parents are old fashioned in their ideas.	8.42	LS
22.	Unable to discuss certain problems at home.	13.26	S
23.	Not getting along with a brother and a sister	12.20	S
24.	Not telling parents everything.	12.14	S
25.	Wanting more freedom at home.	11.20	S
26.	Family quarrel.	12.43	S
27.	Mother	5.20	LS
28.	Father	6.40	LS
29.	Wanting to run away from home.	11.25	S
30.	Talking back to my parents.	8.41	LS
Average Mean		10.38	S

Legend: 21-30 – Very Serious; 10-19 – Serious; 0-9 - Less Serious

The results from Table 6 reveal that third- and fourth-year students experience serious challenges related to home and family life, with an overall average mean score of 10.38. Seventeen of the 30 indicators fall within the serious category, indicating that many students face considerable emotional and psychological stress within their family environments. Key issues include parental absence due to separation, death, or work demands, lack of emotional connection and communication, sibling favoritism, excessive parental control, and ongoing family conflicts. These problems highlight the students' need for emotional support, autonomy, and a nurturing home atmosphere, all crucial for their healthy development.

The highest mean score was for "Parents separated or divorced" at 15.20, indicating this is a major source of stress for students. The lowest mean was for "Mother" at 5.20, reflecting less frequent but still present concerns. This contrast illustrates how significant family disruptions deeply affect students, while some issues, though less severe, contribute to the overall family stress experienced by learners.

These findings are supported by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasizes the critical role of family environment in adolescent development. According to Bronfenbrenner (2013), disturbances in the family microsystem can negatively impact emotional well-being and academic functioning, underscoring the importance of comprehensive support for students facing family challenges.

Money, Work, the Future**Table 6** - Mean Distribution of the Third and Fourth Year Students Adjustment Problem on Money, Work and the Future

Indicators		Mean	Description
1.	Spending money foolishly.	12.20	S
2.	Having to ask parents for money.	8.24	LS
3.	Having a regular allowance.	6.42	LS
4.	Family worried about money.	12.38	S
5.	Being left out of things.	8.70	LS
6.	Wanting to earn some of my own money.	8.42	LS
7.	Too little spending money.	7.42	LS
8.	Not knowing how to look for a job.	21.42	VS
9.	Restless to get out of school and into a job.	14.22	S
10.	Needing to find a part time job now.	22.10	VS
11.	Having less money than my friends have.	14.13	S
12.	Having a work too hard for the money I get.	12.52	S
13.	Wanting to know more about college.	7.24	LS
14.	Wanting to know more about trades.	8.21	LS
15.	Needing a job during vocation.	10.28	LS
16.	Needing to know my vocational abilities.	11.13	S
17.	Needing to decide an occupation.	12.24	S
18.	Needing to know more about occupation.	11.20	S
19.	Wondering if I've chosen the right vocation.	14.10	S
20.	Afraid of the future.	21.30	VS
21.	Not knowing what I really want.	15.30	S
22.	Wondering if I'll ever get married.	16.42	S
23.	Wondering what becomes of people when they die.	15.21	S
24.	Wanted to buy more of my own things.	13.41	S
25.	Not knowing how to buy things wishes.	10.01	S
26.	Too few nice clothes.	10.20	S
27.	Concerned about military services.	13.05	S
28.	Can't make up my mind about things.	14.75	S
29.	Afraid to try new things by myself.	12.60	S
30.	Afraid I may get an operation.	7.28	LS
Average Mean		12.39	S

Legend: 21-30 - Very Serious; 10-19 - Serious; 0-9 - Less Serious

The adjustment problems of third- and fourth-year students related to money, work, and the future show an overall average mean of 12.39, indicating a serious level of concern. This reflects significant stress and uncertainty about financial matters and career planning during late adolescence.

The highest mean score was for "Needing to find a part-time job now" at 22.10, classified as very serious and underscoring the urgency students feel about financial self-reliance. The lowest mean score was for "Having a regular allowance" at 6.42, categorized as less serious but still indicating limited financial independence for some students. This contrast reveals critical concerns about immediate economic needs alongside smaller but meaningful gaps in financial support.

These findings align with Usman and Banu (2019), who emphasize the impact of economic hardship and career uncertainty on students' emotional well-being and academic engagement. Such adjustment problems

can diminish motivation and academic performance, highlighting the need for comprehensive interventions that include career development, financial literacy, and mental health support to better prepare students for adulthood.

Boy-Girl Relationship

Table 7- Mean Distribution of the Third and Fourth Year Students' Adjustment Problem on Boy-Girl Indicator Relationship

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Girls don't seem to like me.	12.08	S
2. Boys don't Seem to like me.	12.20	S
3. Going out with the opposite sex.	9.01	LS
4. Dating	11.02	S
5. Not knowing how to make a date.	8.78	LS
6. Nothing interesting to do in spare time.	12.36	S
7. So often not allowed to go out at night.	13.24	S
8. Not allowed to have dates.	14.42	S
9. Wanting to know more about girls.	7.24	LS
10. Wanting to know more about boys.	8.24	LS
11. Wanting a more pleasing personality.	7.64	LS
12. Being made fun off.	10.62	S
13. Being picked on.	6.39	LS
14. Not knowing what to do on date.	12.26	S
15. Girlfriends	10.26	S
16. Boyfriends	11.24	S
17. Deciding love.	8.24	LS
18. Deciding whether to go steady.	11.39	S
19. Getting into arguments.	15.26	S
20. Getting into fights.	9.02	LS
21. Thinking too much about opposite sex.	8.32	LS
22. Wanting information about sex matters.	7.24	LS
23. Embarrassed by talks about sex.	15.24	S
24. Being jealous.	12.11	S
25. Disliking someone.	13.27	S
26. Being dislike by someone.	15.09	S
27. Slow in making friends.	13.20	S
28. Bashful.	9.30	LS
29. Not allowed to use bicycle.	11.10	S
30. Not getting outdoors enough.	12.30	S
Average Mean	10.93	S

Legend: 21-30 - Very Serious; 10-19 - Serious; 0-9 - Less Serious

The overall average mean of 10.93 indicates that adjustment problems related to boy-girl relationships are generally perceived as serious by third- and fourth-year students. This reflects the emotional and psychological complexities that adolescents experience as they begin to engage in romantic and social interactions. Their responses point to challenges in communication, identity formation, and navigating relationships, highlighting the need for supportive interventions that address both emotional and social development.

The highest-rated concern was "getting into arguments" with a mean of 15.26, suggesting that interpersonal conflict is a significant source of stress for students in boy-girl relationships. This could be due to emotional immaturity, miscommunication, or a lack of relational skills. In contrast, the lowest-rated concern was "being picked on" with a mean of 6.39, indicating that while social teasing exists, it is not as pressing compared to emotional conflicts within romantic dynamics. This distinction points to a greater need for conflict resolution and emotional regulation strategies among adolescents.

These findings are supported by Orben et al. (2020), who emphasized that adolescent brains are highly sensitive to social evaluation, making them vulnerable to stress and anxiety in peer and romantic interactions. Likewise, Laursen and Veenstra (2021) noted that difficulties in adolescent relationships can significantly affect emotional well-being and identity development, reinforcing the importance of structured guidance and support during this formative stage.

Relation to People in General

Table 8 - Mean Distribution of the Third and Fourth Year Students on Relation to People in General

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Not allowed to run around w/ kids I like.	6.43	LS
2. Too little chance to go to parties.	7.42	LS
3. Never chosen as a leader.	6.08	LS
4. Wishing people like me better.	4.24	LS
5. Too easily led by other people.	4.63	LS
6. Picking the wrong kind of friends.	11.28	LS
7. Getting into trouble.	12.04	S
8. Being teased.	8.24	LS
9. Being talked about.	5.36	LS
10. Being treated like an outsider.	10.68	LSLS
11. People finding fault with me.	4.28	LS
12. Wanting to be man like other people.	6.24	LS
13. Awkward in meeting people.	7.28	LS
14. Hurting people's feeling.	10.69	S
15. Feeling ashamed of something I've done.	6.33	LS
16. Being punished for something I've done.	11.42	S
17. Not being strong as some other kids.	4.24	LS
18. Too clumsy and awkward.	5.39	LS
19. Clash of opinions between me and my parents.	12.36	S
20. Keeping away from kids I don't like.	7.28	LS
21. No one to tell my troubles.	12.74	S
22. Sometimes lying without meanings too.	12.10	S
23. Can't forget some mistakes I've made.	5.42	LS
24. Finding it hard to talk about my troubles.	10.25	S
25. Not at ease social affairs.	11.61	S
26. Feeling nobody likes me.	5.56	LS
27. Missing someone very much.	13.21	S
28. Meaning dirty stories.	11.10	S
29. Afraid God is going to punish me.	15.42	S
30. Thinking about heaven and hell.	11.20	S
Average Mean	8.68	S

Legend: 21-30 - Very Serious; 10-19 - Serious; 0-9 - Less Serious

The overall average mean of 8.68 reveals that third- and fourth-year students perceive their adjustment problems related to social relationships as less serious. This suggests that while some interpersonal concerns exist, most students manage social dynamics without experiencing overwhelming stress. Their responses imply a generally resilient approach to common adolescent social situations.

The highest-rated concern was "afraid God is going to punish me" with a mean of 15.42, classified as serious, indicating that spiritual anxiety or internalized guilt may weigh heavily on some students. This reflects deeper emotional and moral struggles possibly tied to upbringing or religious beliefs. On the other hand, the lowest-rated concerns were "wishing people liked me better" and "not being as strong as some other kids", both with a mean of 4.24, and viewed as less serious. These suggest that students may be developing emotional maturity and realistic self-acceptance, managing insecurities common in adolescence.

These results are consistent with Crone and Achterberg (2020), who noted that adolescents undergo emotional and cognitive changes that influence their social perception and self-concept. Similarly, Orben et al. (2020) emphasized the significance of social connection in adolescent well-being. The serious concern over spiritual guilt and the low levels of distress over peer acceptance highlight the complex emotional terrain students navigate, underscoring the need for open dialogue and supportive guidance in schools and families.

Self-Centered Concern

Table 9 - Mean Distribution of the Third and Fourth Year Students on Self Centered Concerns

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Not enough time for play and fun.	12.01	S
2. Too little chance to do what I want to do.	11.14	S
3. Getting too excited.	6.24	LS
4. Being afraid of making mistakes.	7.17	LS
5. Failing in so many things I try to do.	10.25	S
6. Feeling so easily hurt.	8.42	LS
7. Trying to stop a bad habit.	11.09	S
8. Sometimes not being honest as I should be.	10.76	S
9. Giving into temptation.	11.03	S
10. Talking self-control.	12.69	S
11. Missing too much school because of illness.	13.26	S
12. Not spending enough time in studies.	12.41	S
13. Not having as much fun as other kids have.	8.72	LS
14. Worrying	10.79	S
15. Having sad dreams.	6.34	LS
16. Lacking self-confidence.	13.24	S
17. Sometimes wishing I've never been born.	7.61	LS
18. No place to entertain friends.	8.24	LS
19. Trouble in keeping a conversation going.	9.76	S
20. Not sure about proper sex behavior.	10.21	S
21. Not sure about proper sex behavior.	12.31	S
22. Being lazy	7.04	LS
23. Feeling Careless	8.24	LS
24. Feeling nobody understands me.	7.36	LS
25. Daydreaming.	8.48	LS
26. Forgetting things	11.36	S
27. Getting tired easily.	10.21	S
28. Not taking some things seriously enough.	9.78	S
29. Losing my temper	10.28	S
30. Being stubborn.	12.24	S
Average Mean	9.96	S

Legend: 21-30 - Very Serious; 10-19 – Serious; 0–9 - Less Serious

The results in Table 10 reveal that third- and fourth-year students exhibit a serious level of self-centered concerns, with an overall average mean of 9.96. This indicates that students are dealing with significant internal challenges related to emotions, behaviors, and self-perception. These findings underscore the importance of developing interventions focused on emotional regulation, self-discipline, and personal growth to help students manage their internal struggles more effectively.

Among the indicators, the highest-rated concern was “Missing too much school because of illness” with a mean of 13.26, while the lowest-rated concern was “Getting too excited” with a mean of 6.24. The highest score suggests that students may be experiencing health-related disruptions that interfere with their academic responsibilities. Meanwhile, the lowest score indicates that overexcitement is not perceived as a major issue, implying more pressing emotional and behavioral concerns take precedence in students' self-assessments.

These findings are consistent with Gadassi et al. (2021), who explains that adolescence is marked by increased emotional sensitivity and introspection, often leading to struggles with self-regulation and identity. This reinforces the need for structured support systems that address students' holistic development.

Relationship Between Adjustment Problems of Students and their Academic Performance

Table 10 - Relationship between Adjustment Problems and Academic Achievement

Year Level	Variables	N	Mean	SD	Computed r	Computed t
Third Year	Adjustment Problems	123	10.78	6.54	.16	1.09
	Academic Performance		2.09	4.20		
Fourth Year	Adjustment Problems	122	11.26	6.78	.15	1.25
	Academic Performance		2.51	3.15		

c.v= 1.96

Table 10 presents the relationship between adjustment problems and academic performance among third- and fourth-year students. The computed t-values (1.09 for third-year and 1.25 for fourth-year) fall below the critical value of 1.96, indicating no significant relationship between the two variables. Although slight positive correlations were observed ($r = 0.16$ and $r = 0.15$, respectively), these are statistically insignificant.

These results suggest that the adjustment problems experienced by students—whether emotional, behavioral, or interpersonal—do not have a substantial impact on their academic outcomes. Both year levels exhibited a similar pattern, implying that academic performance remains relatively stable despite the presence of adjustment concerns.

This finding supports Santrock (2021), who emphasized that adolescents are capable of maintaining academic performance despite internal struggles, often through resilience, support systems, and adaptive coping strategies. The data highlights the importance of recognizing other contributing factors—such as personal determination, classroom environment, and peer support—that may buffer students from the negative effects of adjustment difficulties.

Relationship between Adjustment Problems and Socio-Economic Status

Table 11 - Relationship between Adjustment Problems and Socio-Economic Status

Year Level	Variables	N	Mean	SD	Computed r	Computed t
Third Year	Adjustment Problems	123	11.20	7.30	.09	.68
	Academic Performance		2.47	2.69		
Fourth Year	Adjustment Problems	122	10.71	6.91	.06	.39
	Academic Performance		2.30	3.12		

* - Significant at 0.5

c.v. = 1.96

ns - not significant

The results in Table 12 show no significant relationship between adjustment problems and socio-economic status (SES) among both third- and fourth-year students. For third-year students, the computed t-value was 0.68, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.09$. For fourth-year students, the t-value was even lower at 0.39, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.06$. Both values fall below the critical value of 1.96, confirming that the

null hypothesis is accepted for both groups—there is no significant association between SES and adjustment problems.

The highest correlation was observed among third-year students ($r = 0.09$), while the lowest was among fourth-year students ($r = 0.06$). Despite these positive correlations, they are weak and statistically insignificant, indicating that socio-economic background does not meaningfully influence students' adjustment difficulties.

This result supports the view of Papalia and Martorell (2013) as cited by Mutyahara and Prasetyawati (2018), who emphasized that while socio-economic conditions may shape certain life experiences, emotional and social adjustments during adolescence are more often influenced by psychological resilience, interpersonal support, and school climate rather than purely economic factors.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study concludes that third- and fourth-year high school students from lower-middle socio-economic backgrounds share common adjustment concerns, particularly related to financial independence and future planning. Their academic performance, generally classified as average, aligns with their cognitive capacities. Importantly, the research found no significant correlations between adjustment problems and either academic performance or socio-economic status. This implies that other factors—such as psychological resilience, interpersonal relationships, and school support—may play a more substantial role in shaping adolescents' adjustment experiences.

Recommendation

To enhance students' adjustment and overall well-being, schools should conduct seminar-workshops to strengthen teachers' skills in homeroom guidance and group facilitation, and make homeroom sessions more engaging by inviting resource speakers on relevant topics such as personality development and sex education. Guidance counselors should collaborate with local businesses to offer students part-time job opportunities and promote vocational projects for practical experience. Peer support clubs must be established to build students' confidence, social skills, and leadership. Teachers should apply varied teaching strategies to encourage participation and communication. Schools must also foster stronger parent involvement through home visits and PTA meetings, promote values education to instill moral responsibility, and educate students on the benefits of a healthy diet for their physical and mental well-being.

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