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## A study on social alienation among adolescents

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### Abstract

Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to adult life. During this age many changes were takes place like increased peer relations, autonomy and striving for Social identity and more sensitive to social issues. Research review revealed that social alienation was observed among (53%) of adolescents and young adults in the age range of 18-34 years were often felt alone and depressed. Adolescents who were suffering with social alienation, they are physically present but mentally away from the external world and they exhibit aggressiveness and deviant behaviours. Hence, an attempt was made to study the Social Alienation among Adolescents. Ex-post facto research design was used for the study. A sample of 60 Adolescents in the age range of 16-21 years studying in different educational disciplines like Engineering, Agricultural and Allied sciences were selected by purposive random sampling method from Hyderabad, Telangana state. Social alienation scale by Jessor and Jessor was used to measure the Social alienation status. Frequencies, Percentages and Regression were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that majority of (88%) were suffering with high level of Social Alienation in which adolescent boys were high compared to girls. Adolescents who are victims of bullying in early years experienced high social alienation and demographic profiles like Age and Income levels or Socio economic status has a significant influence on social alienation.

**Keywords:** Social alienation, adolescence, reasons for social alienation, significance of social alienation

### Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional period in which there are considerable changes in Physical, Social and Psychological. It is a crucial period, where the relationships with peers, family, and society undergo distinct changes. Peer influence, social identity, self esteem, intimate friendships and friendships with opposite sex increased in this period and parental influences reduces. According to modern sociologists, Hajda (1961) defined alienation as "an individual feeling of uneasiness or discomfort which reflects a self exclusion from social and cultural participation. Another meaning of Social Alienation is separation, exclusion or isolation and people are withdrawal or lack of involvement in community activities. It is "a condition in social relationships reflected by a low degree of integration or common values and a high degree of distance or isolation between individuals, or between an individual and a group of people in a community or work environment." And it occurs when a person withdraws or becomes isolated from their environment or from other people. According to Williams (2001), weak bonds with particularly positive social institutions such as school, family and peers or exclusion from these social institutions create a serious threat to basic human needs such as belongingness, self-respect, self-control and meaningful existence. Simon Dixon, study revealed that social alienation was observed among (53%) of adolescents and young adults in the age range of 18-34 years were often felt alone and depressed. This is because of Modernization and also common reasons were found to be lack of attachment with Parent or caregivers, sudden change in their comfort zone, lack of friendly environment, bullying, lack of interactions with friends and extreme involvement with the social media. Social alienation may leads to aggressive behaviors, high level of loneliness, isolation and resentment. So the present study was taken up to study Social alienation status among Adolescents which intern helps to improve mental health by minimizing health risks associated with social alienation.

### Objectives

1. To study the status of social alienation among adolescents
2. To find out the reasons of social alienation
3. To study the contributing factors of Social Alienation.

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**Materials and Methods**

Based upon the nature of the research problem and objectives of the present study, Ex-post facto research design was used for the study. The sample was selected from different educational disciplines like Engineering, Agricultural and Allied sciences of Hyderabad, Telangana state. The sample comprises of sixty adolescents in the age range of 16-21 years includes 30 boys from Agriculture and Engineering and 30 girls from Allied sciences and Engineering. A schedule was designed to collect general profile of adolescents and reasons for social alienation. Social Alienation Scale by Jessor and Jessor, Smart Phone Addiction Scale (SAS) by Kwon and Kim, were also used to collect data. Frequencies, percentages and Regression were used to analyze the data.

**Results and Discussion**

**Table 1:** Demographic profile of Adolescents

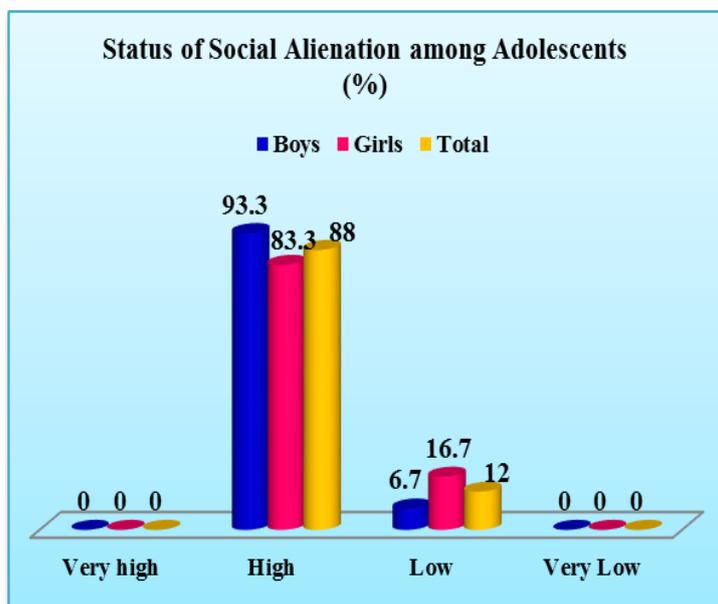
S. No	Variables	Respondents (N= 60)	
		N	%
1	<b>Age</b>		
	16-17 years	10	17%
	18-19 years	35	58%
	20-21 years	15	25%
2	<b>Income Levels</b>		
	Low	29	48%
	Middle	14	23%
	High	17	29%
3	<b>Type of Family</b>		
	Nuclear	59	98%
	Joint	1	2%
4	<b>Residence</b>		
	Urban	34	57%
	Rural	25	42%
	Tribal	1	1%

From the above table, it was observed that nearly sixty (58%) percent of the adolescents are in the age range 18-19 years, most of (98%) them were from nuclear families, nearly fifty (48%) them belongs to low income groups. The findings were on par with the study Tome. G, *et al.* (2016) [6] who reported that low socio economic status (SES) had a higher probability of alienation. More than half of (57%) the respondents were from urban background.

**Table 1.1:** Relationship Variables

S. No	Variables	Respondents (N= 60)	
		N	%
1	<b>No. of Close friends</b>		
	One	4	7%
	Two	3	5%
	Three –five	12	20%
	More than five	41	68%
2	<b>Conflicts with Friends</b>		
	Frequently	5	8%
	Some times	32	54%
	No	23	38%
3	<b>Victims of Bullying by Peers in Early Years</b>		
	Yes	18	30%
	No	42	70%
4	<b>Opinion on Parenting styles</b>		
	Permissive	2	3%
	Democratic	46	77%
	Authoritarian	12	20%
5	<b>Perception related to their parental attachment</b>		
	Secure	22	36.7%
	Anxious	12	20%
	Avoidant	26	43.3%
6	<b>Rating about their Intimacy with friends</b>		
	High	26	43.3%
	Medium	8	13.4%
	Low	26	43.3%

From the above table it was observed that nearly seventy (68%) of respondents had more than five close friends, more than half (54%) of the respondents were having conflicts with friends, more than one fourth (30%) of the respondents reported that they were victims of bullying by peers in their early years. Majority of (77%) respondents felt that their parents are using democratic parenting style followed by authoritarian and permissive disciplinary methods where as forty three percent of the respondents reported an avoidant attachment with their parents due to cold and rejecting behavior of parents and forty three percent of the Adolescents felt high Intimacy with friends and similar percent felt low intimacy with their friends followed by medium level of intimate relations.



**Fig 1:** Status of Social Alienation among Adolescents

From the above table the results showed that majority (88%) of the adolescents were felt high level of social alienation, where as few (12%) of respondents were reported low level of social alienation. None of them reported either very high or very low social alienation. It was interested to note that there

are slight gender differences in social alienation levels. Adolescent boys were experiencing social alienation more when compare to adolescent girls. A study by Tome. G, *et.al* (2016) [6] reported that Boys have higher (1.6) probability to feel social isolation than girls.

**Table 2:** Reasons for Social Alienation

S. No	Reasons for Social Alienation	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
1	Lack of Attachment with parents or Care givers	26	43.3%	12	20%	22	36.7%
2	Sudden Changes in Comfort Zone	33	55%	9	15%	18	30%
3	Peer victimization like bullying	33	55%	11	18.3%	16	26.7%
4	Lack of interactions with friends	25	41.7%	8	13.3%	27	45%
5	Lack of friendly environment	20	33.5%	7	11.5%	33	55%
6	Addicted to Smart phone	High		Moderate		Low	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
		10	16.7%	45	75%	5	8.3%

From the above table on reasons for social alienation among adolescents, the results showed that more than half (55%) of the respondents were agreed that they faced bullying, sudden changes in comfort zone which means ones activities and their behaviors are not well like routine, that maximizes stress and risk. Forty three percent agreed lack of attachment with parents or care givers. The similar findings were found by Tome. G, *et.al* (2016) [6] noticed that poorer relationship with the parents have higher (10.5) probability of being alienated among adolescents. More than forty (41.7%) of the respondents were agreed lack of interactions with friends were major reasons for social alienation followed by lack of friendly environment leads them to social alienation. The similar findings were found by Yi Zhu, (2013) reported that rejection by the classmates which leads to alienation. It is important to notice that majority (75%) of the adolescents are moderately addicted to smart phones followed by high addiction (16.7%) which was also an important reason for social alienation. Turkle. S, (2017) found that heavy usage of social media can exacerbate or intensify the feelings of social isolation.

**Table 3:** Model Summary of selected independent variables (Reasons) and dependent variable i.e. social alienation

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.448 <sup>a</sup>	.201	.110	4.20502

The R value shows the correlation between the dependent variable social alienation and independent variables such as lack of attachment with parents, sudden changes in their comfort zone, bullying victimization by peers in early years, lack of interactions with friends, lack of friendly environment and smart phone addiction. The R value of 0.44 indicates average relation of social alienation with the stated reasons. The R<sup>2</sup> Square value indicates that the influence of independent variables on dependent variable. The value shows (20%) influence of the total independent variables on dependent variable i.e. social alienation and thus the present study explored 20% of contributing variables for social alienation and the remaining need to be explored.

**Table 4:** ANOVA of selected independent variables (Reasons) and dependent variable i.e. social alienation

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	235.425	6	39.238	2.219	.05
	Residual	937.158	53	17.682		
	Total	1172.583	59			

The ANOVA table states that the effect of independent variables to be significantly influencing the dependent

variable as the calculated f value was significant at 0.05 level.

**Table 5:** Coefficients of Selected independent variables (Reasons) and dependent variable i.e. social alienation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Smart phone Addiction	6.414E-005	.057	.000	.001	.999
Lack of attachment with parents	.834	.502	.244	1.662	.102
Sudden changes in comfort zone	1.009	.629	.254	1.604	.115
Peer victimization like bullying	2.038	.674	.465	3.022	.004**
Lack of interactions with friends	.846	.643	.232	1.316	.194
Lack of friendly environment	.456	.593	.126	.769	.445

\*\*p<0.01 level of significance

From the above table the regression coefficient indicates that of all the reasons only victimization bullying by peers in early

years was found to have significant influence on social alienation at 0.01 significance level.

**Table 6:** Model Summary of selected independent variables (Demographic factors) influencing social alienation

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.398 <sup>a</sup>	.159	.081	4.27426

The R value gives the correlation between social alienation and demographic factors like age, gender, Income levels or socio economic status, Type of family and Residence which is .398. It can be inferred that the relationship between the dependent and independent variables as average. The r square

shows 15% influence of independent variables on dependent variable.

**Table 7:** ANOVA of selected independent variables (Demographic factors) and dependent variable i.e. social alienation.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	186.043	5	37.209	2.037	.088 <sup>b</sup>
1 Residual	986.540	54	18.269		
Total	1172.583	59			

The ANOVA shows that the influence of selected demographic variables was not significant.

**Table 8:** Coefficients of Selected independent variables (Demographic factors) and dependent variable i.e. social alienation

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Age	2.301	1.010	.333	2.279	.027*
Income groups or Socio economic status	1.935	.887	.373	2.182	.033*
Type of Family	4.670	3.187	.190	1.465	.149
Residence	1.076	1.387	.129	.776	.441
Gender	.578	1.186	.065	.487	.628

\* $p < 0.05$  level of significance

Regression Coefficients in the above table indicates that age and income levels or socio economic status were significant factors influencing social alienation at 0.05 level of significance. Other factors like type of the family, residence and gender had no significant influence on social alienation.

**Conclusion**

Finally it can be concluded that, majority (88%) of the respondents were having high social alienation, as per the results showed, lack of attachment with parents, sudden changes in their comfort zone, lack of interactions with friends, lack of friendly environment and smart phone addiction and bullying in early years of life. Above all of these reasons, bullying in early years of life has a strong contributing factor for social alienation. Strategies should be followed at school level like; setting up clear rules, open communication between teachers and students, engaging of parents, providing counseling services and also encouraging the child in maintaining good interpersonal relationships with others, sharing the things with others and family members to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. Adolescents should maintain strong social ties with others, it reduces risks of mental health problems such as aggressiveness, deviant behaviors, loneliness, isolation and depression etc., Social interactions are important for physical well being, mental health and life satisfaction. Parental attachment is very important in adolescents which will help to reduce the consequences of negative behaviours. Media should create awareness and focus on symptoms, characteristics and consequences of social alienation and strategies to reduce social alienation among adolescents. Hence it is very important to identify the factors contributing to social alienation.

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