



# STUDY OF EFFECT OF EGO-STRENGTH ON DIMENSIONS OF ADJUSTMENT

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## Abstract:

Under the present study, the effect of Ego-strength on different dimensions of adjustment like home, health, social, emotional and in overall is examined. Ego-strength Scale and Differential Personality Scale along with Mohsin-Shamshad Adaptation of Bell's Adjustment Inventory was utilized as research tools. The considered tools were administered on all the respondents (N=480) and their scores were obtained. Then the median value of the scores was calculated. The respondents falling at and above the median were placed in high Ego-strength group and those falling below it were placed in low Ego-strength groups. For the analysis and treatment of the scores t-test, r-test and chi-square test were employed. The results showed significant association of adjustment with ego strength. The high ego strength group of subjects showed better adjustment pattern as compare to the low ego strength subjects. Thus equal strength and adjustment were found positively and significantly related.

**Keyword:** ego-strength, home, health, social, emotional

## 1.0 Introduction

India is a country of people with diverse ethnic and religious characteristics. It includes different societies and sub societies which have separate norms, values, standard traditions and beliefs creating a significant impact on interpersonal perceptions as well as social interactions. The explanation of adjustment in terms of normality and that of maladjustment in terms of abnormality did not gain much ground among the subsequent thinkers.

The process of adjustment can be described on the basis of two factors:

1. The individual and his characteristics including needs, motives, competencies and skills.
2. The demand of external environment in which the person live.

There is always a conflict between the forces emanating from these two factors which call for adjustive process. That set of behaviour can be considered as adjusted behaviour which makes a stable balance between the forces originating from these two factors and help the individual in attaining a harmonious, stable and satisfying state.

Adjustment is a process. By this process the individual tries to bring a harmonious, stable and satisfying relationship with his environment i.e. by this process the individual alter his impulses and response to fit the demand of his environment. By this process too the individual tries to satisfy the needs and desire in accordance with the

environment demands on the one hand and his ability and limitations on the other. A good adjustment always aims at long-term satisfaction instead of satisfying immediate intense need.

Whenever the question of adjustment/maladjustment of an individual is discussed, the focus moves around the various component of his/her personality and their organization and also towards the broad collection of their attributes including temperament, attitudes, values and distinctive behavioural pattern that seems to characterize him/her.

## 2.0 Ego-strength and related studies:

Chaplin (1975) defined the term 'ego strength' as a hypothetical strength of the ego as determined by the amount of psychic energy available to it. Ego strength is an important factor in determining whether or not the individual will break down under unfavorable conditions. However, most ego theories are structural, that is, the ego is seen as striving for self consistency and meaning.

The ego is above all a process, not a thing. The striving to master, to integrate, to make sense of experience is not some of the function among many but the essence of the ego. The striving to make experience meaningful is for integration, not something that a thing called ego does; the striving for meaning is what ego is. The fundamental characteristics of the ego are that it is a process, a structure, social in origin, functioning as a whole and guided by purpose and meaning (Jane Loevinger, 1976).

In Psycho-analytic psychology, the ego is that part of the psychic apparatus which is the mediator between the person and reality. Its prime function is the perception of reality and adaptation to it. The ego is held responsible for controlling and maintaining the adaptation of the individual to his physical, mental and social environment. Freud's most general formulation concerning ego-strength was that it is reflected in the ability to love and work.

Hartmann (1958) remarks: "All definitions of ego strength will prove unsatisfactory as long as they take into account only the relation to other mental systems and leave out the consideration of intra-systematic factors." (Bellack (1973) stated that ego can be defined by its functions but also by its development and the quantitative aspects of its performance. Barron (1963) is of opinion that "The strength of a person's ego is not the amount of troubles, conflicts and crisis that he encounters, but the manner and confidence with which he encounters them. According to him the following characteristics are collectively referred to as Ego-strength: 1. Psychological stability and good health, 2. Strong sense of reality, 3. Feeling of personal adequacy and vitality, 4. Permissive morality, 5. Lack of ethnic prejudice, 6. Emotional outgoingness and spontaneity and 7. Intelligence.

Gilchrist (1972) said "In Freudian terms the capacity to adopt to reality, to reconcile impulses and conflicting aspects of the psyche with one another and with the demands of the environment and the resulting adequacy of personal functioning are the tasks of the ego and the effectiveness of such ego strength functioning is referred to as ego-strength, Ego-strength may be defined as the total psychic energy at the disposal of the individual enabling him to enjoy his striving to master the environment. Such non-psycho-analytic concepts as whites (1959) competence motive, Maslow's (1954) self-actualization and psychological health seem to have much in common with the concept of ego strength,

Wolman (1964) considered that the situation will hinder ego development. We may judge the ego strength of a person from the standpoint of his ability and capacity of meeting the task. The degree of intensity of anxiety, conflict and proper tackling of impulses depend on the ego strength of the individual. One must have relative adequacy that he is aware of both internal drives and external drives and be able to adequately integrate conflicting internal drives in behaviour. Appropriateness of behaviour, directness of impulse expression, competence of performing the task adequately, degree and kind of relatedness etc. are all dependent on the ego strength of a person.

### 3.0 Objective and Hypothesis:

**Objective:** The objective of this study to examine the effect of ego strength with adjustment relating to home, health, social and emotional dimensions as well as with overall adjustment.

**Hypothesis:** The high ego strength group of subjects would show better adjustment pattern while the low ego strength group would show more maladjustment patterns.

**4.0 Methodology:** This section includes the following:

**(i). Sample:** The incidental cum purposive sample consisting of 480 students was drawn from the student of undergraduate classes of the College of Patna University and Magadh University located in the central area of Patna town. The subjects were in the age group of 14 to 16 years in respect of sex, community, social economic status, area of inhabitation, etc.

**(ii) Research tools:** The following research tools are used in this study:

**(a) Personal Data Sheet:** A Personal Data Sheet prepared by the researcher herself was used for collecting relevant information about the subjects. To be more specific information relating to age, sex, community, inhabitation, religion, and education etc. of the respondents were collected through this PDS.

**(b) Mohsin-Shamshad Adaptation:**

For measuring adjustment of the respondents Mohsin-Shamshad Adaptation of Bell's Adjustment Inventory (1987) was used. Instructions for answering the questions are given on the front cover of the test booklet and the procedures for test administration are simple. The testee are requested to go through instructions and do accordingly. The Inventory has no time limit. However, it takes 35 to 40 minutes. The testee are asked to fill in their name, date, class and make all other necessary entries. They are asked not to read the question unless asked for. Before the test begins it is to be ensured that the instructions have been understood by the testee. The Inventory can be used both as a group test and as an individual test, as necessary. The Inventory is scored simply by counting the number of responses marked in each area of adjustment. The responses to which the score is to be given are mentioned in the Manual of the Inventory. High Score indicates poor adjustment and low score indicates better adjustment.

**(c) Ego Strength Scale:**

In order to measure the ego strength of both the Hindu and Muslim subjects, the Ego Strength Scale (ESS) prepared by Hassan (1970) was used. The scale is an adaptation of interrogative statements of Barron's scale. It consists of 32 statements to be responded to in terms of 'right' or 'wrong'. The reliability coefficients of the scale was obtained by odd-even and test-retest procedure are 0.78 and 0.86 respectively. The scale is also highly valid.

**(d) Differential Personality Scale:** Differential Personality Scale was developed and standardized by Sinha and Singh (1976). This scale is a heterogeneous scale of personality which measures nine major dimensions or traits of personality. Ego Strength: Persons having the trait of ego strength tend to concentrate and attend to different activities at a time, have feelings of adequacy and vitality, have adequate control over impulses and tend to show high coordination between thoughts and actions.

**(iii) Procedures:** The procedure of the administration of the test/scales consisted of different phases. Scoring was made as per the manual of the concerned test or scale. The research tools were administered to the respondents in 20 phases, each phase consisted of one session. In the session Personal Data Sheet (PDS), Mohsin-Shamshad Adaptation of Bell's Adjustment Inventory and Ego-strength Scale were administered to the respondents. One day prior to the actual administration of the tests or scales a formal permission for engaging the student was sought from the head of the institution. The date and time for the purpose was fixed. The researcher reached the place in time and established a rapport with the respondents by talking with them. When they were ready to co-operate with her the personal data sheet was given to them with a request to fill in the blanks. Then Mohsin-Shamshad adaptation inventory was given to them. They were requested to go through the instructions given on the cover page of the inventory and do it accordingly. In the end Ego-strength Scale and Differential Personality Scale were given to them

and they were requested to read the given instructions and to do accordingly. In the likewise manner in the remaining phases data were collected from all the respondents (N=480).

**(iv) Data analysis:** Using t-test the effect of the independent variable Ego-strength on the dependent variables (adjustment) was examined. Using the r-test the relationship of this independent variable under reference with adjustment was ascertained. Similarly,  $X^2$  test was employed as an association of this independent variable with the adjustment was examined. Keeping in view, the nature of the obtained data, it was decided to analyse the data according to the following scheme:

1. Comparison between the high and low anxiety groups of subjects in terms of adjustment.
2. Correlation between anxiety and adjustment irrespective of other factors.

**5.0 Results and Discussion:** Based on the above data collection and analysis, the effect of Ego-strength on the dependent variable i.e. Adjustment with its four dimensions - home, health, social and emotional dimensions besides overall adjustment is described below

**(A) Ego Strength as a determinant of adjustment:**

One important aim of the present work was to examine the impact of ego strength on adjustment of the respondents (N=480). They were divided into high ego strength group and low ego strength group on the basis of the scores obtained by them on ego strength dimension of DP Scale by Sinha and Singh. Those falling at and above the median value were placed in high ego strength group and those falling below it were placed in low ego strength group. Mohsin-Shamshad Adaptation Inventory was administered to the respondents of both the groups and their scores on different dimensions of adjustment besides overall adjustment were obtained. The critical ratio test was administered for the analysis and treatment of the data. Results thus obtained were recorded in Table 1.1 given below. The results contained in Table-1.1 showed a significant effect of ego strength on adjustment. The high ego strength group of the subjects was found better used in all dimensions such as home ( $t = 5.86$ ,  $df = 478$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), health ( $t = 4.78$ ,  $df = 478$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), Social ( $t = 6.75$ ,  $df = 478$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), emotional ( $t = 7.96$ ,  $df = 478$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ) and even in overall adjustment ( $t = 5.37$ ,  $df = 478$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ).

Thus the hypothesis as stated of the present work was confirmed. The finding might be interpreted in terms of greater tolerance on the part of the person with stronger ego. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Singh, Chaudhary and Tauwab (1997).

**Table 1.1**

Dimensions of adjustment	Ego-Strength	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	df	P
Home	High	280	8.16	6.25	0.37	5.86	478	<0.01
	Low	200	12.26	8.29	0.59			
Health	High	280	11.35	5.35	0.32	4.78	478	<0.01
	Low	200	14.89	9.44	0.67			
Social	High	280	10.45	6.19	0.37	6.75	478	<0.01
	Low	200	15.78	9.71	0.69			
Emotional	High	280	9.41	4.25	0.25	7.96	478	<0.01
	Low	200	13.55	6.48	0.46			
Total	High	280	37.50	12.82	0.77	5.37	478	<0.01
	Low	200	44.75	15.77	1.11			



**(B) Application of correlation method:**

Scatter Diagram method of Product moment correlation was also employed to verify the results based on t-test. In view of the nature of the data this method of correlation was found suitable and appropriate here.

**Table 1.2**

Variables	N	r	df	P
Home adjustment vs Ego Strength	480	0.456	478	<0.01
Health adjustment vs Ego Strength	480	0.532	478	<0.01
Social adjustment vs Ego Strength	480	0.394	478	<0.01
Emotional adjustment vs Ego Strength	480	0.405	478	<0.01
Overall adjustment vs Ego Strength	480	0.405	478	<0.01

One major purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between adjustment and ego-strength. Adjustment was treated as a dependent variable and ego-strength as an independent variable. Mohsin-Shamshad adaptation inventory was administered to the respondents (N=480) and their scores on different dimensions were obtained. The same respondents were administered to Differential Personality Scale by Sinha & Singh and their scores on ego-strength was obtained. The correlation between the two sets of scores was calculated with the help of a parametric test, namely the Product moment correlation method. The findings thus obtained were recorded in Table 1.2 given above.

The results of Table-1.2 showed a significant positive relationship between adjustment and ego-strength. Ego-strength as a personality factor was found significant and positively related with home adjustment ( $r = 0.456$ ,  $df=478$ ,  $P<0.01$ ) which health adjustment ( $r = 0.532$ ,  $df=478$ ,  $P<0.01$ ) with social adjustment ( $r = 0.394$ ,  $df=478$ ,  $P<0.01$ ) emotional adjustment ( $r = 0.409$ ,  $df=478$ ,  $P<0.01$ ) and also with total adjustment ( $r = 0.405$ ,  $df=478$ ,  $P<0.01$ ).

Thus, the hypothesis of the present study was confirmed beyond 0.01 level of confidence. It was hypothesized the subjects with stronger ego would be found better adjusted as compared to those with weak ego, which was strongly supported. The finding is just in agreement with that of Sangita (1993). The finding might be interpreted on the basis of the rationale that the persons with stronger ego have greater capacity to tolerate the stresses relating to various affairs of life, as compared to those with a weaker ego. This finding is in agreement with the finding based on t-test (table 1.1).

**(C) Application of Chi-square test:**

Chi-square test was used as an additional test to examine the effect of the independent variable under study on the sole dependent variable under reference. It should be noted that here only the overall adjustment was taken into consideration. Median score on the overall adjustment was taken as the cut mark. Those falling at and above the median were placed in high adjustment group and those falling below it were placed in low adjustment group. Percentage of the respondents falling into the high adjustment group and the low adjustment group was calculated. Chi-square test was employed to examine the significance of difference in their percentages. Chi-square test was used to examine the association of adjustment with ego strength and tabulated in Table 1.3.

**Table 1.3**

Showing the association of adjustment with ego strength

Level of Overall adjustment	Subjects		X <sup>2</sup>	df	P
	High ego strength group N=280	Low ego strength group N=200			
High	165 (59%)	76(38%)	8.82	1	<0.01
Low	115 (41%)	124 (62%)			

The results contained in table-1.3 showed strong association between adjustment and ego strength. The high ego strength group was found more adjusted than the low ego strength group ( $X^2=8.82$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $P<0.01$ ). This finding has strong relevance to the findings based on t-test (table-1.1) and r-test (table-1.2) given above.

### 6.0 Conclusion:

Based on the above results obtained and analysis of data the following conclusion was drawn:

The high ego strength group of subjects showed better adjustment pattern as compare to the low ego strength subjects. Thus equal strength and adjustment were found positively and significantly related.

### 7.0 References

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