



# Adjustment of Adolescents with Alcoholic Fathers

Prof. (Dr) Shyamalata Juyal, Department of Psychology, Gurukul Kangri (Deemed to be University),  
Haridwar.

Megha Taragi, Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Kanya Gurukul Campus, Gurukul Kangri  
(Deemed to be University), Haridwar.

## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to know the adjustment of adolescents with alcoholic fathers. Sample included 100 adolescents, 50 with alcoholic fathers and 50 with non-alcoholic fathers each group is further bifurcated into gender; 25 boys and 25 girls. Data was collected from Haridwar, Roorkee and Muzafarnagar district. Adolescents in age range of 13-17 years, who belong to the middle income families, were included in the sample. Adjustment was measured using Bell Adjustment Inventory constructed and standardized by Ojha (2011). The inventory measures adjustment of an individual in four areas i.e. home, health, social and emotional. Data was analyzed using M, SD, 't' test and ANOVA. Results revealed that adolescents with alcoholic fathers have significantly poor home, health, social, emotional and overall adjustment than the adolescents with Non-alcoholic fathers.

**Keywords-** Adolescents, Alcoholic Fathers, Gender.

## Introduction

Alcoholism is a disease characterized by the habitual intake of alcohol. The definition of alcoholism is a chronic use of alcohol to the degree that it interferes with physical health, mental health and with normal social or work life. Alcoholism produces both physical and psychological addiction. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant that reduces anxiety, inhibition, and feelings of guilt it also lower alertness and impairs perception, judgment, and motor coordination, if taken in high doses, it can cause loss of consciousness and even death. Alcohol damages the brain, liver, heart, and other organs. It is fast becoming a degenerating force in Indian society. Alcohol related physical problem cause severe strain on the life of the individual and the social fabric of the family and community at large. Families of alcoholics are at

greater risk for various psychological problems. (Gondolf & Ackermann 1993) The parental alcoholism has been associated with adjustment problems and psychopathology in their adolescents. The effects of growing up around alcoholic father are so profound that they last a lifetime. Children whose fathers use alcohol may not have had a good example to follow from their childhood, and may never have experienced traditional or harmonious family relationships (Haugland, Carvalho, Stea, Strandheim, & Vederhus, 2021.) such adolescents often struggle to distinguish between good role models and bad ones. As a result, many will end up feeling conflicted, confused, and self-conscious. In the context of Indian society, mostly it's the fathers who are seemed to be more indulgent into alcohol abuse hence, the sample preferred for this study were the adolescents with alcoholic fathers. Growing up with a father who has an alcohol abuse issue can change how their adolescents interact with others. It can cause problems in their relationships with friends and family members. Such adolescents are at higher risk for anxiety, depression, and unexplained physical symptoms. They are also more likely to display rule-breaking, aggressiveness, and impulsivity

Adolescent is already a period of great turmoil emotional and psychological development is the core of this period. It is a time when adolescents seek their own sense of individuality and uniqueness. They are searching for an adult identity as well as adult acceptance while striving to maintain peer acceptance (Kellough & Kellough 2008). Adjustment which is a major concern in all developmental stages has great relevance during adolescent years. The major developmental task of the adolescent stage is the adapting to the changes within themselves and to the changed expectations of the society. Their happiness, aspirations, motivation level, emotional wellbeing and subsequent achievements are linked to their adjustment. And if in between all these physical and psychological changes an adolescents have a father with high dependency on alcohol, it can be confusing and frustrating for them to adjust and cope up in different areas of life. Keeping this problem in mind the present study assesses the adjustment of adolescents who have alcoholic fathers.

### **Objectives:**

1. To measure the adjustment of adolescents with Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic fathers
2. To compare adolescent girls and boys of each group on the variable of adjustment

### **Hypotheses:**

1. Adjustment of adolescent will differ significantly in terms of fathers drinking
2. Gender of adolescent of alcoholic and non-alcoholic fathers will differ significantly on adjustment.
3. Interaction effect will differ significantly on adjustment between fathering (Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic) and gender.

## Sample

Sample consisted of 100 adolescents, 50 adolescents of Alcoholic fathers and 50 adolescents belong to the Non-alcoholic fathers. Each group is further bifurcated into gender 25 girls and 25 boys. Data was collected from Haridwar, Roorkee and Muzzafarnagar district. Adolescents in age range of 13-17 years, who belong to the middle income families were included in the sample, In the group of adolescents with alcoholic fathers, only those adolescents were included whose fathers consume more than four pegs in 4-5 days in a week and have a history of more than five years of alcohol abuse Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic fathers of adolescents suffering from any other major physical and psychological disease were excluded from the sample.

## Tool Used

Bell Adjustment Inventory constructed and standardized by Ojha (2011) was administered individually on each participant. The inventory measures adjustment of an individual in four areas i.e. home, health, social and emotional. High score indicate low adjustment and low score indicate high adjustment.

## Procedure for data collection

Investigator contacted families from Haridwar, Roorkee and Muzaffarnagar district who had Alcoholic males' rapport was established with them and information was taken about their colleagues who also have alcohol abuse issues so that further data can be collected. Adolescents of alcoholic fathers were contacted individually and the purpose of the study was explained, they were assured that their responses will be kept confidential. Instruction was explained to complete the inventory and the test was administered. For the control group, adolescents of Non-Alcoholic fathers were contacted from same districts mentioned above.

## Results and Interpretation

**Table 1- Comparison between the Adolescents of Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Fathers in terms of Adjustment (Mean, SD and 't' test)**

Areas of Adjustment	Adolescents of Alcoholic Fathers (N=50)		Adolescents of Non-Alcoholic Fathers (N=50)		't' value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Home	16.00	5.75	10.18	4.07	<b>5.83**</b>
Health	11.98	6.53	9.76	4.56	<b>1.98*</b>
Social	17.92	4.16	15.72	4.54	<b>2.52*</b>
Emotional	17.98	6.94	14.30	7.96	<b>2.44*</b>
Total	63.86	17.45	49.96	17.82	<b>3.94**</b>

Table 1 indicated significant difference between the adolescents of Alcoholic and Non-alcoholic fathers on all areas of adjustment i.e. home ( $t = 5.83, p < 0.01$ ) health ( $t = 1.98, p < 0.05$ ), social ( $t = 2.52, p < 0.05$ ), emotional ( $t = 2.44, p < 0.05$ ) as well as on total adjustment ( $t = 3.94, p < 0.01$ ). Mean values showed that adolescents of Non-Alcoholic fathers are well adjusted in all areas of adjustment in comparison to adolescents of Alcoholic fathers. Home ( $M = 16.00$  v/s  $10.18$ ), Health ( $M = 11.98$  v/s  $9.76$ ), Social ( $M = 17.92$  v/s  $15.72$ ), Emotional ( $M = 17.98$  v/s  $14.30$ ) and total ( $M = 63.86$  v/s  $49.96$ ).

**Table 2- Comparison between the Adolescent Girls and Boys of Alcoholic Fathers in terms of Adjustment (Mean, SD and 't' test)**

Areas of Adjustment	Girls (N = 25)		Boys (N=25)		't' value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Home	15.84	6.50	16.16	5.03	0.19
Health	15.32	6.53	8.64	4.62	<b>4.17**</b>
Social	17.84	4.56	18.00	3.82	0.13
Emotional	18.76	6.50	17.16	7.40	0.81
Total	67.76	17.47	59.96	16.89	1.60

Table 2 depicted significant difference on the area of health adjustment between girls and boys of alcoholic fathers ( $t = 4.17, p < 0.01$ ). Mean values showed that girls of alcoholic fathers ( $M = 15.32$ ) have poor health adjustment as compare to boys of the same group ( $M = 8.64$ ).

**Table 3- Comparison between the Adolescent Girls and Boys of Non-Alcoholic Fathers on the variable of Adjustment (Mean, SD and 't' test)**

Areas of Adjustment	Girls (N = 25)		Boys (N=25)		't' value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Home	10.76	4.37	9.60	3.75	1.01
Health	12.08	4.79	7.44	2.88	<b>4.14**</b>
Social	15.76	4.85	15.68	4.32	0.06
Emotional	18.64	7.80	9.96	5.41	<b>4.56**</b>
Total	57.24	18.89	42.68	13.45	<b>3.13**</b>

Table 3 showed that significant difference was found between girls and boys of Non-Alcoholic fathers on the area of health ( $t = 4.14, p < 0.01$ ), emotional ( $t = 4.56, p < 0.01$ ) and on total adjustment ( $3.13, p < 0.01$ ). Mean values showed that girls have poor adjustment in comparison to boys on the area of health ( $M = 12.08$  v/s  $7.44$ ), emotion ( $M = 18.64$  v/s  $9.96$ ) and on total adjustment ( $M = 57.24$  v/s  $42.68$ )

**Table 4- Comparison between Adolescent Girls of Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Fathers on Adjustment (Mean, SD, and 't' test).**

Areas of Adjustment	Girls of Alcoholic Fathers (N = 25)		Girls of Non-Alcoholic Fathers (N=25)		't' value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Home	15.84	6.50	10.76	4.37	<b>3.24**</b>
Health	15.32	6.53	12.08	4.79	<b>1.99*</b>
Social	17.84	4.56	15.76	4.85	1.56
Emotional	18.76	6.50	18.64	7.80	0.05
Total	67.76	17.47	57.24	18.89	<b>2.04*</b>

Table 4 indicated significant difference between girls of Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic fathers on the areas of home ( $t = 3.24, p < 0.01$ ), health ( $t = 1.99, p < 0.05$ ) and total adjustment ( $t = 2.04, p < 0.05$ ). Mean values denotes poor adjustment in the girls of alcoholic fathers than the girls of non-alcoholic fathers on home ( $M = 15.84$  v/s  $10.76$ ), health ( $M = 15.32$  v/s  $12.08$ ) and total adjustment ( $M = 67.16$  v/s  $57.24$ ).

**Table 5- Comparison between Adolescent Boys of Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Fathers in terms of Adjustment (Mean, SD, and 't' test).**

Areas of Adjustment	Boys of Alcoholic Fathers (N = 25)		Boys of Non-Alcoholic Fathers (N=25)		't' value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Home	16.16	5.03	9.60	3.75	<b>5.22**</b>
Health	8.64	4.62	7.44	2.88	1.10
Social	18.00	3.82	15.68	4.32	<b>2.00*</b>
Emotional	17.16	7.40	9.96	5.41	<b>3.93**</b>
Total	59.96	16.89	42.68	13.45	<b>4.00**</b>

Table 5 showed significant difference between boys of alcoholic and non-alcoholic fathers on the areas of home ( $t = 5.22, p < 0.01$ ), social ( $t = 2.00, p < 0.05$ ), emotional ( $t = 3.92, p < 0.01$ ) and on total adjustment ( $t = 4.00, p < 0.01$ ). Mean values denoted poor adjustment for boys of alcoholic fathers on the area of home ( $M = 16.16$  v/s  $9.60$ ), social ( $M = 18.00$  v/s  $15.68$ ), emotional ( $M = 17.16$  v/s  $9.96$ ) and total adjustment ( $M = 59.96$  v/s  $42.68$ )

**Table 6 Interaction between fathering (alcoholic and non-alcoholic fathers) and gender of adolescents on four areas of adjustment (2x2 ANOVA)**

Areas of Adjustment	Source of variance	F-value	Sig.
Home	Fathering	0.17	N.S.
	Gender	33.60	< 0.01
	Fathering X Gender	0.54	N.S.
Health	Fathering	33.58	< 0.01
	Gender	5.16	< 0.05
	Fathering X Gender	1.09	N.S.
Social	Fathering	0.002	N.S.
	Gender	6.22	< 0.05
	Fathering X Gender	0.01	N.S.
Emotional	Fathering	14.09	< 0.01
	Gender	7.14	< 0.01
	Fathering X Gender	6.68	< 0.05
Total	Fathering	11.07	< 0.01
	Gender	17.11	< 0.01
	Fathering X Gender	1,01	N.S.

Table 6 depicted that F-value found significant between fathering (Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic) on health ( $F = 33.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), emotional ( $F = 14.09$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and on total adjustment ( $F = 11.07$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Significant difference was also found between gender on all areas of adjustment i.e home ( $F = 33.60$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), health ( $F = 5.16$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), social ( $F = 6.22$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), emotional ( $F = 7.14$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and total ( $F = 17.11$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) whereas significant interaction effect was found between fathering (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and gender of adolescents only on the area of emotional adjustment ( $F = 6.68$ ,  $p < 0.05$ )

## Discussion of the results

The present study was conducted to know the adjustment of adolescents with alcoholic fathers. Results indicated that adolescents whose fathers are alcoholic have poor adjustment in all the dimensions i.e home, health, social, emotional and on total adjustment as compare to adolescents with Non Alcoholic fathers (Table 1).

In terms of gender, girls of alcoholic fathers showed poor health adjustment than the boys of the alcoholic fathers (Table 2). Adolescent girls of Non-Alcoholic fathers also showed poor health, emotional and total adjustment than the boys of the Non-Alcoholic fathers (Table 3).

Girls of Alcoholic fathers had poor home, health and total adjustment in comparison to girls of Non-Alcoholic fathers (Table 4) while boys of alcoholic fathers showed poor adjustment in all the dimensions of adjustment as well as on total adjustment than the boys of Non-Alcoholic fathers (Table 5). Interaction effect was found significant only on emotional dimension of adjustment between fathering (Alcoholic & Non-Alcoholic) and Gender (Table- 6).

Results similar to the present study were found by Madhavi (2016) she studied the self esteem and adjustment among adolescent of Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic fathers in a selected community in Coimbatore. She found significant difference between the groups on emotional, school, social and home adjustment, and adolescents of Alcoholic fathers showed poor adjustment in all the areas. Mahajan & Kaur (2016) also studied the adjustment of adolescents of rural areas with alcoholic and non alcoholic fathers and found that adolescents of non- alcoholic fathers showed better adjustment in different areas i.e. home, school, social and health adjustment. Torvik, Rognmo, Ask, & Røysamb (2011) did a study on Parental alcohol use and adolescent school adjustment in the general population, results revealed that higher parental drinking indicate lower school adjustment.

## Conclusion of the study

1. Adolescents of Alcoholic fathers showed poor home, health, social, emotional and total adjustment
2. Girls of Alcoholic fathers showed poor health adjustment in comparison to boys of Alcoholic fathers.
3. Girls of Non-Alcoholic fathers showed poor health, emotional and total adjustment than the boys of Non-Alcoholic fathers
4. On home, health and total adjustment girls of Alcoholic fathers showed poor adjustment as compare to the girls of Non-Alcoholic fathers
5. Boys of Alcoholic fathers showed poor home, social, emotional and total adjustment than the boys of Non-Alcoholic fathers.



## Application of the study

The purpose of this study was to measure the adjustment of adolescents with alcoholic fathers and the results revealed that adolescents with Alcoholic fathers have poor home, health, social and emotional adjustment as compare to the adolescents with Non-Alcoholic fathers. Alcohol not only affects the physical and mental health of a person consuming it but also severely impact the psychological well being of his family. Adolescents were chosen as subjects in this study because at this age many physical and psychological changes occur and any malfunction at home can damage their well being. Adolescents who watch their father mostly drunk can have severe impact on their mental health and it can lead to various adjustment problems and other psychological issues. It is important to create awareness among families that alcohol dependency of parents can harm their adolescent's mental well being for life. And it can increase their chances of being an alcoholics or substance abusers. Another important application of this study includes providing counseling to those adolescents who are facing trouble due to their father's alcohol abuse such children need to provide an environment where they can talk about the issues they are facing and how it is impacting their day to day life it will help the counselor to prepare a counseling intervention for them as per their need.

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