



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT AMONG SECONDARY FEMALE STUDENTS IN JORDAN

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### **Abstract:**

The investigation of the level of Social and Academic Adjustment and the relationship between both of them in Jordan is still inadequate due to lack of research and interest among scholars and researchers. This fact is occurring even though the increase of refugees during the last five years has affected other Jordanian students. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between Social Adjustment and Academic Adjustment among secondary female students in Jordan. A total of 100 students from one school were examined. The result from the analysis posited that there is a high level of Social Adjustment (60%) and Medium level of Academic Adjustment (66%). Additionally, there is a positive statistically significant correlation (0.552) among the total of Social Adjustment and the total of the Academic Adjustment. Pearson correlation was used to evaluate the overall relationship between social and academic adjustments. A strong positive correlation was found between the social and academic scores of students. The current study has also discussed the results, the limitations and the recommendations.

**Keywords:** social adjustment, academic adjustment, Jordanian secondary female students

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## 1. Introduction

Majali (2015) points out that the adverse well-being of students in Jordan is primarily due to the refugee migration, over two millions in the past ten years. This is due to the fact that Jordan being relatively the most stable country in the previous region. According to the studies of (Gharaebah, 2014; Nassar, 2010) the face social and academic adjustment problems faced by students from these refugee population admitted in Jordanian also has a significant effect on Jordanian students. The main reasons for low achievement in students, in particularly females, are attributed to these social and academic adjustment problems (Ashour, et al., 2010; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Lee and Chen, 2000; Olimat, Saaida, and Alzyadat, 2013).

The previous studies were shown that the low level of social and academic adjustment among students lead to be an underachievers, this will be a problem in future among their students because the levels of social and academic adjustment related to academic performance.

Furthermore, the results of studies (Olimat, et al., 2013; Tomul and Savasci, 2013) were confirmed that academic achievement of students is related to individual differences between students, socioeconomic features in which they grow up, and educational resources of students. Here, the important of social and academic aspects at the outcomes of educational process are appeared through effect the level of social and academic adjustment on academic performance among students.

However, there are a lack of studies that address the relationship between social adjustment and academic adjustment. Hence, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the relationship between Social Adjustment and Academic Adjustment among female students in secondary schools in Jordan.

## 2. Social Adjustment

Social adjustment is the relationship with family, friends and the school staff. School social adjustment means complying with rules and procedures of the school (Cook, 1990). It is the ability of a student to adapt the rules and regulations while being able to function successfully in the school (Huffines, 2002).

Habit (2003) identified four factors, which help increase the level of social adjustment: (i) the personal and psychological needs among individuals should be satiated (ii) knowing and accepting the the self (iii) the individual's skills and abilities to achieve basic needs, and (iv) ability to flexibly respond to external influences.

According to Levine and Levine (1996), the four aspects of social adjustment are competence, personal development, social integration and social responsibility. Of these four, it was found that social integration was the most difficult aspect for mobile high school students. High school teachers play a major role in the adjustment of new students (Levine & Levine, 1996).

As pointed out by Polloway, et al. (1994), youth spend most of their day in school, and their behavior in school is the crucial element in overall social adjustment. Many important life-skill activities are engaged in school, e.g. gaining academic knowledge; learning and practicing generalized skills like problem solving, time awareness, and responding to directions. Formative relationships with peers and adults are developed in school. The learning tasks of students and the others around them can be disturbed by inappropriate behavior in school. Research has shown that teachers' evaluation of students' academic performance is influenced by student behavior at school.

### **3. Academic Adjustment**

Baker and Syrik (1999) defined academic adjustment as "having a positive attitude toward setting academic goals, completing academic requirements, the effectiveness of the efforts to meet academic goals, and being successful in the academic environment". A clear sense of purpose and motivation to learn and meet academic demands is essential for academic adjustment. The difference between social adjustment and academic adjustment is that social adjustment is all about adjusting to the rules and regulations of the school environment, while academic adjustment orients specifically to academic learning (Baker & Syrik, 1999).

Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (1994), outline the broad concepts of academic adjustment: the motivation for learning, a sense of purposefulness, action to comply with academic demands and satisfaction from the academic environment. All these require developing some practical skills like learning skills, writing and summarizing, thinking and memorizing, coping with masses of reading materials, submitting papers, summarizing lectures, writing seminar papers, effective time management and taking exams. (Gerdes and Mallinckrodt, 1994; Zeidner, 1992).

Russell and Petrie (1992) detail three fundamental aspects of academic adjustment:

1. Forecasting for academic adjustment comprising three elements: academic factors (aptitude and ability, study skills, test anxiety, academic motivation, and self-efficacy with attribution); society factors (social support, life stress, work

involvement, and family variables); and personality factors (standardized personality major, locus of control, self-esteem, and trait anxiety).

2. Outcomes of academic adjustment as seen in the three elements of forecasting listed above: academic performance, social adjustment, and personal adjustment.
3. Intervention and treatment. Low level of academic adjustment are addressed and improved by easing the academic adjustment process. The two elements that comprise intervention and treatment are: individual and group counselling, and the school program by the counsellor (Russell and Petrie, 1992).

## **4. Research Methodology**

### **4.1 The Population and Sampling of the Study**

The current study is a cross-sectional study aimed at investigating the relationship between social adjustment and academic adjustment among female students in secondary schools in Jordan.

The population of the current study was all secondary female students in secondary schools in Jordan. In addition, a sample of 100 female students were selected randomly from one school in Amman City in Jordan. The sampling was done randomly for the survey.

### **4.2 Instrumentation**

For the purposes of the present study, two instruments were used: Social Adjustment Scale and Academic Adjustment Scale.

*Social Adjustment Scale*: the scale was built by Fudah (2008) and has a total of 33 items, divided into three dimensions: relationship between adolescent and school environment, relationship between adolescent and her family, and relationship between adolescent and her community. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale: always, often, sometimes, rarely, never.

The minimum score was 33 and the maximum score was 165. In addition, the scale has three score categories: Low= under 77, Medium= 77-121, And High= more 122. For purposes of the current study, the researcher extracted the reliability to social adjustment scale, and determined the reliability of the scale using Cronbach's alpha. 54 students received the scale in the same school. In table below the Cronbach's alpha is seen at an acceptable value (0.79). This means the questionnaire was ready to be used for data collection.

**Table 1:** The Cronbach's Alpha for the social adjustment

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Nu. of Items
0.79	0.82	33

All the 33 items in the table above showed acceptable range of Cronbach's alpha. Since the overall Cronbach's alpha is accepted, there was no need for readjustment and retest of the pilot study.

*Academic Adjustment Scale:* Nassar (2010) developed the Academic Adjustment Scale from Henry Barrow's scale (1949), and the Arabic version of Henry Barrow's scale which was translated to suit the Jordanian environment (Sahawneh, 1989). Nassar (2010) developed this scale to suit the secondary students, with a total of 43 items. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale: always, often, sometimes, rarely, never. The scale had five dimensions: curricular adjustment, the level of ambition and maturity goals, personal effectiveness in planning and exploiting time, academic skills, and the personal relationships with teachers and students. The minimum score was 43 and the maximum score was 215. In addition, the scale has three score categories: Low= under 100, Medium= 100-157, and High= more 157.

For purposes of the current study, the researcher extracted the reliability to academic adjustment scale, and determined the reliability for the scale through using Cronbach's alpha. 54-students were received the scale in the same school. In the table below, the Cronbach's alpha shows an acceptable value (0.80). This means the questionnaire was ready to be used for data collection.

**Table 2:** The Cronbach's Alpha for the academic adjustment

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Nu. of Items
0.80	0.78	43

All the 43 items in the table above showed acceptable range of Cronbach's alpha. Since the overall Cronbach's alpha was accepted, there was no need for readjustment and retest of the pilot study.

### 4.3 Procedure

The researcher has chosen one secondary female school randomly in Amman city to participate in the current study. Then, the researcher obtained the approval from the secondary school to conduct the current study.

In addition, the researcher explained to students the aims of the study additionally, and instructions were given to fill the scales were. Moreover, the

researcher informed students who don't want to participate for any reasons were free to opt out from the study. Both scales took 15-minutes to complete.

#### 4.4 Data Analysis

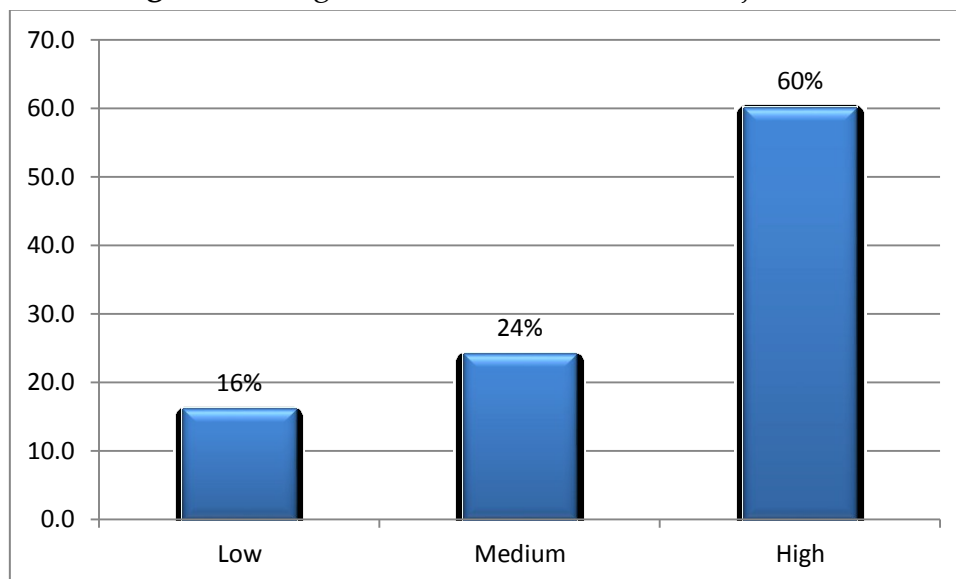
The aim of the current study is to investigate the relationship between social adjustment and academic adjustment among female secondary students in Amman City in Jordan. For this purpose, the data was analyzed using percentage of answers and Spearman correlation.

### 5. Result

#### 5.1 The Level of Social and Academic Adjustment

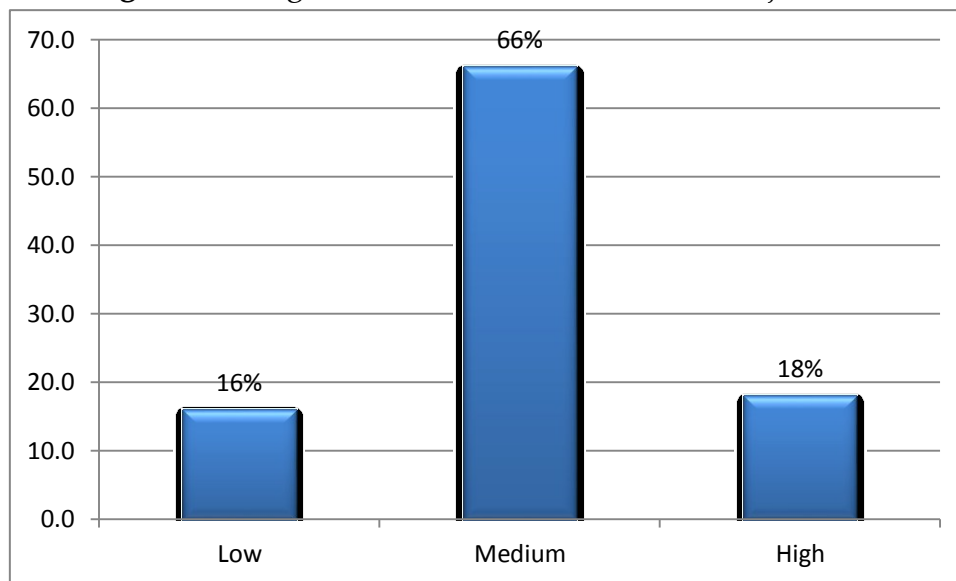
For the general evaluation of social adjustment, the high level (60%) was the most common frequent level, followed by medium (24%) and low (16%), as shown in the Figure below:

**Figure 1:** The general evaluation of social adjustment



For the general evaluation of academic adjustment, the medium level (66%) was the most frequent level, followed by high (18%) and low (16%) respectively, as shown in the Figure below.

**Figure 2:** The general evaluation of academic adjustment



### 5.2 The Comparison based on levels of social and academic adjustment

Spearman correlation was used to evaluate the overall relationship between social and academic adjustments. A strong positive correlation was found between the social and academic scores of students (Spearman rho coefficient = 0.552,  $p < 0.001$ ), i.e. increase in academic adjustment with increase in social adjustment.

**Table 3:** The correlation coefficient between social and academic adjustment

Spearman's rho	Academic overall score Correlation Coefficient	P value (2-tailed)
Social overall score	.552**	<0.001

## 6. Discussions

This section discusses the results of the current study through analyses of the results. Table below illustrates the percentage of social adjustment among female students.

**Table 4:** The level of social adjustment

The level	High	Medium	Low
Percentage	60%	24%	16%

The results show that the level of social adjustment among secondary female students is high level (60%). This result conforms to the previous studies (e.g. Abu Ali, 2012; Abu Leil, 2011; Shadeh, 2012). The results in the previous studies (e.g. Abu Ali, 2012; Abu

Leil, 2011; Shadeh, 2012) were shown a high level of social adjustment among students. Abu Ali, (2012) identified this results to affect of social media which it enable the students to build a new relationships depend on social media. Then, it effects to positive education outcomes through identify the best ways to study from colleagues (Abu Ali, 2012). Where Abu Leil, (2011) explained the high level of social adjustment among Arab students to Arab's values and attitudes which it increase the level of social adjustment. When the students have a high level of social adjustment because of an Arab's values and attitudes then the students come to school with high level of learning motivation where the Arab's values and attitudes were interested at education (Abu Leil, 2011). While, Shadeh, (2012) identified the high level of social adjustment to the positive interactive between students at secondary stage and the social individuals through considered the students as a part of community, the students look at themselves as an important part of social. Then, the students achieve a social satisfaction this affects positively on their learning (Shadeh, 2012).

Of course, Rivkin, et al. (2005) focused on the impact of two factors such as the teacher and the school should not be overlooked at the level of social adjustment. Moreover, DiPrete and Jennings (2012) and Skelton (2010) confirmed that the girls enter the school with high level of social skills than the boys and they maintain their skills at the next grades. And the girls have high levels of interested at teamwork.

Mohammad (2015) identified that the adolescents could find their right position at community through using their social skills. In addition, they can get social acceptance then, it leads to achieve high levels in social adjustment (Mohammad, 2015). The result from the analysis shows that secondary female students have high levels of social adjustment in Jordan. According to explanations the previous studies (Abu Ali, 2012; Abu Leil, 2011; DiPrete & Jennings, 2012; Mohammad, 2015; Shadeh, 2012; Skelton, 2010; Rivkin, et al., 2005), the results of current study because of the nature of relations that are based on values and social norms which seek to achieve social solidarity among students (Abu Leil, 2011). In addition, the upbringing of children, a sense of responsibility towards their families, their commitment to the performance of their duties, and the impact of this transfer of learning to the community (Abu Leil, 2011). Furthermore, the presence of environmental pressure factors because of the economic and living conditions lead the students to search for alternative adaptive strategies so as to be closer to each other and to provide a sufficient amount of support and self-assertion (Shadeh, 2012).

Furthermore, the attitude of secondary female students towards school environment and interpersonal relationships among female students were critical important factors which influencing the level of social adjustment among female



secondary school which it affects at the education outcomes (Abu Ali, 2012). Moreover, the secondary school environment involves multi-programs which it support the level of social adjustment such as school radio where the student presents herself front all students this activity enable the student to develop her social skills and which leads to increase her level of social adjustment then will positively affects on education outcomes (Abu Ali, 2012).

The Table below illustrates the percentage of academic adjustment among female students.

**Table 5:** The level of academic adjustment

The level	High	Medium	Low
Percentage	18%	66%	16%

The results show that the level of academic adjustment among secondary female students is Medium level (66%). This result conforms to the previous studies (Abu Leil, 2011; Samadi, 2013; Nassar, 2010). Abu Leil (2011) and Nassar (2010) mentioned the reason to medium level of academic adjustment in light of the adaptive pressures and problems which Arab students were faced in schools and universities by Jews in palestine's cities, which affects on their academic performance. Whereas Samadi (2013) focused on the study skills were provided to students at the schools which help students to adapt at new educational stage. The result of the current study from the analysis shows that secondary female students have Medium level of academic adjustment in Jordan. These results because of the political and economic conditions that are imposed on students, leading to Medium level of academic adjustment, which it affects negatively on their academic performance (Nassar, 2010). These conditions control the student's on feelings and thoughts, and cause them anxiety, tension and fear of the future (Abu Leil, 2011). Moreover, the Medium level of academic adjustment refers to the difficulties and problems of students with the curriculum and time management, where these problems affect negatively on their academic performance (Samadi, 2013).

Moreover, it is known, that the academic performance is considered cumulative which means that the level of performance at the previous grade affect at the next grades. Then, the student who have a low or moderate level of performance may be affect on her level of academic adjustment at present grade (Samadi, 2013).

About The Comparison based on levels of social and academic adjustment, as seen in table (3), the results of the relationship between social and academic adjustment show that there are positive significant correlation among the total score of social adjustment and the total score of the academic adjustment among secondary female

students, with coefficient of (0.554). This result conforms to the previous studies (Al-Ghamdi & Al-Nahal, 2014; Abu Lail, 2011). In study of Al-Ghamdi & Al-Nahal (2014), the results refer to positive significant correlation between social and academic adjustment with coefficient of (0.466). However, in study of Abu Lail (2011) the results refer to positive significant correlation between social and academic adjustment with coefficient of (0.400).

Al-Ghamdi & Al-Nahal (2014) confirmed that the reason for the positive relationship between social adjustment and academic adjustment is the family stability and social solidarity of the student is reflected positively on his way of thinking and his behavior in the academic field. This makes her more adaptable, which is reflected positively in the academic performance (Al-Ghamdi & Al-Nahal, 2014).

Other reason was highlighted by Abu Lail (2011) and Al-Ghamdi & Al-Nahal (2014), the reason is the positive relationship between student and teacher affects on the academic performance through more interest and follow-up to the lessons by student. Similarly, the negative relationship between student and teacher affects on the academic performance through decrease the interest and follow-up to the lessons by students, which leads to decrease or increase the level of academic performance (Abu Lail, 2011; Al-Ghamdi & Al-Nahal, 2014).

Furthermore, the high level of social skills affect on the level of confidence among student, which leads to increase the achievement among students. Hence, a high level of social skills enables the students to acquire the confidence and achievement motivation which it effects on the academic performance (Abu Lail, 2011, Yau, Sun, & Fong Cheng, 2012).

Therefore, according to the results of the current study about the positive relationship between social adjustment and academic adjustment and the results of the previous studies (e.g. Abu Lail (2011); Al-Ghamdi & Al-Nahal (2014); Yau, Sun, et al. (2012), we can summarize the reasons of the positive relationship between social and academic adjustment as a follow: (i) The high level of social skills (ii) the family stability and social solidarity of the student (iii) the positive relationship between student and teacher.

### **6.1 Limitation**

The main issue faced in this study is that more schools could not be surveyed because of logistics limitations. Therefore, the number of schools surveyed was limited to just one school in Amman City, Jordan. Another study should focus on more schools in order to generalize the findings.

## 6.2 Suggestion and Future Investigation

It is suggested to set up a supervisory committee in the Ministry of education in Jordan to observe and evaluate the level of social and academic adjustment among students, and to increase the level of social and academic adjustment through counseling programs and interventions. Thus, a qualitative research, and perhaps an experimental study over a period of time, should be conducted to get better results. Increase in the levels of social and academic adjustment should be addressed through conducting experimental studies which address interventions based on counseling theories from primary schools to overcome this problem.

In addition, the current study addressed only female students, whereas another study could focus on males and females in order to generalize the findings.

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