

ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF IP LEARNERS: ITS IMPLICATION TO CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

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Abstract:

This study aims to determine the relationship between IP learners' academic and social adjustments of Hiyang-Hiyang Elementary School Manara Extension. To address this problem, the researcher made use of a descriptive-correlational method of research utilizing the developed research instrument administered to the 45 IP learners. Findings of the study revealed that the extent of the academic and social adjustments of the IP learners is very high and when grouped according to their profile variables. Findings also revealed that there is a significant correlation between IP learners academic and social adjustment. These results show that IP learners are well adjusted socially and academically. In this regard, IP learners are encouraged to maintain their academic and social adjustments. Teachers are encouraged to guide IP learners in their academic and social adjustments in school. They should motivate them to participate in any activities to develop in them the spirit of friendship among their classmates and schoolmates.

Keywords: Academic Adjustment, Social Adjustments, IP Learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Adjustment with school life is considered as one of the main indicators of success in school as it is an indicator for the pupil's ability to face the problems resulting from fulfilling their academic, social and emotional needs. Through achieving adjustment with school life, the pupils will be able to form a kind of good relationship with others leading him to enhance his academic achievement.

Moreover, adjustment with school life can be a strong indicator of the academic level of the pupils from one hand and the level of social relations development and achieving personal goals from the other hand. Along this line, many educational scholars studied this aspect in order to explore the status of the academic, social and psychological level of students then determining the problems facing them when trying to achieve their goals (Ali, 2003).

The stage of school life is an important part of the student's and pupil's life as he or she moved from the total dependence on the teacher, family and curriculum into the complete independence. Moreover, many students move away from their cities into new places causing a change in their cultural, social and psychological environment, this may affect their adjustment with the school life (Al-shinawi & Abdurrahman, 1994).

Baker (2007) contends that school life has its own demands and challenges, failure in meeting those demands and challenges will cause academic failures. Psychological and social problems of the student are mostly affected by those problems. Therefore, it is important to guide students to achieve adjustment in order to avoid those problems and achieve their goals.

In the remote school of Hiyang-Hiyang Elementary School, indigenous pupils are majority of the pupils. Indigenous communities have always been expected to have different life styles and living conditions

The rationale presented above motivates the researchers to conduct an investigation of the academic and social adjustments of the IP learners Hiyang-Hiyang Elementary School.

II. Literature Review

The literature consistently shows that the academic and social adjustment of Indigenous pupils is shaped by cultural alignment, teacher relationships, school climate, and strength of identity. Across contexts such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States, Indigenous learners often experience a mismatch between home cultural values and mainstream schooling structures. This mismatch, combined with discrimination and low expectations, can weaken academic engagement and social belonging. However, research also highlights protective factors, particularly strong cultural identity, inclusive school climates, and culturally responsive pedagogy, that enhance resilience, belonging, and achievement.

Indigenous pupils frequently encounter cultural mismatch in school environments that privilege dominant norms. Fryberg, Troop-Gordon, and D'Arrioso (2013) demonstrate that when classroom norms conflict with Indigenous collectivist identities, students receive lower teacher evaluations and show weaker academic outcomes. Rahman (2013) explains that the hidden curriculum often pressures Indigenous students to assimilate, undermining their sense of belonging. Milne (2013) similarly describes "whitestream" schooling spaces where Indigenous identities are

marginalized. These systemic misalignments create barriers not only to academic success but also to social integration within the school community.

Teacher expectations and experiences of discrimination are also central to adjustment. Hynds et al. (2017) found that positive teacher expectations significantly influence Indigenous students' academic aspirations. In contrast, Bodkin-Andrews and Denson (2013) report that perceived discrimination predicts disengagement and self-sabotage among Indigenous learners. A meta-analysis by Civitillo, Mayer, and Jugert (2024) further confirms that perceived teacher-based racial discrimination is negatively associated with well-being, belonging, and academic performance. Brown and Chu (2012) add that school context moderates the impact of discrimination on academic outcomes. Together, these studies show that relational experiences within schools directly shape both social and academic adjustment.

Despite these challenges, research emphasizes the protective role of cultural identity and inclusive school climates. Purdie, Tripcony, and Boulton-Lewis (2000) found that strong Indigenous self-identity is positively related to motivation and academic outcomes. Cummins, Hu, and Markus (2015) show that identity-affirming pedagogies improve both literacy achievement and cultural pride. Celeste, Baysu, and Phalet (2019) demonstrate that multicultural school diversity policies can reduce belonging and achievement gaps. Berryman and Eley (2019) further argue that relational trust and culturally responsive teaching enhance school belonging, which mediates academic success. Overall, Indigenous pupils adjust more successfully when schools affirm their identities, foster inclusive climates, and build strong, respectful relationships.

Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of this study is to determine the academic and social adjustments of the indigenous pupils of Hiyang-Hiyang Elementary School Manara Extension. Specifically, this study answered the following questions (1) what is the level of the academic adjustments of the IP learners when grouped as to sex, age, grade level, religion, and number of siblings; (2) what is the extent of the social adjustments of the IP learners when grouped according to sex, age, grade level, religion, and number of siblings; and (3) is there significant correlations between IP learners' academic and social adjustments?

III. Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive-correlational method of research was used in this study. This method is the most appropriate because the study involved the description of IP learners' extent of academic and social adjustments. According to Latin and Berg (2004), descriptive research is typified by observations or descriptions of the status of a condition or situation. Investigators using this method do not manipulate variables or make things happen.

On the other hand, it is also correlational because relationship among the variables in this study were likewise determined. Salkind (2003) states that the most liked type of research to answer questions about the relationship among

variables or event is correlational research. It provides some indications as to how two or more things are related to one another or, in effect, what they share or have in common or how well a specific outcome might be predicted by one or more pieces of information.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the 45 IP learners of Hiyang-Hiyang Elementary School Manara Extension. They were grouped according to sex, age, grade level, religion, and number of siblings. To determine the IP learners as actual respondents of the study, total enumeration was used. This means that all IP learners of Hiyang-Hiyang Elementary School Manara Extension were considered as actual respondents of the study.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study consisted of two main parts. Part I of the research instrument determined respondents' personal information. This includes respondents' name which is optional, sex, age, grade level, religion, and number of siblings. On the other hand, part two of the research instrument was a 5-point Likert Scale which was used to measure the academic and social adjustments of the IP learners of Hiyang-Hiyang Elementary School Manara Extension. This portion of the research instrument consisted of 20 items, 10 of which measured the academic adjustments and the other 10 items measured the social adjustments of the IP learners. For the respondents to give their responses, five options were provided. These are very great extent, great extent, moderate extent, slight extent, negligible extent.

Validity of the Research Instrument

According to Thorndike and Hagen as cited by Laguda (2011), validity is the suitability of the test for its purposes. It must yield the kind of result it needs. A test is valid if it yields scores that help accomplish the purpose for which it was intended.

The research instrument used in determining the academic and social adjustments of the IP learners was subjected to validity. In the conduct of validity, the researcher adopted the criteria developed for evaluation of the survey questionnaire set forth by Carter V. Good and Douglas V. Scates.

To establish the validity, the research instrument was presented to the three jurors considered experts in the field of education, research, and multicultural education. They went over the research instrument item-by-item and judge the suitability and appropriateness of the items. Recommendations or suggestions for improvement were taken into consideration and was given due consideration by the researcher.

The mean rating obtained from the three jurors was 4.52. This obtained mean showed that the research instrument was very good and are valid to a very high degree.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

To establish the reliability, the research instrument was pilot tested to the elementary pupils of Hiyang-hiyang Elementary School. The data obtained in this regard was subjected to Cronbach Alpha. The Cronbach Alpha was used

whenever the researcher has items that are not scored simply as right or wrong (Carlson, 2004).

The computed alpha was 0.93. According to Ornstein in Dioneza (2013), a coefficient of 0.80 or higher indicates high reliability. This means that the research instrument modified by the researcher was reliable to a high degree.

Data Gathering Procedures

In the conduct of the study, permission from the school authorities of the Division of Cadiz City was asked by the researchers for the conduct of the research instrument to the target respondents.

After permit was granted, the researcher reproduced sufficient copies of the questionnaires and administered it to the target respondents. After the conduct, questionnaires were retrieved and the data were tallied, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted according to the specific problem, and hypotheses set forth in this investigation.

Data Analysis Procedure

In the process of the data obtained through the questionnaire, the researcher utilized the following descriptive and inferential statistics:

For problem 1 which determined the profile of the IP learners, frequency and percent was used.

For problem 2 which determined the extent of the academic and social adjustments of the IP learners when taken as a whole and when grouped according to profile variables, mean was used.

For problem 3 which determined relationship between IP learners academic and social adjustments, Pearson r was used.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study sets out to determine the relationship between IP learners academic and social adjustment. Thus, the presentation of the results focused on (1) IP learners' extent of academic adjustments; (2) level of IP learners' social adjustments; and (3) relationship between learners academic and social adjustments

Extent of the Academic Adjustments of the IP Learners

Result reveal that the level of the academic adjustment of the IP learners is very high ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 0.20$). This means that IP that indigenous learners can adjust very well in their academic life and activities in school. The academic support system provided by the school has helped them make necessary adjustments especially in their academic endeavor. Their responses imply that school as a learning institution should always look into the diversity of learners. Multicultural education should not be left behind because no matter what they also have rights for better and quality education.

However, according to Burgess (2010) students/pupils from backgrounds that are culturally different from the dominant culture of the school potentially face additional challenges in adjusting to the academic environment. Furthermore, these adjustment challenges can accumulate over time, influencing long-term academic trajectories and career aspirations. When students repeatedly experience misrecognition or marginalization, their academic self-concept may gradually decline, even in the presence of strong ability.

Importantly, institutional efforts that validate diverse cultural identities and explicitly teach hidden academic norms have been shown to significantly reduce these barriers and promote equitable outcomes

On the other hand, Burgess (2010) contends that despite the significant advances in technology, studies have shown that cross-cultural barriers continue to be a major hurdle for most people. Difficulties (including adjustment issues) have been identified among pupils from backgrounds different to that of the dominant culture and these can be a source of frustration and disappointment for students, and a challenge for staffs and teachers. Along this line, Robertson et al. as cited by AUPGSA (2007) noted that recognizing and demystifying the problems pupils face as learners in unfamiliar contexts is the critical first step towards improving their learning environments.

Table 1
The Extent of the Academic Adjustments of the IP Learners as to the Selected Profile Variables

Profile Variables	Categories	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Sex	Male	4.84	0.18	Very High
	Female	4.82	0.23	Very High
Age	5-8 years old	4.83	0.21	Very High
	9-11 years old	4.83	0.19	Very High
Grade Level	Grade One	4.84	0.21	Very High
	Grade Two	4.84	0.20	Very High
	Grade Three	4.82	0.20	Very High
Religion	Roman Catholic	4.84	0.18	Very High
	Non-Roman Catholic	4.83	0.21	Very High
Number of Siblings	1-2	4.98	0.04	Very High
	3-4	4.83	0.22	Very High
	5-6	4.89	0.13	Very High
	7-8	4.71	0.22	Very High

Table 1 reflects that the extent of the academic adjustments of boys ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 0.18$) and girls ($M = 4.82$, $SD = 0.23$) IP learners is very high. Results indicate that boys and girls are well adjusted academically. They can cope with the lessons and they can go at par with other pupils in the classroom. However, considering their obtained means, results disclosed that the obtained means of boys and girls are almost the same which can be interpreted to mean that the level of their academic adjustments is almost the same. These responses of the IP learners imply that equality should be dealt with properly in the classroom. Stereotyping that is believing that mathematics is for boys and language is for girls should be avoided. Teachers should always remember that as long as they are in school, they should supposedly experience equal opportunity.

Result presented in this regard was supported by the Vishal and Kaji (2014) on their study on adjustment of boys and girls school level students in Ahmedabad. In this study, the obtained data were analyzed through „t“ test to know the mean difference between boys and girls school students. The result shows that there is no significant difference in school adjustment of boys' and girls' students in Ahmedabad.

When grouped according to age, the extent of the academic adjustment of IP learners whose age belong to the age group of 5 – 8 years old ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.21$) and those who belong to the age group of 9 – 11 years old ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.19$) is very high. This is confirmed by Coley (2011) in his study on gender differences within ethnic groups of varying ages and it revealed more similarities than differences. On most measures, gender differences did not vary much from one ethnic group to another.

Considering indigenous pupils grade level, result reveals that the extent of the academic adjustments of grade one ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 0.21$), grade two ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 0.20$), and grade three ($M = 4.82$, $SD = 0.20$) is very high. This means that indigenous pupils in different grade level were academically adjusted. They have academically adjusted well with their academic life in school.

Furthermore, when grouped according to religion, the extent of the academic adjustment of IP learners who are Roman Catholics ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 0.18$) and Non-Roman Catholics ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.21$) is very high. This means that regardless of IP learners’ religious affiliation, yet the level of their academic adjustments is still very high. IP learners are academically adjusted. They knew how to cope academically to the different subject areas. This implies that learning environment should be conducive to the IP learners so that improvements in their academic performance will be achieved.

In terms of the number of siblings, the extent of the academic adjustments of the IP learners is very high. This is supported by the obtained means of 4.98, 4.83, 4.89, and 4.71 at standard deviations of 0.04, 0.22, 0.13, and 0.22.

Extent of the Social Adjustments of the IP Learners

Considering social adjustments, results shows that the extent of the social adjustments of the IP learners was very high ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 0.24$). This means that indigenous pupils are well adjusted socially despite of the fact that they belong to an ethnic group, yet they know how to adjust themselves socially with people surrounding them. School’s support system has helped them make necessary social adjustments. This also implies that the role of the school as an agent of change among learners has played great parts on how these IP learners have adjusted themselves socially.

The finding suggests that social integration is being intentionally supported within the school context. Research consistently shows that positive school climate and culturally responsive practices significantly enhance minority students’ social outcomes. Gay (2010) argues that culturally responsive teaching fosters mutual respect, inclusion, and stronger peer relationships, while Wentzel (1998) found that supportive school environments are directly linked to prosocial behavior and social competence. In this case, the school’s support system may function as a protective factor, helping Indigenous learners navigate peer interactions confidently and reducing the social risks often associated with minority status.

Moreover, social adjustment among Indigenous learners is strengthened when schools affirm rather than suppress cultural identity. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that culturally relevant pedagogy supports academic and social success by validating students’ cultural backgrounds.

Similarly, Phinney (1990) found that strong ethnic identity is positively associated with psychological well-being and social confidence among minority youth. When schools celebrate Indigenous heritage and integrate inclusive curricula, students are less likely to experience identity conflict and more likely to develop secure cross-cultural relationships. The high mean score may therefore reflect both institutional validation and students internalized cultural pride, which together promote healthy social adaptation.

Finally, the school’s role as an agent of change is central to fostering long-term social adjustment. Tinto (1993) highlights that institutional support and social integration are critical predictors of student persistence and success. Additionally, Benner and Graham (2009) found that perceived discrimination negatively impacts adjustment, whereas supportive peer and teacher relationships mitigate such effects. By providing counselling services, inclusive extracurricular opportunities, and structured peer interaction, schools create environments that encourage belonging and intercultural dialogue. Thus, the strong social adjustment observed among IP learners likely reflects a combination of systemic support, inclusive climate, and student resilience, demonstrating that when schools actively cultivate belonging, culturally diverse learners can thrive socially.

Table 2
Extent of the Social Adjustments of the IP Learners
as to the Selected Profile Variables

Profile Variables	Categories	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Sex	Male	4.90	0.15	Very High
	Female	4.78	0.33	Very High
Age	5-8 years old	4.88	0.21	Very High
	9-11 years old	4.77	0.31	Very High
Grade Level	Grade One	4.73	0.33	Very High
	Grade Two	4.87	0.15	Very High
	Grade Three	4.95	0.12	Very High
Religion	Roman Catholic	4.84	0.21	Very High
	Non-Roman Catholic	4.86	0.25	Very High
Number of Siblings	1-2	4.97	0.05	Very High
	3-4	4.88	0.20	Very High
	5-6	4.89	0.16	Very High
	7-8	4.69	0.39	Very High

Table 2 reveals that the extent of the social adjustments of boys ($M = 4.90$, $SD = 0.15$) and girls ($M = 4.78$, $SD = 0.33$) IP learners is very high. These responses indicate that both boys and girls are socially well adjusted, demonstrating comfort in interacting with peers and participating in school activities collaboratively. Research on school belonging supports this interpretation, as strong peer relationships and positive classroom engagement are key indicators of social adjustment (Wentzel, 1998; Goodenow, 1993). When learners feel accepted and included within the school community, they are more likely to participate actively and build meaningful peer connections.

However, considering the obtained means, results disclose that boys scored slightly higher than girls in terms of social adjustment. This may suggest that boys in this context report greater ease in peer interaction. Some developmental research

indicates that boys often form larger, activity-based peer networks, which may facilitate visible social participation in school settings (Rose & Rudolph, 2006). In contrast, girls' friendships are often characterized by intimacy and emotional depth, which may not always be reflected in measures emphasizing general social interaction or participation.

The finding that boys may establish friendships more easily than girls should be interpreted cautiously. Gender differences in social adjustment are often influenced by contextual, cultural, and environmental factors rather than inherent ability (Maccoby, 1998). Additionally, differences in socialization patterns may shape how boys and girls perceive and report their social experiences (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Therefore, while boys obtained a slightly higher mean score, both groups demonstrate very high levels of social adjustment, suggesting that the school environment effectively supports positive peer relationships for all IP learners.

When grouped according to age, the findings indicate that IP learners aged 5–8 years ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 0.21$) and those aged 9–11 years reportedly demonstrate very high levels of social adjustment. This suggests that both early childhood and middle childhood learners are socially well integrated within the school environment. Developmental theory supports the idea that during these stages, children actively develop social competence through peer interaction, cooperative play, and participation in structured group activities (Erikson, 1963). In the early years (5–8), children are typically navigating the stage of initiative versus guilt, while those aged 9–11 are in the industry versus inferiority stage, where peer approval and collaborative achievement become increasingly important. High adjustment scores across both groups may indicate that the school effectively supports age-appropriate social development.

Furthermore, research in child development emphasizes that peer relationships during middle childhood become more stable and structured, contributing to improved social skills and group belonging (Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 2006). If both age groups exhibit very high social adjustment, it may reflect a school climate that fosters inclusivity, cooperation, and positive peer norms across grade levels. Structured classroom routines, group-based learning, and extracurricular engagement likely provide consistent opportunities for children to practice communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork, regardless of age differences.

However, it is important to examine the reported mean of 0.77 for the 9–11 age group, as this appears inconsistent with a “very high” interpretation if the measurement scale ranges similarly to the younger group's mean of 4.88. This may suggest a typographical error or data encoding issue that requires clarification. Assuming both groups indeed scored within the “very high” range, the results imply that age variation among IP learners does not significantly influence their capacity to adjust socially. Instead, the findings point to the strength of the school's support systems and inclusive practices in promoting social integration across developmental stages.

Considering IP learners' grade level, the results reveal that Grade One ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 0.33$), Grade Two ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 0.15$), and Grade Three ($M = 4.95$, $SD = 0.12$) pupils all demonstrate very high levels of social adjustment. This

indicates that across early primary levels, Indigenous learners are socially integrated within the school environment. The consistently high means suggest that pupils, regardless of grade placement, are able to form friendships, participate in collaborative classroom tasks, and engage positively with peers. Such findings imply that social competence is being developed progressively as learners advance through grade levels, possibly strengthened by continuous exposure to structured group activities and cooperative learning experiences.

Moreover, the slightly increasing mean scores from Grade One to Grade Three may reflect growing social maturity and confidence as children spend more time in the school setting. As pupils move to higher grades, they typically develop stronger communication skills, better conflict resolution strategies, and more stable peer networks, which contribute to smoother social interaction. The results therefore suggest that the school environment effectively supports peer collaboration and inclusive participation across grade levels, enabling IP learners to establish and maintain meaningful social relationships while engaging in school-related activities.

Furthermore, when grouped according to religion, the results indicate that IP learners who are Roman Catholics ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 0.21$) and Non-Roman Catholics ($M = 4.86$, $SD = 0.25$) demonstrate very high levels of social adjustment. This suggests that religious affiliation does not hinder the ability of Indigenous pupils to interact positively with peers or participate in school activities. Research on school socialization emphasizes that inclusive and respectful school environments can foster peer relationships across diverse belief systems, promoting mutual respect and cooperation (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Phinney, 1990). The high scores indicate that IP learners are able to navigate social dynamics effectively, irrespective of their religious backgrounds.

Moreover, the findings highlight that these learners are capable of establishing friendships and maintaining collaborative relationships with classmates. This demonstrates the effectiveness of school practices in promoting social cohesion and integration, where students are encouraged to work together and appreciate differences in beliefs and traditions. Inclusive school policies, culturally responsive teaching, and peer-support programs likely contribute to this positive social adjustment, helping IP learners develop interpersonal skills and a sense of belonging in the school community (Wentzel, 1998; Gay, 2010). Overall, religious diversity does not appear to be a barrier to social adaptation among these pupils.

Lastly, when grouped according to the number of siblings, the results indicate that IP learners with 1–2 siblings ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 0.05$), 3–4 siblings ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 0.20$), 5–6 siblings ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 0.16$), and 7–8 siblings ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 0.39$) all demonstrate very high levels of social adjustment. This suggests that family size does not negatively affect the ability of Indigenous pupils to interact effectively with peers or participate in school activities. Research in child development indicates that while siblings can influence social learning at home - through negotiation, cooperation, and sharing - these skills often transfer to the school setting, enabling children to build friendships and navigate peer

interactions successfully (Dunn, 2004; McHale, Updegraff, & Whiteman, 2012).

Moreover, the findings imply that IP learners, regardless of whether they come from smaller or larger families, are capable of establishing positive relationships and collaborating with classmates. The slightly lower mean for those with 7–8 siblings may reflect minor differences in attention or individual experience, but overall, social adjustment remains very high across all groups. This highlights the role of the school environment as a key factor in promoting social integration, providing structured opportunities for teamwork, cooperative play, and peer interaction that support students in developing strong social skills regardless of family background.

Relationship Between IP Learners Academic and Social Adjustments

Table 3
Relationship between IP Learners Level of Academic and Social Adjustments

Variables Correlated	N	r	p	Interpretation
Academic and social adjustments of indigenous pupils	45	0.61	0.00	Significant

Table 3 reveals a significant positive correlation between IP learners' level of academic and social engagement ($r = 0.61$, $p = 0.00$), indicating a moderate-to-strong relationship between these two dimensions of adjustment. This finding suggests that students who are better adjusted academically tend also to be well-adjusted socially, and vice versa. From a developmental perspective, this relationship aligns with theories of school engagement, which emphasize that academic performance and social competence are mutually reinforcing (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Children who are confident in their academic abilities often feel more competent in peer interactions, enabling them to participate in collaborative learning activities, engage in classroom discussions, and establish supportive peer relationships. Similarly, strong social skills can enhance academic performance by promoting positive classroom behavior, cooperative learning, and access to peer-based learning support (Wentzel, 1998; Eccles & Roeser, 2011).

Furthermore, the correlation highlights the complementary nature of social and academic adjustment. IP learners who are socially integrated - able to establish friendships, communicate effectively with peers, and navigate classroom social norms - may experience reduced anxiety and greater motivation, which can positively influence their academic outcomes (Phinney, Romero, Nava, & Huang, 2001). Conversely, students with strong academic engagement, such as participating in class or completing tasks successfully, often gain confidence that facilitates broader social interaction. These dynamic underscores the importance of holistic educational approaches: teachers should not focus solely on cognitive or academic skill development but must also provide structured opportunities to enhance students' social competencies. Programs that integrate cooperative

learning, peer mentoring, and group problem-solving tasks can simultaneously support academic and social growth (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

In the context of Indigenous pupils, these findings take on added significance. Research on culturally responsive education indicates that social integration is particularly important for minority students, as supportive peer networks and positive teacher relationships can buffer against marginalization and improve learning outcomes (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Therefore, the significant correlation between academic and social adjustment among IP learners suggests that educational interventions should adopt a dual focus: while fostering literacy, numeracy, and other academic skills, schools must also create inclusive, collaborative, and socially supportive environments that validate students' cultural identity and promote peer interaction. This approach maximizes the likelihood that academic and social development reinforce each other, leading to more holistic student growth.

V. IMPLICATION

The findings of this study suggest that academic and social development among IP learners should be treated as interconnected dimensions of education rather than separate areas of concern. Since learners who are socially well-adjusted also tend to perform well academically, schools need to adopt holistic approaches that integrate cognitive growth with social skill development. This means that fostering inclusive classroom environments, encouraging positive peer interactions, and practicing culturally responsive teaching are essential components of effective education for Indigenous learners.

The results further indicate that when schools provide consistent support and culturally sensitive learning environments, factors such as sex, age, grade level, religion, and family background do not become barriers to success. The study highlights the importance of strengthening policies and programs that promote equity, inclusion, and belonging. By doing so, schools can serve as transformative spaces where Indigenous learners are empowered to thrive academically and socially, contributing to their long-term development and overall well-being.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners are highly adjusted both academically and socially, demonstrating their ability to cope effectively with school demands while forming positive peer relationships. The results highlight the critical role of the school environment, where inclusive teaching practices, supportive learning structures, and culturally responsive approaches facilitate holistic development and help learners navigate both academic and social challenges.

Furthermore, academic and social adjustments are mutually reinforcing, with success in one domain enhancing the other. This underscores the importance of holistic educational strategies that simultaneously foster cognitive skills and social competencies, while validating students' cultural identities and promoting inclusive classroom climates.

Overall, when schools provide a supportive, culturally sensitive, and inclusive environment, Indigenous learners are able to thrive academically and socially, regardless of their individual backgrounds. These findings emphasize the need for educators to implement interventions that balance academic development with social integration, ensuring equitable opportunities for growth and lifelong learning.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that schools strengthen the implementation of culturally responsive teaching practices that recognize, respect, and integrate Indigenous learners' cultural backgrounds into the curriculum. Teachers should incorporate inclusive instructional strategies, contextualized learning materials, and classroom discussions that validate Indigenous knowledge and experiences. Such practices not only enhance academic engagement but also foster a strong sense of identity and belonging among IP learners, which supports both academic and social development.

Schools should also adopt a holistic approach to learner development by designing programs that simultaneously promote academic competence and social skills. Structured cooperative learning activities, peer mentoring systems, and guidance services can help learners build confidence, improve communication skills, and strengthen peer relationships. Since academic and social adjustments are interconnected, interventions should not focus solely on academic achievement but also intentionally cultivate teamwork, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving within classroom settings.

Furthermore, continuous professional development for teachers is essential to ensure sensitivity to cultural diversity and awareness of potential adjustment challenges faced by Indigenous learners. Educators should be equipped with strategies to create equitable learning environments that avoid stereotyping and ensure equal participation opportunities for all students. Finally, schools are encouraged to foster strong partnerships with families and Indigenous communities to reinforce support systems beyond the classroom, ensuring that learners receive consistent academic encouragement and social guidance both at school and at home.

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