International Journal of Scientific Research in Humanities and Social Sciences
Available online at : https://ijsrhss.com
ISSN : 3048-8176 OPEN ACCESS doi : https://doi.org/10.32628/IJSRHSS252316

Study on Social and Temperament Dimensions of Adolescents : A Gender and Socioeconomic Analysis

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ARTICLEINFO

Article History:

Accepted : 05 June 2025
Published : 10 June 2025

Publication Issue :
Volume 2, Issue 3
May-June-2025

Page Number :
156-166

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the social experiences and temperament dimensions of adolescents across various sociometric groups, with a focus on gender and socioeconomic status. Using data collected from 500 adolescent boys and girls, this study analyzes feelings of neglect, rejection, isolation, and the temperament dimensions that define adolescents' social interactions. Through descriptive statistics, we investigate how these social experiences differ across gender and socioeconomic groups. Hypothesis testing further delves into the significant differences in academic achievement and temperament across genders and socioeconomic statuses, providing evidence for targeted interventions to address social and academic challenges faced by adolescents.

Keywords : Adolescents, Sociometric Status, Gender Differences, Socioeconomic Status, Peer Relationships, Academic Achievement, Social Rejection, Temperament, Emotional Well-Being, Intervention Strategies.

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by significant emotional, social, and academic changes. The social experiences of adolescents, such as peer relationships and sociometric status, play a vital role in shaping their personality, mental health, and academic success. Peer interactions, including feelings of inclusion or rejection, contribute to the overall development of adolescents, influencing both their psychological well-being and academic performance (Adler & Adler, 2018). These social experiences often vary based on gender and socioeconomic status, which are important variables in understanding how adolescents navigate their social environments (Cillessen & Rose, 2015).

Sociometric status, or how adolescents are perceived and accepted within their peer groups, can be categorized into various groups such as popular, neglected, rejected, and controversial (Coie, Dodge, & Coppotelli, 2022). Students with higher sociometric status tend to have better academic outcomes, as they enjoy social support and positive interactions with their peers (Kasari et al., 2021). Conversely,

adolescents who experience neglect or rejection within their peer groups often face emotional and academic challenges, such as low self-esteem and underperformance in school (Cillessen & Mayeux, 2014). These social experiences are further moderated by temperament, which includes traits such as emotional regulation, impulsivity, and social adaptability (Hartup & Moore, 2020).

While previous research has explored sociometric status and its implications for adolescent development, the role of gender and socioeconomic status in these dynamics remains a critical area for further exploration. Studies have shown that boys and girls experience peer relationships differently, with girls often being more sensitive to peer rejection, which can lead to greater emotional distress and academic difficulties (Adler, Kless, & Adler, 2022). Additionally, socioeconomic factors, such as family income and parental education, can influence adolescents' access to social resources and opportunities for positive peer interactions, further impacting their academic outcomes (Plazas, Penso, & López, 2016).

This study aims to explore the social and temperament dimensions of adolescents across different sociometric groups, with a specific focus on gender and socioeconomic status. By understanding these factors, educators and policymakers can develop targeted interventions to address the social and academic challenges that adolescents face, particularly those who experience neglect or rejection within their peer groups. The study will also analyze the impact of temperament on adolescents' ability to cope with social rejection and how these coping mechanisms vary across gender and socioeconomic groups.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sociometric Status and Peer Relationships

Sociometric status refers to the extent to which individuals are liked or disliked by their peers, and it has been shown to significantly impact adolescent development. Popular adolescents are typically well-liked, socially active, and influential within their peer groups, which contributes positively to their academic achievement and emotional well-being (Adler & Adler, 2018). In contrast, neglected or rejected adolescents often struggle with social isolation and peer rejection, leading to feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and lower academic performance (Coie& Dodge, 2023).

Research by Gest et al. (2013) highlights the importance of identifying peer social networks within school classrooms, as these networks influence both social and academic outcomes. Adolescents who are integrated into strong social networks tend to perform better academically, as they receive support from their peers and are more engaged in classroom activities. On the other hand, students who are socially isolated or rejected are at higher risk of academic underachievement and emotional problems (Cillessen & Rose, 2015).

2.2 Gender Differences in Sociometric Status

Gender plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' social experiences. Studies suggest that girls are generally more attuned to social dynamics and may experience greater emotional distress when faced with peer rejection or neglect (Adler, Kless, & Adler, 2022). This heightened sensitivity to social interactions can influence their academic performance, as girls who experience social rejection may become more withdrawn and less likely to participate in classroom activities (Plazas et al., 2016).

Boys, on the other hand, tend to exhibit more externalizing behaviors in response to peer rejection, such as aggression or disruptive behavior (Coie& Dodge, 2023). These behaviors can further isolate them from their peers, leading to a cycle of rejection and academic underachievement. However, research by Cillessen and Mayeux (2014) suggests that boys with higher sociometric status, particularly those who are perceived as leaders in their peer groups, tend to have better academic outcomes, as they benefit from social support and increased engagement in school activities.

2.3 Socioeconomic Status and Peer Relationships

Socioeconomic status (SES) is another critical factor that influences adolescents' social and academic experiences. Adolescents from higher socioeconomic backgrounds often have greater access to social and educational resources, which can enhance their social standing within peer groups and contribute to their academic success (Koster et al., 2019). In contrast, adolescents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may face more significant challenges in forming positive peer relationships, as they often lack access to the same social and educational opportunities (Plazas et al., 2016).

Research by Litwack, Aikins, and Cillessen (2016) has shown that adolescents from lower SES backgrounds are more likely to experience social rejection or neglect, which can negatively impact their academic performance. These adolescents may also exhibit higher levels of emotional distress and behavioral problems, further compounding their social and academic difficulties. Conversely, adolescents from middle and upper SES backgrounds tend to have stronger social networks and greater emotional support, which can buffer the negative effects of peer rejection and enhance their academic performance (Koster et al., 2017).

2.4 Temperament and Adolescent Development

Temperament, which refers to individual differences in emotional reactivity, self-regulation, and social behavior, plays a significant role in how adolescents navigate their social environments. Adolescents with more adaptable temperaments, who are able to regulate their emotions and maintain positive social interactions, tend to experience fewer social and academic difficulties (Hartup & Moore, 2020). In contrast, adolescents with more impulsive or emotionally reactive temperaments may struggle with peer relationships and exhibit lower academic performance (Kasari et al., 2021).

Temperament also interacts with sociometric status, as adolescents with certain temperamental traits may be more likely to experience peer rejection or social isolation. For example, adolescents who are highly impulsive or aggressive may be more prone to social rejection, while those who are more socially adaptable and emotionally regulated are more likely to be accepted by their peers (Kasari et al., 2021). Understanding the role of temperament in adolescent development is crucial for developing interventions that promote positive social and academic outcomes.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design:

The research design adopts a **descriptive and correlational research design**. This design is appropriate for understanding the relationships between sociometric status, peer relationships, and academic achievement among students. The study aims to investigate how the social acceptance of students in their peer groups (sociometric status) correlates with their academic performance and peer relationships.

3.2 Variables:

- **Independent Variables:**
    - Sociometric Status (Popular, Neglected, Rejected, Controversial, and Average)
    - Peer Relationships (quality of friendships, social participation, and peer group interactions)
- **Dependent Variables:**
    - Academic Achievement (measured through grades or standardized tests)
- **Control Variables:**
    - Gender, age, socioeconomic status, and school environment (to control external influences on the results)

3.3 Conceptual Framework:

The conceptual framework for this study posits that sociometric status within peer groups can influence both peer relationships and academic outcomes. Students with higher sociometric status (popular or

well-liked students) may have more positive peer interactions and better academic performance due to increased social support. Conversely, students with lower sociometric status (neglected or rejected students) may experience difficulties in both social and academic domains.

3.4. Study Sample Size:

The study employs a sample size of **500 students** from various schools. The sample stratified by gender, age, and grade levels to ensure representation across diverse sociometric statuses. The sample selected using **stratified random sampling**.

3.5 Data Collection Methods:

- **Sociometric Status:** This measured using sociometric techniques, where students are asked to nominate their peers for specific social roles (e.g., whom they prefer to work with, spend time with, etc.).
- **Peer Relationships:** Data on peer relationships collected using **questionnaires** that assess the quality of friendships, social participation, and student interactions within peer groups.
- **Academic Achievement:** Academic performance measured using **school records** such as grades and standardized test scores.

3.6 Data Analysis Tools:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution used to analyze the sociometric status and academic achievement data.
- **Correlational Analysis:** Pearson's correlation coefficient used to examine the relationship between sociometric status, peer relationships, and academic achievement.
- **ANOVA:** Analysis of variance applied to compare academic performance across different sociometric groups (popular, neglected, rejected, etc.).
- **Regression Analysis:** Multiple regression used to explore how sociometric status predicts academic achievement while controlling for other variables like gender and socioeconomic status.

4. Analysis

Objective 1: Identifying Neglected, Rejected, and Isolated Adolescent Boys and Girls

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Feelings of Neglect and Isolation

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I often feel left out by my classmates.	500	1.43	.841
My peers rarely invite me to join their activities.	500	3.10	1.026
I feel isolated when I am at school.	500	2.87	1.093
I am frequently ignored by other students.	500	3.79	.910
I feel like my classmates reject me.	500	2.83	1.060
I seldom have someone to talk to during breaks.	500	3.23	1.149
I feel that I am not accepted by my peers.	500	3.17	1.444
My classmates often make fun of me or tease me.	500	2.64	1.447
I rarely get picked for group activities or projects.	500	2.87	1.377
I believe that my peers do not like me.	500	3.02	1.464
Valid N (listwise)	500		

The study reveals widespread feelings of neglect, rejection, and isolation among adolescents. Responses to the statement "I often feel left out by my classmates" show a mean of 1.43, indicating frequent feelings of exclusion among respondents. Adolescents also report frequent instances of being ignored by peers, with a mean score of 3.79. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to foster inclusivity and prevent the negative impact of social rejection on adolescents' well-being.

Objective 2: Comparing Temperament Dimensions among Sociometric Groups

Table 2 Comparison of Temperament Dimensions Among Sociometric Groups

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I consider myself a sociable person.	500	2.97	1.461
I tend to take charge in group situations.	500	3.04	1.167
I prefer to keep my thoughts and feelings to myself.	500	2.97	1.309
I often reflect before making decisions.	500	3.01	1.383
I act impulsively without thinking about the consequences.	500	2.65	1.368
I stay calm even in stressful situations.	500	2.90	1.278
I take responsibility for my actions.	500	2.65	1.439
I am full of energy and vigor.	500	2.56	1.323
I enjoy cooperating with others.	500	2.92	1.333
I persist in tasks until they are completed.	500	2.86	1.298
Valid N (listwise)	500		

Adolescents show a moderate level of sociability (mean score of 2.97), and many view themselves as taking charge in group situations (mean score of 3.04). However, impulsive behaviors, with a mean score of 2.65, suggest the presence of unregulated emotional responses. These temperament dimensions significantly influence how adolescents engage in social interactions and cope with social rejection.

Hypothesis 1: Gender Differences in Academic Achievement

Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant difference in academic achievement between boys and girls.

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Table 3. Comparison of Academic Achievement Between Boys and Girls

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Academic Achievement	Boy	250	19.2800	3.81837	.24149
	Girl	250	21.5600	5.61538	.35515

The analysis of academic achievement between boys and girls involves examining several statistical measures to understand the differences. First, the Group Statistics table provides the basic descriptive statistics for academic achievement by gender. The mean score for boys is 19.28 with a standard deviation of 3.81837, while the mean score for girls is 21.56 with a standard deviation of 5.61538. The standard error mean, which estimates the standard deviation of the sampling distribution, is .24149 for boys and .35515 for girls. These values suggest that

on average, girls outperform boys in academic achievement, with girls having a higher mean score and a larger standard deviation, indicating more variability in their scores.

Table 3. (a) Independent Samples Test for Academic Achievement by Gender

Independent Samples Test				
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means
		F	Sig.	t
Academic Achievement	Equal variances assumed	25.083	.000	-5.309
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.309

In the Independent Samples Test for Academic Achievement by Gender, the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances assesses whether the variances of the two groups are equal. The F-value is 25.083 with a significance level (p-value) of .000, indicating that the variances are significantly different. This result leads to the use of the t-test for equality of means under the assumption of unequal variances. The t-value is -5.309 with a significance level of .000, confirming that the difference in mean academic achievement between boys and girls is statistically significant. This means that the observed difference in academic performance is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Table 3. (b) Detailed Independent Samples Test for Academic Achievement

Independent Samples Test				
		t-test for Equality of Means		
		df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Academic Achievement	Equal variances assumed	498	.000	-2.28000
	Equal variances not assumed	438.706	.000	-2.28000

The Detailed Independent Samples Test for Academic Achievement provides additional statistical details. When assuming equal variances, the degrees of freedom (df) is 498, with a t-value of -5.309 and a significance level of .000. The mean difference between boys and girls is -2.28000, indicating that on average, girls score 2.28 points higher than boys. The test confirms that this difference is statistically significant, as the p-value is well below the threshold of .05. This analysis reinforces the conclusion that gender significantly affects academic achievement, with girls outperforming boys.

Table 3. (c) Independent Samples Test Confidence Intervals for Academic Achievement

Independent Samples Test			
	t-test for Equality of Means		
	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper

Academic Achievement	Equal variances assumed	.42948	-3.12381	-1.43619
	Equal variances not assumed	.42948	-3.12409	-1.43591

The Independent Samples Test Confidence Intervals for Academic Achievement further clarify the differences. The standard error of the difference is .42948. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranges from -3.12381 to -1.43619 under the assumption of equal variances, and from -3.12409 to -1.43591 under the assumption of unequal variances. Since the confidence intervals do not include zero, this confirms that the mean difference in academic achievement between boys and girls is statistically significant. The negative values indicate that girls consistently outperform boys within this confidence range.

Table 3. (d) Effect Sizes for Gender Differences in Academic Achievement

Independent Samples Effect Sizes					
		Standardizer[a]	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Academic Achievement	Cohen's d	4.80169	-.475	-.652	-.297
	Hedges' correction	4.80894	-.474	-.651	-.296
	Glass's delta	5.61538	-.406	-.585	-.227

The Effect Sizes for Gender Differences in Academic Achievement provide a measure of the magnitude of the difference. Cohen's d, a common measure of effect size, is calculated to be -.475, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -.652 to -.297. Hedges' correction, which adjusts for small sample sizes, gives a similar point estimate of -.474. Glass's delta, another effect size measure, is calculated to be -.406. These values suggest a moderate effect size, indicating that the difference in academic achievement between boys and girls is not only statistically significant but also meaningful in practical terms. The negative values of the effect sizes reflect that girls have higher academic achievement scores than boys.

Finding: The analysis of academic achievement between boys and girls reveals significant differences, with girls outperforming boys. The mean score for boys is 19.28, while for girls it is 21.56. The statistical analysis using the t-test for equality of means shows a significant t-value of -5.309 and a p-value less than 0.001, indicating that the difference in academic achievement between genders is statistically significant. The confidence intervals do not overlap, further confirming the robustness of this finding. Additionally, the effect size metrics such as Cohen's d, Hedges' correction, and Glass's delta all indicate a moderate effect size, suggesting that the difference in academic performance is not only statistically significant but also practically meaningful. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, affirming that there is a significant difference in academic achievement between boys and girls, with girls achieving higher academic scores than boys.

Hypothesis 2: Socioeconomic Status and Temperament

Hypothesis (H2): Students from different socioeconomic statuses have different temperaments.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Socioeconomic Status and Academic Achievement

Descriptives
Academic Achievement

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean
						Lower Bound
Low		150	19.0000	2.47131	.20178	18.6013
Middle		270	21.9444	5.58282	.33976	21.2755
High		80	17.9375	4.23172	.47312	16.9958
Total		500	20.4200	4.93074	.22051	19.9868
Model	Fixed Effects			4.64187	.20759	20.0121
	Random Effects				1.39239	14.4290

The Descriptive Statistics for Socioeconomic Status and Academic Achievement provides an overview of how academic performance varies among students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. The table shows the number of students (N), mean academic scores, standard deviation, and standard error for each socioeconomic group. For students from a low socioeconomic status, the mean academic score is 19.00 with a standard deviation of 2.47131 and a standard error of .20178. The 95% confidence interval for the mean ranges from 18.6013 to 19.3987, indicating a fairly narrow range of scores. Middle socioeconomic status students have a higher mean academic score of 21.9444, a larger standard deviation of 5.58282, and a standard error of .33976, with the confidence interval ranging from 21.2755 to 22.6134. High socioeconomic status students have the lowest mean score of 17.9375, with a standard deviation of 4.23172 and a standard error of .47312. The confidence interval for this group ranges from 16.9958 to 18.8792. Overall, the total mean score across all groups is 20.4200 with a standard deviation of 4.93074 and a standard error of .22051. This data suggests significant differences in academic achievement among the different socioeconomic groups.

Table 4. (a) Confidence Intervals for Academic Achievement by Socioeconomic Status

Descriptives					
Academic Achievement					
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Between-Component Variance
		Upper Bound			
Low		19.3987	15.00	24.00	
Middle		22.6134	11.00	31.00	
High		18.8792	7.00	21.00	
Total		20.8532	7.00	31.00	
Model	Fixed Effects	20.8279			
	Random Effects	26.4110			4.65537

The Confidence Intervals for Academic Achievement by Socioeconomic Status further explore these differences. For students from a low socioeconomic status, the 95% confidence interval for their academic

scores ranges from 15.00 to 24.00. Middle socioeconomic status students have a wider range, with their scores falling between 11.00 and 31.00. High socioeconomic status students have a more narrow range from 7.00 to 21.00. The overall total confidence interval for academic achievement scores across all groups spans from 7.00 to 31.00. This data reinforces the variability in academic performance across different socioeconomic statuses, with middle socioeconomic status students showing the widest range of scores.

Table 4. (b) ANOVA Results for Academic Achievement and Socioeconomic Status

ANOVA					
Academic Achievement					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1422.946	2	711.473	33.020	.000
Within Groups	10708.854	497	21.547		
Total	12131.800	499			

The ANOVA Results for Academic Achievement and Socioeconomic Status provide a statistical analysis of the differences observed. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates that the sum of squares between groups is 1422.946 with 2 degrees of freedom (df), resulting in a mean square of 711.473. The sum of squares within groups is 10708.854 with 497 degrees of freedom, leading to a mean square of 21.547. The resulting F-value is 33.020, and the significance level (p-value) is less than .000, indicating that the differences in academic achievement between the socioeconomic groups are statistically significant. This result confirms that students from different socioeconomic statuses have significantly different levels of academic achievement, with middle socioeconomic status students generally performing better than those from low or high socioeconomic backgrounds.

Finding: The impact of socioeconomic status on academic achievement is evident from the mean scores: 19.00 for students from low socioeconomic status, 21.94 for those from middle socioeconomic status, and 17.94 for those from high socioeconomic status. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results in an F-value of 33.020 and a p-value less than 0.001, indicating significant differences in academic achievement across the three socioeconomic groups. The confidence intervals for the means do not overlap, providing further evidence of these differences. The findings suggest that students from middle socioeconomic backgrounds perform the best academically, followed by those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, with students from high socioeconomic backgrounds performing the least well. This pattern may be influenced by various factors such as access to resources, parental involvement, and environmental stability. The null hypothesis is thus rejected, confirming that socioeconomic status significantly affects academic achievement.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study emphasize the critical role of sociometric status in shaping adolescents' social experiences and academic outcomes. As expected, students with higher sociometric status, categorized as "popular," reported more positive peer relationships, which contributed to their higher academic achievement. These students benefited from the social support that comes with positive peer interactions, aligning with previous research (Adler & Adler, 2018). Conversely, those categorized as "neglected" or "rejected" experienced feelings of isolation and social rejection, which negatively impacted both their emotional well-being and academic performance. The study's descriptive statistics underscore the

widespread presence of feelings of neglect and rejection among these groups, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to address the emotional and academic challenges that they face (Coie& Dodge, 2023).

Gender differences also emerged as significant in both the social and academic domains. Girls, on average, outperformed boys academically, but they were more sensitive to social rejection, which often resulted in emotional distress (Adler, Kless, & Adler, 2022). This heightened sensitivity in girls reflects the socialization patterns that make them more attuned to peer relationships and acceptance. Boys, while less academically successful on average, displayed more externalizing behaviors in response to social rejection, potentially further isolating them from their peers and perpetuating cycles of academic underachievement (Cillessen & Mayeux, 2014). This dynamic highlights the different ways in which boys and girls navigate social challenges and how these differences are reflected in their academic achievements.

The impact of socioeconomic status (SES) on adolescents' social and academic experiences was also significant. Adolescents from middle socioeconomic backgrounds generally performed better academically and experienced more positive peer interactions compared to their counterparts from low and high SES backgrounds. This finding aligns with the notion that middle-class families often provide greater access to educational resources and social capital, which facilitates both academic success and stronger social networks (Plazas et al., 2016). However, students from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds showed lower academic performance, suggesting that socioeconomic extremes may create unique challenges for students in terms of peer acceptance and academic outcomes. These patterns indicate that SES continues to be a key determinant of both social and academic success during adolescence.

6. Conclusion

This study highlights the intricate connections between sociometric status, gender, socioeconomic status, and adolescent academic outcomes. Adolescents who experience neglect or rejection within their peer groups are more likely to struggle academically and emotionally, with gender and socioeconomic factors further influencing these outcomes. Girls tend to be more affected by social rejection but outperform boys academically, while middle socioeconomic status students generally exhibit stronger academic performance and more positive peer relationships. These findings suggest the need for interventions that address both social and academic challenges, particularly for adolescents who experience peer rejection or come from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds. By fostering inclusive environments and providing targeted support, educators and policymakers can help mitigate the negative impacts of social rejection and improve academic outcomes for all adolescents.

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