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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERPARENTAL CONFLICT AND
SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG STUDENTS IN MINILIK II
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

BY

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December, 2024

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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College of Education and Behavioral Studies

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Declaration

Hear-by, I declare that this research is my original work and that all source of materials used in this research have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that this research is not submitted to any other institution for the award of any academic degree, diploma or certificate.

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Advisor Approval page

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among students at Minilik II Secondary School. The study included 355 students (147 males, 208 females) in grades 9-12. Researchers utilized the Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale (CPIC) and the Social Adjustment Scale, translating and pilot-testing the instruments, which demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.918$). Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses revealed that students perceived low levels of parental conflict properties, with moderate levels of conflict threat and low self-blame. Social adjustment among students was found to be at a moderate level. A statistically significant positive correlation was observed between parental conflict and social adjustment ($r = 0.699, p < .001$). Regression analysis indicated that conflict property and threat significantly predicted social adjustment, while self-blame and living situation did not. Gender differences emerged in social adjustment, with female students demonstrating higher adjustment levels compared to male students. However, no statistically significant differences in parental conflict were found based on gender or age. Conclusions and recommendations were drawn from the findings.

Keywords: *Inter-parental conflict, conflict property, self-blame, threat, social adjustment*

Acronyms

AISS-ss: Adjustment Inventory for School Students scale

APA: American Psychological Association

CCF: Cognitive Contextual Framework

CPIC: Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict scale

EST: Emotional Security Theory

IPC: Inter-Parental Conflict

QDA: Qualitative Data Analysis

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UIC: Unique Identification Code

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

WHO: World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Background

Adolescence is a unique stage of human development that is critical in laying the groundwork for good health. It is the stage of life between childhood and adulthood. In this stage, adolescents go through rapid physical, cognitive, and psychosocial development. This includes their feelings, thoughts, decision-making, and interaction with their surroundings. Though the age range for Secondary School students varies by country and educational system, the general age range is typically between the ages of 12 and 17, which falls within the range of adolescence, defined as the period between 10 and 19 years old (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022; UNICEF, 2022).

As Steinberg (2021) highlights, Parents play a crucial role in shaping the health and well-being of their adolescent children. Their involvement, support, and guidance can have a significant impact on various aspects of adolescent health, including physical health, mental health, and risk behaviors. Meier and Jenkins (2021) also noted in their meta-analytic review that parenting behaviors have cascading influences on children's development of self-regulation and competence across multiple domains of functioning. Children learn self-regulation skills (attention control, emotion regulation, behavioral regulation) by observing and internalizing their parents' modeling of these skills. Dude (2022) also noted that family plays a crucial role in shaping children's social adjustment, as it is within the family that children first learn to socialize.

Through the process of raising a child, there are set of behaviors, attitudes, and values that parents use to influence and guide their children's development (Bornstein, 2019). In this process, some disagreements between parents may arise that are common and even normative for children's development. However, when these disagreements continue, parental conflict also known as inter-parental conflict may arise. This is defined as the frequent, intense, and poorly resolved conflicts between parents that involve expressed anger, hostility, and dysregulated emotional exchanges,

including both overt forms (e.g., verbal and physical aggression) and covert (e.g., silent tension, emotional unavailability) (Cummings & Merrilees, 2022).

A 2023 systematic review estimated that the prevalence of high levels of inter-parental conflict in families worldwide is around 20-30% (Irwin et al., 2023). Research conducted across various cultures has shown that parental conflict is linked to several developmental issues in children and adolescents, including difficulties with social adjustment, peer relationships, anxiety, depression, and aggression, which can adversely impact their emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes (McCoy et al., 2021; Sturge-Apple et al., 2020). For example, a study in Germany found that frequent inter-parental conflict is associated with children's social adjustment problems, which lead to peer problems and reduced pro-social behavior (Hess, 2022). These children are likely to display heightened levels of fear, anxiety, anger, sadness, and depression that are at a high risk of worsening (Kausar, 2022; Rahman, et al., 2023).

Similarly, a study in Kenya among 400 Secondary School students found that inter-parental conflict can lead to increased offensive interpersonal behaviors and delinquency in adolescents, which further affects the students' social adjustment (Kiambi, 2019). In addition, research conducted in Egypt revealed that adolescents exposed to conflict between their parents reported adverse social effects. This exposure created feelings of insecurity among the youth potentially leading them to internalize or externalize their adjustment difficulty. Such responses could put these adolescents at high risk for developing behavioral and emotional issues (Elemary et al., 2016). A study in Nigeria also revealed that inter-parental conflict is significantly related to aggression. Indicating that the higher the adolescent exposure to inter-parent conflict, the higher the level of aggressive tendencies in such adolescents (Olatunji & Idemudia, 2021).

1.2. Statement of the problem

Interparental conflict has emerged as a significant global issue affecting children's well-being and social development. Studies indicate that 15-20% of children worldwide are exposed to high levels of parental conflict and violence, including physical, verbal and emotional discord (Kinsfogel & Grych, 2022). While rates appear lower in Europe at 8% (Steiber et al., 2021), they tend to be higher in Asia and Africa. The family environment, particularly parental relationships, plays a

crucial role in shaping a child's social competence and overall well-being (Steinberg, 2021; Dude, 2022). Children exposed to negative parental interactions, conflicts, domestic abuse, separation, divorce, and remarriage may struggle to develop emotional security, impacting their ability to form friendships and intimate relationships potentially leading anti-social behavior (Zawo, 2021).

Picinich (2022) also highlighted those parental relationships involving high conflict result in adverse outcomes for children. Specifically, children exposed to inter-parental conflict since age 3 exhibited significant levels of depression and anxiety by age 15. This ongoing exposure to poor communication and frequent arguments can lead these children to demonstrate similar behaviors in their future relationships, which are often precursors to mental health issues, underscoring the critical impact of social dynamics within the family.

As inter-parental conflict is a significant issue worldwide, it has become a concern here in Ethiopia. Research has established links between exposure to inter-parental conflict and various negative outcomes. Studies show an increase in parental conflict prevalence from 2017 to 2019 in Durbete town (Tasew et al., 2021), while in Hosanna town, 26.0% of participants reported marital dissolution (Asfaw & Alene, 2023). These conflicts significantly affect children's well-being. A study in Jimma revealed that children exposed to parental conflict exhibit diminished psychosocial wellbeing, adversely affecting their social skills and adjustment. The prolonged duration of parental conflict correlates with an increased probability of psychological difficulties in children, encompassing emotional and behavioral issues, anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, diminished self-esteem, academic challenges, and various other difficulties (Shume & Abeshu, 2016). Furthermore, a study in Addis Ababa revealed that inter-parental conflict significantly affects adolescents' academic performance (Duche, 2023).

Having to deal with inter-parental conflict, children face many consequences related to this conflict as they use various unhealthy strategies and approaches that they believe are the ideal solutions at the time. As studies show, children and adolescents employ various methods to deal with the impact of parental conflict, which in turn brings an additional burden to their lives. Some of these methods include abusing drugs, running away from home, engaging in alcohol and drug use, joining gang groups, and entering unwanted romantic relationships (Eti & Odalonu, 2023; Lawwo et al., 2015).

Even though research has been conducted on the prevalence of parental conflict and has established the negative effects on adolescents' overall well-being and academic performance in Ethiopia, previous studies have primarily focused on the direct effects of parental conflict on children's behavioral, emotional, and academic problems. However, less attention has been given to the effects of parental conflict on adolescents' ability to form and maintain positive social relationships outside the family unit, which is called social adjustment.

Therefore, this creates a research gap for the study to be conducted among Minilik II Secondary School students. By building upon existing literature, this study aimed to fill this gap. Hence, the study will answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students?
2. What are the levels of perceived interparental conflict (IPC) and social adjustment?
3. Is there a difference between perception of parental conflict and social adjustment by gender and age?
4. Which component of interparental conflict significantly predicts social adjustment?

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1. General Objective

This study aims to determine the correlation between inter parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To examine the levels of perceived interparental conflict (IPC) and social adjustment.
- To examine sex and age differences of students in interparental conflict and social adjustment.
- To determine which component of interparental conflict significantly predicts social adjustment.

1.4. Significance of the study

The presence of conflict between parents has been identified as a significant factor in negative outcomes in the adolescent's development. These outcomes include difficulties in social adaptation, emotional distress, academic challenges, and behavioral problems. Studying the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment of Secondary School students is significant for several reasons:

First, since Secondary School is a critical period for social development, understanding the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment can help identify specific developmental challenges that these students face, and recognizing these links can inform mental health interventions.

Second, understanding the significance of parental conflict and students' social adjustment can enable early intervention and support for students experiencing difficulties. This understanding allows educators and mental health professionals to identify students who need additional help, implement preventive measures, and develop targeted support programs. By understanding these factors, schools can better allocate resources, provide appropriate mental health support, and collaborate effectively with parents to develop family-oriented interventions. This comprehensive understanding ultimately helps prevent long-term behavioral issues and breaks cycles of negative social patterns, contributing to better outcomes for students' academic and personal development.

Third, by understanding which component of interparental conflict significantly predicts social adjustment, educators and parents can better support students who may be struggling socially due to home dynamics. Additionally, insights from this research can guide the development of targeted interventions for families experiencing conflict, helping to improve parental relationships and student outcomes.

Fourth, understanding the difference between gender and age the perception of parental conflict and social adjustment by can provide insight of the issue.

Fifth, findings can inform policymakers about the need for programs that support families in conflict, ultimately benefiting the broader community, can help in developing resilience-building programs for adolescents, equipping them with skills to navigate conflict more effectively.

Overall, in countries like Ethiopia, where family dynamics may differ significantly from the Western context, this research can provide culturally relevant insights that enhance understanding of local challenges, promote healthier family dynamics, and improve the overall well-being of adolescents during the pivotal stage of their development.

1.5. Limitations

The study is limited to Minilik II Secondary School students due to limited financial resources. This limits the generalizability of the study nationwide. As the study is a quantitative correlational study, it relies on self-report questionnaires, which may be subject to social desirability bias, memory bias, and the possibility that adolescents lack the self-awareness to accurately assess their situations.

The correlational nature of the study prevents the establishment of causation between variables, only showing relationships without determining the direction of influence or accounting for other potential explanatory variables. Methodological constraints include the cross-sectional design that captures only one point in time, making it impossible to track changes over time, while the questionnaire format might miss important contextual factors.

1.6. Operational definition

Parent: A person who has a child or children, either biologically or through adoption, and fulfills a parental role by providing care, support and guidance. This includes guardians or caregivers who take on the responsibilities associated with raising a child.

Conflict: The frequency and intensity of openly expressed anger, disagreement, hostility, or antagonism. Conflict includes yelling, arguing, and physical aggression.

Parental conflict: Intense, frequent, and poorly resolved conflicts between parents, including both overt and covert forms (e.g., verbal and physical aggression, silent tension, emotional unavailability), that are characterized by expressed anger, hostility, and dysregulated emotional exchanges (Cummings & Merrilees, 2022).

This was measured by the Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC). Interpretation of the results from this scale relies on statistical approaches, such as analyzing average scores or percentile ranking (Grych & Fincham, 1990).

Conflict property: The property that is owned or shared by two parents who are in conflict due to their disagreements on issues related to co-parenting and/or child-rearing. These conflicts can have significant negative impacts on the well-being and development of children in the household, leading to emotional distress, instability, and insecurity (Cummings & Schatz, 2015).

Threat: A verbal or nonverbal message that expresses a potential intention to use physical or emotional force, or to engage in behaviors that may cause harm or injury to the other parent or their children. Threats can be explicit or implicit and can be communicated in various forms, such as statements, gestures, or actions (Jouriles et al., 2016).

Self-blame: The occurrence where a child may attribute the conflicts between their parents to their own behavior or actions, leading them to feel guilty, ashamed, or responsible for causing the conflict

Social adjustment: The degree to which a person gets along well with peers, exhibits pro-social behaviors, and avoids aggressive or disruptive behaviors. It was measured using the revised Adjustment Inventory for School Students scale (AISS-ss) (Sinha & Singh, 2017).

Interpretation of results is made by indicates the range of raw score from 0 to 40:

- ≥ 31 : Extremely unsatisfactory social adjustment.
- 26-30: Unsatisfactory social adjustment.
- 21-25: Below average social adjustment.
- 14-20: Average/ Moderate social adjustment.
- 9-13: Above average social adjustment.
- 4-08: High social adjustment.
- < 4 : Extremely high adjustment.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1. Parental conflict

2.1.1. Definition

Several authors have defined parental conflict in various ways, with the term being used interchangeably as inter-parental conflict, parental conflict and marital conflict, all of which refer to the same concept and are used interchangeably by authors. Fincham (1994) defines it as a verbal or physical dispute and argument due to contradictions in family issues. Similarly, Ribar (2015) cited in Mushtaque et al. (2024) defines it as a negative relational bond between parents.

Even if different scholars have different perspectives on the definition of parental conflict, many scholars have used the Cummings and Davies (2010) definition in their studies which is defined as disagreements, tensions, or disputes that occur between parents or caregivers regarding various aspects of parenting, such as discipline, decision-making, or child-rearing practices that can manifest in verbal arguments, non-verbal hostility, or lack of cooperation and coordination between parents.

2.1.2. Types of Parental conflict

Parental conflict is defined as any significant or minor interaction between parents that involves a divergence of opinion, regardless of whether it is negative or positive. Based on this broad definition, Cummings and Davies (2010) classified parental conflict in two types. Constrictive type of conflict: which is considered as normal and healthy part of family life that involves respectful disagreements, effective communication, and problem-solving efforts between parents. And Destructive conflict: where it is considered as unhealthy part of conflict that involves harsh criticism, insults, verbal or physical aggression, hostility, lack of resolution or cooperation between parents.

2.1.3. Causes of Parental Conflict

Studies across time have studied the causes of parental conflict and come up with an idea saying that it can arise from a wide variety of sources depending on each family's unique circumstances and dynamics. In this section, some of the major causes of parental conflict are explored.

2.1.3.1. Parenting styles

As shown in literature, mothers tend to adopt a permissive parenting style which is usually warm, nurturing and with minimal or no expectations on children, while fathers often exhibit authoritarian parenting tendencies that is a strict parenting that places high expectations on children. Thus, these differences lead to conflict within families (Sabattini, 2004). Peltz et al. (2018) highlighted that couples with divergent parenting reported more frequent arguments and disagreements related to childrearing. It is the same in African household including Ethiopia, that it is observed to have parenting style difference. Most mothers typically demonstrate a permissive parenting style, whereas fathers are viewed as authoritative figures that are both feared and respected (Kidane, 2024).

2.1.3.2. Financial stress and economic hardship

Financial stress has also been identified as a significant cause of parental conflict. For example, Masarik and Conger (2017), low-income families and those experiencing poverty are at a higher risk for parental conflict due to the added stress of meeting basic needs and financial constraints.

Study in Ethiopia also found that financial stress is the significant cause of parental conflict. According to the World Bank, 2023 poverty index in Ethiopia, 68.7 percent of the populations are classified as multi-dimensionally poor. In which these statistic underscore to have a pervasive impact of financial difficulties on families in Ethiopia that exacerbates tensions and conflicts within parents (Tolla, 2022).

2.1.3.3. Communication problems and conflict resolution skills

An ineffective communication and low conflict resolution skills has also been identified to be one of the major causes of parental conflict. Conflict resolution strategies, such as withdrawal, defensiveness, or criticism, can worsen conflicts and prevent resolution (Du Rocher Schudlich et al., 2004).

2.1.3.4. Mental health issues and substance abuse

Research findings have also highlighted mental health problems and substance abuse in one or both parents can to significantly contribute to conflict and dysfunction within families. For example, a study by Sturge-Apple et al. (2011) found that maternal depression and anxiety to be associated with increased coercive family processes and conflict between parents.

2.1.3.5. Stress and life transitions

New life transitions and stress have also been identified to be the causes for parental conflict. For example, in Kolak and Volling (2013) study on children's development and family dynamics, it has been found that major life events, such as job changes, or relocations, can cause significant stress and increase the likelihood of parental conflict. In addition, Yu et al. (2016) found that remarriage or blending families contribute to conflicts as families navigate new roles and dynamics.

Having examined various causes of parental conflict, it is clear that these issues are complex and interconnected. Understanding these root causes is crucial as moving forward to exploring social adjustment of children and adolescents.

2.2. Social Adjustment

2.2.1. Definition

According to Dude (2022), social adjustment is the process by which people adjust to their interactions with the environment over the course of a lifetime in order to play a part in it and function in it by making adjustments in dealing with the environment and fellow humans. Kumari and Kmala (2022) also defined it as adjusting to the various environments and demands throughout childhood and adolescence are a multi-faceted process that incorporates four major areas: namely home adjustment, school adjustment, social adjustment, and emotional adjustment.

As Kumari and Kmala (2022), home adjustment is a child's first social environment, attitudes and behaviors from the family are ingrained in them at this age and are carried over into school adjustment. Getting used to school presents new difficulties when adjusting to academic environments. Experiences developed in this stage of school adjustment are deeply rooted in early home experiences that lay the foundation for their area of broader social adjustment - the ability to navigate wider interpersonal relationships and societal situation. Positive home and school life tend to enable better overall social adjustment. The last stage is emotional adjustment, which involves maintaining emotional balance despite internal and external stressors through cognitive coping skills, self-acceptance, and achieving satisfaction across numerous life arenas.

As cited in Suyatno and Hidayat (2018), Schneiders's theory of children's and adolescents' social adjustment refers to actions that support a person's ability to adapt to other people and groups in light of their awareness of and sensitivity to environmental demands. Schneiders also noted that three indicators can be used to assess a child's capacity for social adjustment: First by home adjustment, this includes establishing good relationship with other family members, respecting parental authority, being able to take responsibility, and assisting the family in achieving its objectives: A child's ability to socially adjust can also be seen in two ways: first, through social adjustment at school, which entails building positive relationships with other student, adapting to rules and regulations and second, through social adjustment in society, which involves building relationships with others, and abiding by the laws that are in place in order to further the goals of society.

2.3. Theoretical Models

Different theories provide different perspectives on how parental conflict may affect children's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development, as well as their relationships within the family system and social environment. In this section, two prominent theoretical perspectives that focus on parental conflict and adolescent's social adjustment will be discussed. The following theoretical perspectives highlight the importance of considering factors such as emotional security, and cognitive appraisals, in understanding the consequences of parental conflict on child well-being and social adjustment.

2.3.1. Cognitive Contextual Framework (CCF)

The Cognitive contextual Framework (CCF) model is developed by Grych and Fincham in 1990. It is designed by organizing existing studies to facilitate research into the processes that may give rise to the relation between marital conflict and child problems.

Grych and Fincham (1990) emphasized that the framework's development is attributable to various parameters of this association. Nonetheless, the mechanism by which children's adjustment problems arise from exposure to inter-parental conflict remains largely unknown. Consequently, Grych and Fincham offered a framework that synthesizes previous research and offers recommendations for future studies on mechanisms that could explain the link between child maladjustment and marital conflict.

In their 1990 analysis of the data, Grych and Fincham examined the possibility that marital conflict and child adjustment are related, noting that the former seems to be more strongly associated with child issues than the latter. Which covers the relationship between marital conflict and child problems, which can differ in terms of frequency, intensity, content, and resolution as well as the overt and covert aspects of conflict. In particular, the frequency, intensity, content, and resolution of conflict may have an impact on how stressful marital conflict is for kids, and as a result, these factors may be correlated with the presence of child issues as well as demographic traits like age and gender. A focus on the role of cognitive factors in mediating the relationship between marital conflict and maladjustment is partly due to the relative neglect of children's cognitive abilities to cope with it. According to Grych and Fincham (1990), who also outline processes that may moderate the stressfulness of conflict for the child and emphasize the significance of the context of parental conflict, children's cognitions, and their level of development.

Grych and Fincham expounded on the concept by stating that children who perceive conflict as extremely dangerous and lack the ability to handle it, tend to feel more insecure emotionally and react more physically, which can cause problems with their socialization. As a result, both affect and cognition serve appraisal purposes and direct a child's coping mechanisms, which are evident in both primary and secondary processing. Primary processing occurs when a child initially perceives that something stressful is occurring and experiences an emotion. It is suggested that contextual factors and the characteristics of the conflict episode have an impact on this first stage of appraisal. After that, primary processing might advance to secondary processing, which is a more complex processing stage. The child tries to comprehend the reason behind the conflict and what action is appropriate during secondary processing. This phase entails determining the event's cause, assigning blame and responsibility where appropriate, and setting expectations for the effectiveness of possible coping mechanisms (Grych & Fincham, 1990).

2.3.2. Emotional Security Theory (EST)

Cummings and Davies introduced the Emotional Security Theory (EST) in the early 1990s. This theory was developed by combining John Bowlby's Attachment Theory with research on the impact of marital conflict on children's adjustment. EST points that the emotional security of children in relation to their inter-parental relationship is a primary factor influencing their adjustment, which includes their social functioning (Cummings & Miller, 2015).

According to Cummings and Miller (2015), EST distinguishes between constructive and destructive forms of parental conflict, in which constructive conflict is considered as a normal and healthy part of family life that involves respectful disagreements, effective communication, and problem-solving efforts between parents and it does not significantly threaten children's emotional security. Whereas, destructive conflict involves high levels of hostility, emotional deregulation, poor conflict resolution, and child involvement that led to children's emotional insecurity that manifest through heightened emotional reactivity, vigilance, and risk for social maladjustment in children and adolescents.

Emotional Security Theory further explains how emotional insecurities manifest to maladjustment through the following three processes:

A. Emotional regulation deficits: Children may have difficulty regulating emotions, leading to heightened emotional arousal, anger, and aggression in social contexts.

B. Behavioral dysregulation: Children may exhibit disruptive behavior, aggression, and poor social skills due to emotional insecurity and emotional regulation deficits.

C. Cognitive and representational processes: Children may develop negative representations of social relationships, distrust, and negative attributions, impacting their social interactions.

Therefore, these emotional insecurities manifest as various child adjustment problems like internalizing issues, externalizing problems, school maladjustment, peer difficulties, sleep disruptions, and physical illness.

2.4. Empirical Evidence

2.4.1. Relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment

According to a study conducted in German among 1157 children aged 7 to 16 on the relationship between parental conflict, peer problems, and pro-social behavior, inter-parental conflicts can have catastrophic consequences for children's well-being and pro-social behavior. The study also demonstrated that parents' emotional warmth and negative communication are significantly correlated with increased inter-parental conflict. The research also indicates that the parenting behavior of both mothers and fathers mediates the relationship between social well-being and inter-parental conflict (Hess, 2022).

Another study in China involving 707 students used a Chinese version of Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale (CPIC), the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA), and the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SISA) found that perceived parental marital conflict was positively associated with social anxiety symptoms, which affect social adjustment of students (Adare et al., 2021).

A study in Punjab, Pakistan, involving 305 students in grade 10, 11, and 12, utilized the Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC), The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10), Baker and Sirk's Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ). The study found a strong link between inter-parental conflict and psychological distress, as well as social and academic adjustments among adolescent. The study also revealed that witnessing conflicts between parents may lead children to replicate similar harmful behaviors in their own relationship in the future (Mushtaque, 2024). Amplifying the impact of social and academic adjustment problems on mental wellbeing of the students, this research also revealed that social and academic adjustment problems lead to suicidal ideation in 22.4% of the study population.

A study conducted in Kenya among 400 secondary school students in Murang'a examined the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment using the Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC) and the Reda-Norton scale. The investigation determined that challenges in social adjustment were associated with inter-parental conflict in social adjustment, which manifested as offensive interpersonal behaviors and delinquency behaviors. Consequently, these behaviors lowered the level of pro-social behaviors (Muriithi, 2019).

A study in Nigeria involving 201 adolescents aged 12 to 19 from different family dynamics found that family dynamics were also related to significant variations in the social adjustment of adolescents. The participants included 70 from intact families, 70 from single-parent families, and 70 from blended families (Onongha, 2020). Similar study in Nigeria by (Ngozi et al, 2013) conducted on 150 senior secondary school students determined the influence of parental conflict on adolescents.

Reduced pro-social behavior, poorer social skills, aggressive behavior, poor self-control, less cooperation and loneliness in children have been found to be predicted by parental conflict including marital conflict and intimate partner violence between parents (Holmes et al, 2015).

2.4.2. Impact of parental conflict on students' social adjustment

Parental conflict has a crucial impact on adolescent's social and psychological adjustment, and certainly affects their performance at school as mentioned on the types of parental conflict, parents' destructive conflict was found to be related to children insecurity and behavioral response affecting their social adjustment (Cumming & Goeke, 2012).

Impact of parental conflict on social adjustment has been studied across different countries. For example, a 2022 study in Germany that emphasized on the significant negative impact of inter-parental conflict on children's social adjustment and well-being found a strong relationship between frequent parental conflict and social adjustment, leading to peer problems and reduced pro-social behavior. The study also noted that the frequency and nature of parental conflict are crucial factors influencing children's social well-being, even at fluctuating levels of conflict, and have profound implications for children's development (Hess, 2022).

Another study conducted in Kenya among 400 secondary school students revealed that inter-parental conflict was linked to difficulties in social adjustment; these behaviors lowered the level of pro-social behaviors (Muriithi, 2019). Another study by Adare et al. (2021) in China also supported the relationship and found that perceived parental marital conflict was positively associated with social anxiety symptoms, which affect social adjustment of students (Adare et al., 2021).

A systematic review on various cross sectional and longitudinal studies found out that positive correlation existed between inter-parental conflict and youth maladjustment. The adolescent's perception about their parent's conflict determined their adjustment (Przybyla-Basista, 2016) Another research by Cummings and David (2006) supported that inter-parental conflict and withdrawal had a major impact on children adjustment, whereas inter-parental hostility had an indirect effect on subsequent changes in child adjustment.

2.4.3. Parental conflict and Gender difference

As most research findings revealed, children perception of parental conflicts affects their social adjustment. Although both genders are vulnerable, it is shown that girls are more prone to engage in self - blame and develop internalizing problems. On the other hand, boys respond differently; they show anger and aggression towards parental conflict. Furthermore, the level of anger and aggression increases when parental conflict intensifies (Hosokawa, 2019).

In contrast, Mussaffa (2014) revealed that there is no significant difference in perceptions of parental conflict and gender.

2.4.4. Parental conflict and Age difference

Though there is limited research found on parental conflict and age differences adolescents, a study conducted in Ethiopia examined differences in adolescents' perceptions of inter-parental conflict among 17, 18, and 19 years old. The result showed no significant difference across these ages in conflict property or threat subscales. However, there is a statistically significant difference in self-blame, with 17 years olds reporting higher levels compared to 18 and 19 years old (Duche, 2023).

This finding suggests that perceptions of parental conflict may vary in specific aspects during adolescence, despite overall similarities.

2.4.5. The social adjustment level of students in relation to their exposure to parental conflict

A study in southern Spain among adolescents found that their social adjustment levels in relation to parental conflict indicated that exposure to parental conflict can negatively impact certain aspects of adolescents' social adjustment (Maya et al., 2024).

Similarly, a study in Murang'a County, Kenya, among 400 secondary school Students found that average number of students who perceived parental conflict did not have social adjustment problem (Muriithi, 2019).

Additionally, a study in Seoul and Kyungii encompassing 328 students that live with parents in high marital conflict, low marital conflict and divorced parents found that children living in high parental conflict, compared to those in low parental conflict, showed lower level of psycho-social adjustment (Hong & Kim, 2005).

These findings suggest that social adjustment levels of students in these countries are at an average level.

2.4.6. Social adjustment and gender difference

Studies examining gender differences in social adjustment among secondary school students have yielded mixed results across different cultural contexts. In India, several studies revealed contradictory findings. Packiaselvi and Malathi (2017) and Alam (2017) found that girls exhibited higher social adjustment levels, with one study reporting 78.95% of girls showing high-level adjustment compared to 56.36% of boys. However, Paramanik et al. (2014) presented contrasting results, with boys scoring higher (mean scores: boys 91.61 vs girls 87.72). Bhagat (2016) also found significant gender differences in social adjustment ($F=6.24$, $p<0.01$), though the direction of these differences was not specified.

In contrast, studies conducted in African contexts presented different findings. In Nigeria, Alkali (2016) found no significant gender differences in social adjustment, with males and females showing similar mean scores (94.9872 and 94.8057 respectively). Similarly, in Kenya, Kariuki and Aloka (2015) reported no significant gender differences in non-illegal delinquent behaviors among adolescents ($\chi^2=3.709$, $p=.157$). The contrasting findings between Indian and African studies suggest that cultural context may play a crucial role in shaping gender-based social adjustment differences among secondary school students.

2.4.7. Social adjustment and age difference

Research examining age differences in social adjustment among secondary school students has shown varying results. Kumar and Singh (2014) investigated age variations in social adjustment

patterns among 400 secondary school students in India. The study found significant differences between early adolescents (13-14 years) and middle adolescents (15-16 years), with older students showing better social adjustment ($F=7.83$, $p<.05$). The researchers attributed this to increased maturity and social experiences.

However, some studies have reported contrasting findings. Zhang et al. (2016) examined social adjustment patterns among 450 Chinese secondary school students and found no significant age differences in social adjustment scores between younger (13-14 years) and older (15-16 years) adolescents ($t=1.24$, $p>.05$). The researchers suggested that cultural factors and school environment might play a more crucial role than age in determining social adjustment.

2.5. Conceptual framework

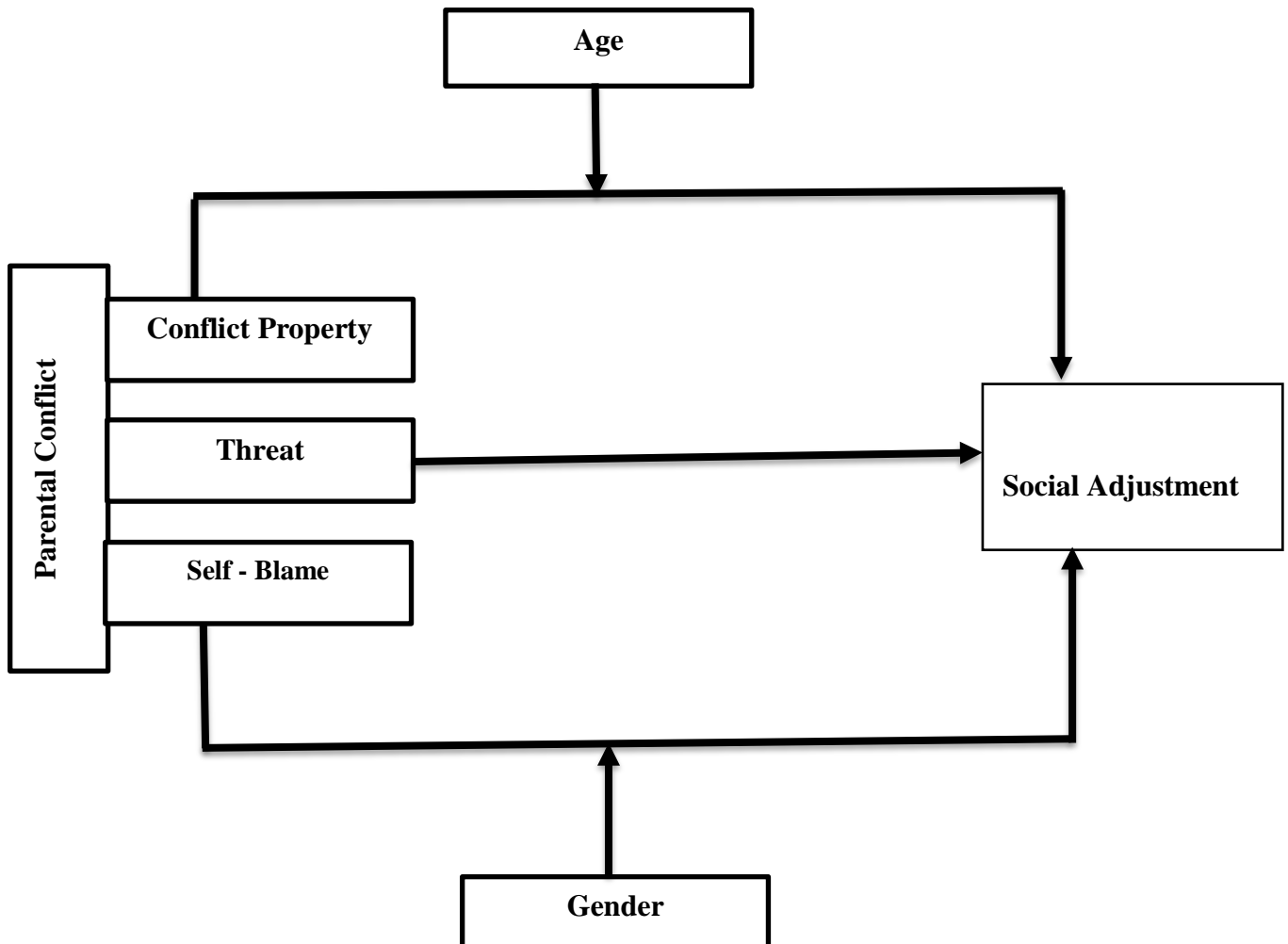


Figure 1: conceptual framework

Model description

The independent variable in this figure, parental conflict, consists of three subscales: conflict property, self-blame, and threat. The dependent variable is social adjustment.

The figure suggests that parental conflict may correlate to adolescents' social adjustment through three pathways. The first pathway is a direct path from the conflict property subscale of parental conflict to social adjustment. The second pathway is from the threat subscale to social adjustment, and the third pathway is from self-blame subscale to social adjustment. Additionally, the figure suggests that age and gender may influence the social adjustment of adolescents.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, correlational research design, as it aimed to determine the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students. This research design was chosen for its ability to determine the relationship between two or more variables (Seeram, 2019).

Therefore, this study utilized a quantitative correlational research design, employing structured questionnaires for both dependent and independent variables which were adapted from existing literature.

3.2. Population and Sampling Techniques

3.2.1. Study Area

Minilik II School encompasses both primary and secondary education levels. The school was named after Emperor Minilik II, who established it in October 1908 as a modern educational facility, guided by Egyptian educator Hana Salib and various Coptic instructors. Consequently, this marked the nascent phase of contemporary Ethiopian education.

Minilik II Secondary School is located on King George VI St, Arat Kilo, next to Addis Ababa University. school accommodates over 6000 students, comprising 3800 evening students and 2201 regular students, facilitated by 48 classrooms and staffed by 144 Ethiopian and 16 expatriate educators.

3.2.2. Study Population

The study focused on all 2201 regular students from grade 9 to 12 at Minilik II Secondary School, with 394 students in grade 9th, 442 in grade 10th, 723 in grade 11th, and 642 in grade 12th as per the records obtained from the school record office. Therefore, the total population of the study was 2201 regular students from Minilik II Secondary School.

3.2.3. Eligibility Criteria

3.2.3.1. Inclusion Criteria

Minilik II Secondary School students, learning from grade nine to twelve, who were presented during data collection time, were included in the study.

3.2.3.2. Exclusion Criteria

Students who were ill and absent during the data collection period were excluded from providing information regarding the problem.

3.2.4. Sampling Procedure

Out of the 444 government schools in Addis Ababa city administration (160 pre-schools, 213 Primary Schools, 58 Secondary, and 13 Preparatory Schools), Minilik II Secondary School was selected purposefully since the researcher is familiar with the school and is interested in the area. Additionally, due to the large number of students, this school often contains a diverse student population, including students from various socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicities, and communities.

Utilizing the total student enrollment data from the school record office, simple random sampling was employed to ensure equitable representation of total number of students in school, thereby minimizing selection bias and facilitating a sample that accurately reflects the school population (Taherdoost, 2016).

3.2.5. Sample Size

The research targeted a population of 2201 regular students at Minilik II Secondary School. Considering the entire population as a source of information for a study is challenging due to constraints such as time, financial resources, and data management complexity. This study employed the sample size determination formula established by Yemane (1967).

The formula is given as

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where N = total number of students (population of the study)

n = sample size of the study

e = the level of precision.

With a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error ($e = 0.05$), the sample size was determined for $N = 2201$.

$$n = \frac{2201}{1+2201(0.05)^2} = 339.$$

Incorporating a non-response rate of 10 %, the total sample size became 373. Therefore, the study's sample size was 373 regular students from Minilik II Secondary School.

3.3. Variables

3.3.1. Independent variable

Socio demographic characteristics: Gender, age, educational level, and living situation.

Parental conflict: It was assessed by Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC).

3.3.2. Dependent variable

Social adjustment of Secondary School students: It was assessed by a social adjustment questionnaire.

3.4. Data collection instruments

Socio demographic factors

Based on previous studies, significant predictors of the variables and other relevant factors are included in the socio-demographic section of the questionnaire. These include age, gender, grade level, and living situation.

3.4.1. The Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC)

The Children's Perception of Inter-Parental Conflict Scale (CPIC) was developed by Grych and Fincham (1990). It is a self-report questionnaire that is designed to assess children's perception of inter-parental conflict. The scale was originally developed for children aged 9-19. But then it was confirmed to be used from age 9 to 21. The CPIC is made up of 40 items scored on a 3-point Likert scale (1 = false, 2 = sort of true, and 3 = true) and takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

The scale consists of different factor-analytically derived subscales consisting of conflict properties including frequency, intensity, and resolution; self-blame properties including content and self-blame; and threat including coping efficacy and perceived threat. To create the total subscale scores of the questions, item scores on each subscale are summed up. Therefore, higher scores indicate greater perceived parental conflict. The interpretation of the results or scores on the scale depends on statistical methods such as mean scores or percentile ranks (Grych and Fincham, 1990).

Sample items include:

- Conflict Property (Frequency: “I often see my parents arguing”; Intensity: “When my parents have an argument, they yell a lot”; Resolution: “Even after my parents stop arguing they stay mad at each other”)
- Threat (Perceived Threat: “I get scared when my parents argue”; Coping Efficacy: “I don't know what to do when my parents have arguments”)
- Self-Blame (Content: “My parents often get into arguments about things I do at school.”; Self-blame: “It's usually my fault when my parents argue”)

The CPIC has been translated to Amharic language by language experts and back-translated to English to ensure accuracy. Two counseling psychologists oversaw the translation process, ensuring the prevention of psychological constructs.

The pilot test was done on 30 students from Abiot Kirs Secondary School. The Cronbach alpha of the translated scale is .918 which suggests that the internal consistency of the scale being used provides a high level of confidence in the result of the study. As the scale is made up of 3 subscales; conflict property 19 items, threat 12 items, and self-blame 9 items with Cronbach alpha result of .744, .794, and .772 respectively.

3.4.2. Social Adjustment Scale

The Social Adjustment Scale is a self-administered questionnaire that was adapted from the Adjustment Inventory for School Students scale (AISS-ss). The Adjustment Inventory initially seeks to segregate well-adjusted secondary school student's age group 14 to 18. However, it was suggested the potential for broader applicability in other age groups. The AISS-ss measures the three areas of adjustment: Emotional, Social, and Educational. The scale consists of 20 items in

each area of adjustment with 3-point Likert scale ranging from Never (0) to Always (2). The social adjustment subscale takes 5-10 minutes to complete and it has been confirmed that it can be used independently (Sinha & Singh,2017). The internal consistency and reliability of the scale were tested by different authors and showed good results. The social adjustment subscale demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.84, indicating good reliability (Kumar & Jha, 2016).

Item scores are summed to create total scores. Higher scores indicate unsatisfactory social adjustment, and lower scores show better social adjustment. Interpretation of results indicates the range of raw score from 0 to 40.

Sample questions include:

- Do you avoid meeting your classmates?
- Do you feel sometimes, as if you have no friends in your school?
- Are you able to get friendly with everyone easily?

Cronbach alpha of the translated scale is .803 which suggests that the internal consistency of the scale being used provides a high level of confidence in the result of the study.

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

3.5.1. Ethical Consideration

Prior to beginning data collection, proper research procedures and ethical steps were followed. The researcher first gained approval from Addis Ababa University to ensure the study met ethical guidelines. With permission from Addis Ababa University and letters of cooperation obtained from Addis Ababa University's School of Psychology, the study acquired permission from Minilik II Secondary School administrators.

Selected participants were then informed about the nature, purposes, and benefits of the study and they were invited to participate voluntarily per informed consent standards. They were told that they could decide whether to participate or not and that they could discontinue participation at any time without having to explain their reason; their decisions were respected. They were also informed that they could ask questions, which were answered at the time. For incomplete surveys, participants were given the option to withdraw their partial data.

Overall, appropriate ethical standards were upheld related to informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, data security, and transparency.

3.5.2. Administration of questionnaire

The data collection for this research was conducted in May, 2024 by the researcher following formal approval from the school administrator Mrs. Gadisse. To select participants from the target population, the researcher employed a simple random sampling method.

Prior to administering the questionnaire, the researcher provided clear communication to all participants regarding the nature and purpose of the study. The researcher emphasized the importance of truthful responses, explaining that the accuracy of their answers was crucial for the validity and reliability of the research outcomes. Participants were informed that: the data collected would be used solely for research purposes, no personal identifiable information would be included in the research analysis, their confidentiality would be strictly maintained throughout the research process, and they had the right to opt out of the study at any time without having to explain.

The questionnaire, consisting of 60 questions, took approximately 20- 25 minutes on average for each participant to complete.

3.6. Data Analysis Methods

For this study data was collected using standardized questionnaires: the Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale (CPIC) and Social Adjustment questionnaire adapted from the Adjustment Inventory of School Students (AISS-ss). These instruments were administered to students from grades 9 to 12 at Minilik II Secondary School. Both questionnaires employed a 3-point Likert scale with responses categorized as 'False' (1), 'Sort of true' (2), and 'True' (3) for CPIC measure and 'Never' (0), 'Sometimes' (1), and 'Always' (2) for Social Adjustment Scale.

Out of 373 distributed questionnaires, 355 were completed and returned, yielding a 95.17% response rate, 10 were incomplete, and 8 were non-returned at all. However, out of the 355 completed and returned questionnaires, 230 participants live with both their mother and father, 73 participants live with another relative (e.g., grandmother, aunt), and 52 participants live with one parent (either with their mother or father). For this study, participants who live with two parent household and those who live with relatives are considered because the researcher noted that these

samples of participants might experience inter-parental conflict in their homes, assuming that those living with their parents or relatives can potentially witness for conflict. Therefore, 303 participants (85.3% of the sample) were included in the final analysis and interpretation.

After data collection, responses were entered into a database and thoroughly cleaned to eliminate errors and ensure accuracy. Data coding was used to ensure uniform. The data analysis was conducted using SPSS Statistics version 26.0. During this process, reversed scored items were reverse scored after the completion of data entry. The analysis process was guided by the research objectives and employed both descriptive and inferential statistical data analysis methods.

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to express the socio-demographic factors, level of parental conflict, and social adjustment. Measure of central tendency (mean) and measure of dispersion (standard deviation) were used to provide a comprehensive overview of the parental conflict and social adjustment scores of the students.

To examine the relationship between the two variables and predict which components of interparental conflict affect social adjustment, Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were conducted. Pearson correlation analysis was used to assess the strength and direction of the linear relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment scores. Multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the prediction of parental conflict on social adjustment.

Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test were used to assess the differences in perception of parental conflict and social adjustment by gender and age. The results of the analysis were interpreted in the context of the research objectives.

In addition, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the perception of parental conflict and its impact on social adjustment between students living with their parents and those living with their relatives.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation of findings and discussions

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, interpretation, and discussion of major findings with respect to its research objectives. The main objective of this research is to explore the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students. Thus, using information gathered from Minilik II Secondary School students, this chapter tries to address the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students?

RQ2: What is the level of perceived interparental conflict (IPC) and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students?

RQ3: Is there a difference between perception of parental conflict and social adjustment by gender and age?

RQ4: Which component of interparental conflict significantly predicts social adjustment?

To achieve its objectives, data were collected from Minilik II Secondary School students using the Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale (CPIC) and Social Adjustment Scale. Mean values, standard deviation, correlation coefficients, multiple linear regression, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis test were used to analyze the data.

4.2. Response Rate

The sample size of the study was 373 students from Minilik II Secondary School. Out of the 373 questionnaires distributed to sampled participants, 355 questionnaires were returned with complete responses. The remaining 18 questionnaires were either not returned to the researcher or contain incomplete responses. Therefore, the response rate of the questionnaire was 95.1%.

Table 1: Response rate of questionnaire

Status of questionnaire	Total Number	Percentage	Decision
Incomplete questionnaires	10	2.7%	Invalid
Non-response questionnaires	8	2.1%	Invalid
Returned completed	355	95.1%	Valid

4.3. Respondents Demographic Characteristics

The demographic information of participant students in terms of sex, age, grade level and living situation are presented in this section.

Table 2: Demographic variables of participants

Variable	Label	Participant number	Percentage
Sex	Male	147	41.4
	Female	208	58.6
Grade level	9 th	64	18.0
	10 th	81	22.8
	11 th	127	35.8
	12 th	83	23.4
Age of participants	15	29	8.2
	16	75	21.1
	17	120	33.8
	18	90	25.4
	19	41	11.5
Living situation	With both my mom and my dad	230	64.8
	Only one of my parents	52	14.6
	Another relative (e.g., grandmother, aunt)	73	20.6

Based on the results shown above, 147 (41.4%) of the participants were males and 208 (58.6%) of the participants were females. This shows that the relative proportionality of females was larger than male participants.

The age distribution of the participants was as follows: 29 (8.2%) were 15 years old; 75 (21.1%) were 16 years old; 120 (33.8%) were 17 years old; 90 (25.4%) were 18 years old; and 41 (11.5%) were 19 years old. The majority of the participant students were 17 years old, while the least represented age group was 15 years old.

Regarding the grade level of participant students, majority of the students were in grade 11, consisting of 127 (35.8%) of the sample, followed by grade 12 students accounting for 83 (23.4%), grade 10 students consisting of 81 (22.8%), and grade 9 students being 64 (18%) of the sample. The reason for the higher representation of grade 11 students was due to the school having a larger enrollment in grade 11 compared to the other grades levels.

The living situations of participants revealed that majority of participants consisting of 230 (64.8%) students lived with both parents, while 73 (20.6%) lived with relatives (e.g., grandmother, aunt), and the rest 52 (14.6%) lived with only one parent (either with their father or mother). This indicates that most of the students were from two-parent households, followed by those living with other relatives, and a smaller proportion lived with a single parent. The researcher noted that 303 (85.3%) might experience inter-parental conflict in their homes, assuming that those living with their parents or relatives can potentially witness for conflict.

4.4. Perception of parental conflict

4.4.1. Level of parental conflict

The study examined parental conflict among students categorized by their living situations, specifically comparing those living with both parents ($n = 230$) and those living with relatives ($n = 73$). To categorize the level of parental conflict as low, medium or high, this study used Khorsheed (2008) cutoff point interval. The categories of mean values are given as low/never (1-1.66), moderate/sometimes (1.67-2.33) and high/always (2.34-3).

4.4.1.1. Level of conflict property

Table 3: Level of conflict property category

Conflict property category	Living situation	Std.	
		Mean	Deviation
I never see my parents arguing or disagreeing	With both parents	2.20	.676
	With relatives	2.14	.673
They may not think I know it, but my parents argue or disagree a lot	With both parents	1.27	.544
	With relatives	1.51	.729
My parents are often mean to each other even when I'm around	With both parents	1.39	.623
	With relatives	1.55	.746
I often see my parents arguing	With both parents	1.52	.678
	With relatives	1.71	.808
My parents hardly ever argue	With both parents	2.11	.790
	With relatives	2.23	.698
My parents often nag and complain about each other around the house	With both parents	1.41	.646
	With relatives	1.53	.709
My parents get really mad when they argue	With both parents	1.29	.533
	With relatives	1.36	.674
When my parents have a disagreement, they discuss the issue calmly	With both parents	1.76	.841
	With relatives	1.82	.872
When my parents have an argument, they say mean things to each other	With both parents	1.37	.886
	With relatives	1.41	.684

When my parents have an argument, they yell a lot	With both parents	1.43	.681
	With relatives	1.58	.762
My parents hardly ever yell when they have a disagreement	With both parents	1.97	.806
	With relatives	2.10	.802
My parents have broken or thrown things during an argument	With both parents	1.13	.418
	With relatives	1.25	.547
My parents have pushed or shoved each other during an argument	With both parents	1.16	.487
	With relatives	1.22	.534
When my parents have an argument, they usually work it out	With both parents	1.59	.781
	With relatives	1.70	.828
Even after my parents stop arguing they stay mad at each other	With both parents	1.44	.676
	With relatives	1.47	.689
When my parents disagree about something, they usually come up with a solution	With both parents	1.47	.774
	With relatives	1.63	.791
When my parents argue they usually make up right away	With both parents	1.43	.676
	With relatives	1.60	.759
After my parents stop arguing, they are friendly toward each other	With both parents	1.42	.724
	With relatives	1.59	.779
My parents still act mean after they have had an argument	With both parents	1.35	.656
	With relatives	1.33	.688
Conflict property category	With both parents	1.525	.664
	With relatives	1.530	.714

As shown in Table 3 regarding the conflict property subscale, the overall mean score of the conflict property subscale showed that students living with their parents reported an overall mean score of 1.525, which falls within the low-level category of the scale (1.0-1.66). This indicates that parental conflict among families was perceived as occurring at low levels of frequency, intensity, and resolution. Similarly, students living with relatives demonstrated an overall mean score of 1.530, also situated within the low-level category of the scale.

Therefore, the results indicate that conflict property among the families of Minilik II Secondary School students is low. Specifically, this means that conflict, with respect to its properties among those who live with parents and relatives, is perceived by students as occurring at low levels of frequency, intensity, and resolution.

4.4.1.2. Level of threat properties

Table 4: Level of threat category

Threat category	Living situation	Std.	
		Mean	Deviation
I get scared when my parents argue	With both parents	1.63	.770
	Another relative	1.92	.846
When my parents argue I worry about what will happen to me	With both parents	1.55	.744
	Another relative	1.97	.849
When my parents argue I'm afraid that something bad will happen	With both parents	1.60	.757
	Another relative	2.00	.833
When my parents argue I worry that one of them will get hurt	With both parents	1.50	.710
	Another relative	1.78	.854
When my parents argue I'm afraid that they will yell at me too	With both parents	1.53	.746
	Another relative	1.71	.858
When my parents argue I worry that they might get divorced	With both parents	1.43	.719
	Another relative	1.71	.858
When my parents argue I can do something to make myself feel better	With both parents	1.94	.852
	Another relative	2.12	.816
I don't know what to do when my parents have arguments	With both parents	1.72	.799
	Another relative	1.90	.869
When my parents argue or disagree, I can usually help make things better	With both parents	1.94	.854
	Another relative	1.97	.833
	With both parents	1.63	.780

When my parents argue there's nothing I can do to stop them	Another relative	1.81	.844
When my parents argue or disagree there's nothing I can do to make myself feel better	With both parents	1.64	2.20
	Another relative	1.52	.784
When my parents argue they don't listen to anything I say	With both parents	1.57	.731
	Another relative	1.59	.779
Threat category	With both parents	1.598	.884
	Another relative	1.750	.848

As shown in Table 4 regarding the threat subscale, the overall mean score for the threat subscale was higher for those living with relatives ($M = 1.75$, $SD = 0.85$) compared to those living with both parents ($M = 1.60$, $SD = 0.88$). Using the mean interpretation guide (Low: 1-1.66, Moderate: 1.67-2.33, High: 2.34-3), the results indicate that participants living with their parents fall into the low level, whereas those living with relatives reported a moderate level among Minilik II Secondary School students. Participants living with relatives reported higher mean scores across most threat-related statements about conflict, experiencing slightly more perceived threat. This implies that students who live with their relatives feel a moderate threat with respect to the conflict they perceive, whereas students who live with their parents do not feel threatened.

4.4.1.3. *Level of self-blame category*

Table 5: Level of Self-blame category

Self-blame category	Living situation	Mean	Std. Deviation
My parents often get into arguments about things I do at school	With both parents	1.28	.599
	Another relative	1.29	.634
My parents' arguments are usually about something I did	With both parents	1.30	.560
	Another relative	1.40	.702
My parents usually argue or disagree because of things that I do	With both parents	1.35	.585
	Another relative	1.41	.663
My parents often get into arguments when I do something wrong	With both parents	1.36	.594
	Another relative	1.47	.747
I'm not to blame when my parents have arguments	With both parents	1.88	.830
	Another relative	2.04	.873
It's usually my fault when my parents argue	With both parents	1.36	.586
	Another relative	1.38	.700
Even if they don't say it, I know I'm to blame when my parents argue	With both parents	1.29	.566
	Another relative	1.40	.740
My parents blame me when they have arguments	With both parents	1.41	.673
	Another relative	1.42	.762
Usually it's not my fault when my parents have arguments	With both parents	1.76	.934
	Another relative	1.85	.861
Self-blame categories	With both parents	1.37	.88
	Another relative	1.41	.88

As shown in Table 5 regarding self-blame, the overall mean score for self-blame was low for both those living with relatives ($M = 1.41$, $SD = 0.88$) and those living with both parents ($M = 1.37$, $SD = 0.88$). Using the mean interpretation guide (Low: 1-1.66, Moderate: 1.67-2.33, High: 2.34-3), this indicates that self-blame related to parental and relative conflict among Minilik II Secondary School students is at a low level since the mean score falls within the low range, which implies that students perceiving conflict among their parents or relatives do not blame themselves for their parents' or relatives' conflict.

4.4.2. Sex difference in perception of parental conflict

The Mann-Whitney U test is employed to assess the differences in perceptions of parental conflict between genders among students at Minilik II Secondary School.

Mann-Whitney U test, also known as the Wilcoxon Rank Sum test, is a non-parametric statistical method employed to compare two samples or groups. This test is particularly useful when researchers need to assess whether two sampled groups are likely to derive from the same population, especially in cases where the data in the populations of interest are not assumed to follow a normal distribution (McClenaghan, 2022).

Table 6: Mann-Whitney U test for perception of parental conflict

	Mann-Whitney U test	Mean rank	
	Sig. (2-sided)	Male	Female
Conflict property	11564.5 .692	149.72	153.74
Self-blame	12135.5 .249	145.36	157.06
Threat	12648.5 .067	141.45	160.04
Total N = 303			

From the above table, it can be concluded that the distribution of conflict property, self-blame, and threat is the same across genders of respondents. Conflict property ($U = 11564.5$, $p = 0.692$), self-blame ($U = 12135$, $p = 0.249$), and threat ($U = 12648.5$, $p = 0.067$) all p -values > 0.05 . Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between gender and perception of parental conflict among Minilik II Secondary School students.

4.4.3. Age difference in the perception of parental conflict

The Kruskal-Wallis test is employed to assess the age-related differences in the perception of parental conflict among students at Minilik II Secondary School.

Kruskal-Wallis test is a non-parametric statistical method employed to compare two or more groups for a continuous variable. It is essentially an extension of the Mann-Whitney U test for more than two independent samples, sharing similar assumptions and methodology. It is analogous

to the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) but does not assume a particular distribution of the data, making it useful when the population of interest are not assumed to follow a normal distribution (McClenaghan, 2022).

Table 7: Kruskal-Wallis test for perception of parental conflict

Kruskal-Wallis test						
Sig. (2-sided)		15	16	17	18	19
Conflict property	5.746					
	.219					
Self-blame	2.144					
	.709					
Threat	2.681					
	.613					
Total N = 303						

From the above table, it can be concluded that the distribution of conflict property, self-blame, and threat is the same across age categories of respondents. Conflict property across all ages $p > 0.05$ ($p = 0.219$), self-blame $p > 0.05$ ($p = 0.709$), and threat $p > 0.05$ ($p = 0.613$). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between age and perception of parental conflict among Minilik II Secondary School students aged between 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 years.

4.5. Level of social adjustment

The social adjustment scale was summed to create total scores, ranging from 0 to 40. Higher scores indicate unsatisfactory social adjustment, and lower scores show better social adjustment. The interpretation of results is mentioned in chapter one.

Table 8: Level of student's social adjustment

	Frequency	percent
Extremely high social adjustment	10	3.3
High social adjustment	24	7.9
Above average social adjustment	30	9.9
Average/Moderate social adjustment	130	42.9
Below average social adjustment	70	23.1
Unsatisfactory social adjustment	20	6.6
Extremely unsatisfactory social adjustment	19	6.3
Total	303	100.0

As shown in the above table, 130 (42.9 %) of the participants reported having an average/moderate social adjustment. The least reported category is extremely high social adjustment, with only 10 (3.3 %) of the participants. Therefore, the interpretation of the scores revealed that the social adjustment of students in Minilik II Secondary School is at Average/moderate level.

4.5.1. Sex differences in social adjustment

The mann-Whitney U test is employed to assess the difference in social adjustment between genders among students at Minilik II Secondary School.

Table 9: Mann-Whitney U test for social adjustment

	Mann-Whitney U test	Mean rank	
		Male	Female
Social adjustment	13147.0	137.64	162.94
	.013		

Total N = 303

From the above table, the distribution of social adjustment is different across categories of gender of respondents. Social adjustment ($U = 13147$, $p = 0.013$) higher in female than male Therefore, it can be concluded that there is statistically significant difference between gender and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students.

4.5.2. Age difference in social adjustment

The Kruskal-Wallis test is employed to assess the age differences in social adjustment among students at Minilik II Secondary School.

Table 10: Kruskal-Wallis test for social adjustment

		Kruskal-Wallis test					
		Sig. (2-sided)	15	16	17	18	19
Social adjustment	4.437						
	.350						
Total N = 303							

From the above table, the distribution of social adjustment is the same across categories of age of respondents. Social adjustment $p = 0.35$. therefore, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between age and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students aged between 15, 16,17,18, and 19 years.

4.6. Relationship between Parental Conflict and Social Adjustment

To analyze the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment of students in Minilik II Secondary School, Pearson's correlation data analysis method was used. The aim of using correlation analysis is to examine the relationship between parental conflict properties (intensity, frequency, and resolution), self-blame (content and self-blame), and the threat (coping efficacy and perceived threat) subscales of parental conflict and the social adjustment level of students. The analysis and interpretation of correlation results was made by using the guidelines of Kothari and Garg (2019).

Table 11: Pearson correlation between parental conflict and social adjustment

	IPC	Conflict Property	Self-blame	Threat	Social Adjustment
IPC	1				
Conflict Property	.879**	1			
Self-blame	.771**	.483**	1		
Threat	.827**	.549**	.779**	1	
Social Adjustment	.699**	.603**	.545**	.634**	1

The above table shows that there is a strong positive correlation between Parental conflict and social adjustment ($r = .699$, $n = 303$, $p < .001$). Therefore, there is a strong relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students.

4.6.1. The relationship between conflict property and social adjustment

In relation to the conflict property subscale of parental conflict and social adjustment, there is a statistically significant correlation ($r = .603$, $n = 303$, $p < .001$). This means that the social adjustment level of Minilik II Secondary School students is highly related to the conflict property subscale of parental conflict.

4.6.2. The relationship between self-blame and social adjustment

In relation to Self-blame subscale of parental conflict and social adjustment, there is a statistically moderate correlation ($r = .545$, $n = 303$, $p < .001$). This means that the social adjustment level of Minilik II Secondary School students is moderately related to the self-blame subscale of parental conflict.

4.6.3. The relationship between threat and social adjustment

In relation to threat subscale of parental conflict and social adjustment, there is a statistically significant correlation ($r = .634$, $n = 303$, $p < .001$). This means that the social adjustment level of Minilik II Secondary School students is highly related to the threat subscale of parental conflict.

4.7. Prediction of social adjustment by the components of parental conflict and living situation

In this study, the analysis of multiple linear regressions was performed to predict the social adjustment of Minilik II Secondary School students by parental conflict characteristics (conflict property, self-blame, and threat).

Before performing multiple regressions analysis, regression assumptions (diagnostic tests) were considered as a pre-condition. Refer Appendix D for detail information.

Table 12: Regression model summary

Model	Sum of		Mean		Sig.	R	R Square
	Squares	df	Square	F			
Regression	264.010	4	66.002	75.215	.000	.709	.499
Residual	261.502	298	.878				
Total	525.512	302					

A. Predictors: (Constant), Living situation, Self-blame, Conflict property, Threat

B. Dependent variable: Social adjustment

A multiple linear regression was conducted to examine the predictors of social adjustment. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(4, 298) = 75.215$, $p < .001$, accounting for a significant proportion of variance in social adjustment. It is observed that the correlation coefficient (R) value 0.709 suggests that the combination of characteristics of parental conflict and living situation contributed about 49.6% ($R^2 * 100$) of the social adjustment status of Minilik II Secondary School students.

In order to evaluate the individual impact of each independent variable on the social adjustment of students at Minilik II Secondary School, a regression coefficient is presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Regression Coefficients

Variables	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	-.025	.287		.086	.932
Conflict property	.064	.009	.348	7.073	.000
Self-blame	.032	.018	.115	1.747	.082
Threat	.075	.015	.345	4.967	.000
Living Situation	.190	.128	.062	1.481	.140

Dependent variable: Social adjustment

The standardized coefficient (Beta value) can be employed to determine the contribution of each variable. The significant contributors to the social adjustment status of students in Minilik II secondary school were conflict property subscale of parental conflict (Beta value = 0.348, $t = 7.073$, $p < .001$) and the threat subscale of parental conflict (Beta value = 0.345, $t = 4.967$, $p < .001$). For each unit increase in conflict property, social adjustment increases by 0.064 units, holding other variables constant, and for each unit increase in threat, social adjustment increases by 0.075 units, holding other variables constant. Therefore, conflict property and threat showed a significant positive relationship with social adjustment.

However, the regression analysis shows that self-blame of parental conflict (Beta value = 0.115, $t = 1.747$, $p = .082$) did not significantly contribute to the social adjustment of students.

The living situation of the participants also did not show a statistically significant relationship with social adjustment (Beta value = 0.062, $t = 1.481$, $p = .140$).

Among the properties of parental conflict among families of students in Minilik II Secondary School, conflict property and threat subscales are the predictors of students' social adjustment.

4.8. Discussion of Results

In this section, the key findings of the study were discussed based on research objectives with integration of empirical reviews.

4.8.1. The relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment

This section addresses the main research objective of the study: The relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students. To answer this question, the total sum of the subscales of parental conflict and the independent subscales of parental conflict is analyzed to examine their relationship with social adjustment of the students.

The results of the study indicate a strong positive relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students. Specifically, there is a statistically significant correlation between conflict property and threat subscale of parental conflict and social adjustment, while a moderate relationship is found with the self-blame subscale of parental conflict.

This result supports the study in China among 707 students that perceived parental conflict positively associating with social anxiety symptoms, which affected the social adjustment of students (Adare et al., 2021). The study also aligns with a study in Kenya among 400 secondary school students in Murang'a which found inter-parental conflict is related to difficulties in social adjustment (Muriithi, 2019).

4.8.2. Level of parental conflict

The level of parental conflict among Minilik II Secondary School students reveals that the conflict property is perceived as low, indicating that students experience parental conflict infrequently, with low intensity and good resolution, both for those who live with their parents and those who live with their relatives. Conversely, the threat of parental conflict is assessed at a moderate level. The results indicate that participants living with relatives reported a moderate level of threat, while

those who live with their parents fall into the low level, suggesting that students who live with their relatives do feel a more pronounced sense of threat concerning the conflicts they observe.

However, when it comes to self-blame related to these conflicts, students report low levels regardless of whether they live with their parents or relatives, implying that they do not attribute responsibility for the conflicts to themselves.

This research finding aligns with Kiambi (2019) regarding parental conflict among secondary school students, as both indicate that students perceive parental conflicts to occur infrequently and with low intensity. In Kiambi's (2019) study, the majority of secondary school students reported low frequencies of parental conflicts, with only a small number indicating high levels of perceived conflict. This trend is consistent with earlier findings from Minilik II Secondary School students, who also perceived the level of parental conflict as low and infrequent.

4.8.3. The difference between perception of parental conflict by gender and age

The difference in perception of parental conflict by gender and age is presented in the next subsection.

4.8.3.1. The difference between perceptions of parental conflict by gender

This section addresses the research objective: the gender differences in perceptions of parental conflict. The Mann-Whitney U test yielded the results, which led to the study's conclusion that there is no statistically significant difference between gender and perception of parental conflict among Minilik II Secondary School students.

The results specifically examined the individual differences between the parental conflict subscales (conflict property, self-blame, and threat), and there is no difference in the parental conflict subscales based on gender of the participants.

This research finding doesn't align with previous studies such as Brown et al. (2016), Afkhami et al. (2018), and Davies & Lindsay (2014), reporting females as more emotionally affected and perceiving higher threat levels compared to males. The lack of gender difference in Minilik II Secondary School suggests that the students may have similar perceptions of parental conflict than previously observed in other settings.

The results of the study correspond with Mussaffa (2014), which revealed no variation of inter-parental conflicts between genders.

4.8.3.2. The difference between perceptions of parental conflict by age

This section tries to answer the research objective: the difference between perceptions of parental conflict by age. Result was drawn from Kruskal-Wallis test, therefore, from the result obtained, the study concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between age and perception of parental conflict among Minilik II Secondary School students aged between 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 years.

The result specifically saw the individual difference between the parental conflict subscales (conflict property, self-blame, and threat) and there was no difference of the parental conflict subscales on age of the participants.

While there is limited research found on the parental conflict and age differences among adolescents, comparing this research finding with Duche (2023) reveals both similarities and differences. Both studies found no significant difference in conflict property and threat subscales across age groups. However, there was a significant difference in the findings related to self-blame. Duche (2023) found a statistically significant difference in self-blame, with 17 years olds reporting high levels compared to 18 and 19 years old, while the current research found no significant difference in self-blame across all age groups. Therefore, this research finding corresponds with Duch's 2023 study in the two sub scales but doesn't align with the self-blame subscale findings.

4.8.4. Level of social adjustment

The next research objective is to examine the social adjustment levels of Minilik II Secondary School students in relation to their exposure to parental conflict. As a result, it is found that half of the participants reported to have an average/moderate level of social adjustment in relation to their exposure to parental conflict. Therefore, the interpretation of the scores revealed that the social adjustment of students in Minilik II Secondary School is at an Average/moderate level.

This result supports the findings of Maya et al. (2024) and Muriithi (2019) that social adjustment level of students in these countries are at an average level.

4.8.5. The difference between social adjustment by gender and age

The difference in social adjustment by gender and age is presented in the next subsection.

4.8.5.1. The difference between social adjustment by gender

The research finding indicates a statistically significant difference in social adjustment between genders among Minilik II Secondary School students, with females exhibiting higher levels of social adjustment. This aligns with studies such as Packiaselvi and Malathi (2017), which reported that girls showed higher levels of social adjustment compared to boys, and Alam (2017), who also found that girls had greater adjustment levels than boys. However, contrast with Paramanik et al. (2014), who found that boys scored higher on social adjustment, and Alkali (2016), which reported no significant gender differences in Nigeria.

4.8.5.2. The difference between social adjustment by age

This study's finding of no statistically significant difference in social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students aged 15 to 19 aligns with the research conducted by Zhang et al. (2016), which also reported no significant age differences in social adjustment among Chinese adolescents. Their conclusion that cultural factors and the school environment could be more influential than age in shaping social adjustment aligns with your results, suggesting that the context in which students are situated may play a critical role in their social experiences, regardless of age. In contrast, this finding does not align with Kumar and Singh (2014), who identified significant age differences in social adjustment among Indian secondary school students, noting that older adolescents (15-16 years) demonstrated better social adjustment due to increased maturity and social experiences.

4.8.6. Prediction of social adjustment by the components of parental conflict and living situation

The results of the study indicated that parental conflict significantly predicted the social adjustment levels of Minilik II Secondary School students. More specifically, an assessment of the individual effects of subscales of parental conflict shows that the conflict property and threat subscales significantly contributed to the social adjustment of these students. However, the self-blame aspect of parental conflict did not significantly contribute to the students' social adjustment. In addition,

the living situation of the participants also did not show a statistically significant relationship with social adjustment.

The result supports a study in Germany that emphasized on the significant negative impact of inter-parental conflict on children's social adjustment and well-being and found a strong relationship between frequent parental conflict and social adjustment, leading to peer problems and reduced pro-social behavior that the frequency and nature of parental conflict are crucial factors influencing children's social well-being (Hess, 2022).

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Summary

The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School Students. The following research questions were formulated.

RQ1: What is the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students?

RQ2: What are the levels of perceived interparental conflict (IPC) and social adjustment among Minilik II Secondary School students?

RQ3: Is there a difference between perception of parental conflict and social adjustment by gender and age?

RQ4: Which component of interparental conflict significantly predicts social adjustment?

To achieve this objective two research questionnaires were utilized: The Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale (CPIC) and the Social Adjustment Scale.

To answer these questions, 373 students were chosen using a simple random sampling technique from grades 9 to 12 at Minilik II Secondary School. Out of the 373 distributed questionnaires, 355 were completed and returned, consisting of 147 (41.4%) males and 208 (58.6%) females. Out of the 355 completed and returned questionnaires, 230 (64.8%) students lived with both parents, while 73 (20.6%) lived with relatives (e.g., grandmother, aunt), and the rest 52 (14.6%) lived with only one parent (either with their father or mother). Thus, 303 (85.3%) of the sample were included in the final analysis of the study.

Mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis, Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney U test, and t-test were used to analyze the result of the research.

The descriptive statistical analysis revealed that among MinilikII Secondary School students, parental conflict properties were perceived as low, indicating that students experience parental conflicts infrequently, with low intensity and good resolution. Conversely, the threat of parental conflict is assessed at a moderate level. The results indicate that participants living with relatives reported a moderate level of threat, while those who live with their parents fall into the low level, suggesting that students who live with their relatives do feel a more pronounced sense of threat concerning the conflicts they observe. However, when it comes to self-blame related to these conflicts, students report low levels regardless of whether they live with their parents or relatives, implying that they do not attribute responsibility for the conflicts to themselves. In addition, students demonstrated a moderate level of social adjustment in relation to their exposure to parental conflict.

Consequently, the correlation analysis revealed that there is a statistically significant correlation between parental conflict and social adjustment in Minilik II Secondary School students. Conflict property and threat characteristics of parental conflict were strongly correlated with social adjustment, while self-blame was moderately correlated.

Subsequently, based on regression analysis, the results showed that parental conflict significantly predicted social adjustment of Minilik II Secondary School students. Conflict property and threat characteristics of parental conflict significantly predicted social adjustment, while self-blame and living situation did not contribute.

Lastly, the Kruskal-Wallis test and the Mann-Whitney U test showed that there is no statistically significant difference in perception of parental conflict among Minilik II Secondary School students based on gender or age. However, the research findings indicate a statistically significant difference in social adjustment between genders with females exhibiting higher levels of social adjustment. In addition, no statistically significant difference in social adjustment was found based on age.

5.2 Conclusions

The key findings of the study were summarized under the above section. Here, a conclusion of the study is drawn based on the major findings of the study.

- The results of the study showed that the parental conflict properties were perceived as low, indicating that students experience parental conflicts infrequently, with low intensity and good resolution. Conversely, the threat of parental conflict was assessed at a moderate level for those who live with their relatives, suggesting that students feel a sense of threat concerning the conflicts they observe. However, students reported low levels of self-blame, implying that they do not attribute responsibility for these conflicts to themselves. In addition, students demonstrated a moderate level of social adjustment in relation to their exposure to parental conflict.
- Regarding the relationship between parental conflict and social adjustment, the results of the study showed that there is a significant correlation among the two variables. Conflict property and threat characteristics were strongly correlated, while self-blame was moderately correlated. This implies the importance of the family environment in shaping children's social adjustment. In other words, how parents interact, especially conflict can spill over into children's social life through distinct mechanisms or to different degrees.
- According to the result, parental conflict significantly predicted social adjustment with conflict property and threat characteristics significantly predicted and self-blame and living situation did not contribute, this implies that parental conflict is causing students/adolescents to face social adjustment issues that are important to forming relationships and maintaining relationships. In addition, it implies that even though few students blame themselves, there are still some students that are affected by this issue and are facing difficulty.
- The social adjustment levels of the students are at an average/moderate level. This implies that despite witnessing frequent, intense conflicts that lack, students at Minilik II Secondary School Students have moderate amount social skills that help them to adjust to society.
- Consequently, the result revealed no statistically significant difference among genders or ages in the perception of parental conflict. This implies that being male or female, and being between ages 15- 19, doesn't affect how they perceive conflict. This may be due to most of the participants reporting good coping efficacy, which they may have developed through shared socialization experiences regarding conflict perception and interpretations. It may also imply that students observe conflict similarly regardless of their age or gender.

- Finally, the result revealed that gender plays a significant role in social adjustment among students, with females demonstrating higher levels of social adjustment compared to their male counterparts. This could indicate that female students have developed more effective coping strategies, are better at managing social relationships, or have stronger social support networks. However, age does not appear to influence social adjustment levels, suggesting that social adjustment abilities are more influenced by gender than age.

5.3 Recommendations

After considering the major conclusions drawn above, the researcher suggests and forwards some possible recommendations to the relevant bodies.

5.3.1. For Students

1. Be encouraged and encourage other students to reach out when experiencing difficulties due to family conflict.
2. Facilitate and engage in a peer support group where it can be and experience sharing and coping strategies.
3. Participate in an extracurricular activity that can strength social connection and a sense of belonging outside the family context.

5.3.2. For Parents

1. Provide emotional support to children, especially during times of family stress or conflict.
2. Maintain open communication with children about the family dynamics, addressing their concerns and fears.
3. Participate in counseling sessions to improve communication skills and conflict resolution skills.

5.3.3. For Schools

1. Provide training for teachers to raise awareness so that they can recognize signs of social adjustment and difficulties in students and offer appropriate support.
2. Organize parent-teacher conferences to promote healthy family dynamics and communication.
3. Ensure the availability of school counselors to support students' experiencing parental conflict.

4. Facilitate workshops entailing the impact of parental conflict on students' entire wellbeing.
5. Provide holistic psychosocial support for parents and students to work on the causes of parental conflict and way forward.

5.3.4. For Policy makers

1. Allocate resources for the schools to address social adjustment and family dynamics.
2. Promote programs that offer support to families experiencing conflict.
3. Launch public awareness campaigns to educate the public on the effect of parental conflict on children's social development.

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Appendix A: English Questionnaire

UIC: _____

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about issues related to parental conflict and social adjustment among students. The information to be collected through this questionnaire will be used only for academic purpose and are thus promisingly confidential. Hence you are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire your honest responses are crucial for producing credible research findings.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

The Researcher

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following items are about biographic information. Please, give your biographic data by filling the required information or by putting a “X” mark in the blank spaces.

1. Age _____
2. Sex: Male___ Female_____
3. Grade_____
4. With whom do you live?
I live with both my mom and my dad _____
Only one of my parents_____
- Another relative (e.g., grandmother, aunt) _____

SECTION B: PARENTAL CONFLICT

In every family there are times when the parents don't get along. When their parents argue or disagree, kids can feel a lot of different ways. We would like to know what kind of feelings you have when your parents have arguments or disagreements.

If your parents don't live together in the same house with you, think about times that they are together when they don't agree or about times when both of your parents lived in the same house, when you answer these questions.

No	Items	False	Sort of true	True
	Frequency			
1.*	I never see my parents arguing or disagreeing			
2	They may not think I know it, but my parents argue or disagree a lot			
3	My parents are often mean to each other even when I'm around			
4	I often see my parents arguing			
5.*	My parents hardly ever argue			
6	My parents often nag and complain about each other around the house			
	Intensity			
7	My parents get really mad when they argue			
8.*	When my parents have a disagreement, they discuss the issue calmly			
9	When my parents have an argument, they say mean things to each other			
10	When my parents have an argument, they yell a lot			

11.*	My parents hardly ever yell when they have a disagreement			
12	My parents have broken or thrown things during an argument			
13	My parents have pushed or shoved each other during an argument			
	Resolution			
14.*	When my parents have an argument, they usually work it out			
15	Even after my parents stop arguing they stay mad at each other			
16.*	When my parents disagree about something, they usually come up with a solution			
17.*	When my parents argue they usually make up right away			
18.*	After my parents stop arguing, they are friendly toward each other			
19	My parents still act mean after they have had an argument			
	Content			
20	My parents often get into arguments about things I do at school			
21	My parents' arguments are usually about something I did			
22	My parents usually argue or disagree because of things that I do			
23	My parents often get into arguments when I do something wrong			
	Perceived Threat			
24	I get scared when my parents argue			
25	When my parents argue I worry about what will happen to me			
26	When my parents argue I'm afraid that something bad will happen			
27	When my parents argue I worry that one of them will get hurt			

28	When my parents argue I'm afraid that they will yell at me too			
29	When my parents argue I worry that they might get divorced			
	Coping Efficacy			
30.*	When my parents argue I can do something to make myself feel better			
31	I don't know what to do when my parents have arguments			
32.*	When my parents argue or disagree, I can usually help make things better			
33	When my parents argue there's nothing, I can do to stop them			
34	When my parents argue or disagree there's nothing, I can do to make myself feel better			
35	When my parents argue, they don't listen to anything I say			
	Self-Blame			
36.*	I'm not to blame when my parents have arguments			
37	It's usually my fault when my parents argue			
38	Even if they don't say it, I know I'm to blame when my parents argue			
39	My parents blame me when they have arguments			
40.*	Usually, it's not my fault when my parents have arguments			

Note: Items marked with an asterisk should be reverse scored. The questionnaires on parental conflict were adopted from Children's Perception of Inter-parental Conflict Scale (CPIC).

SECTION C: SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

The table below contains statements describing how you interact with others at School. Indicate how much the statement is true for you **TICK ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT**

No	Items	Never	Sometimes	Always
1	Do you avoid meeting your classmates?			
2	Are you of a shy nature?			
3	Do you hesitate in asking a question when you don't understand something?			
4	When some of your teachers are together, do you go there without any complex?			
5	Do you feel sometimes, as if you have no friend in your school?			
6	Are you able to get friendly with everyone easily?			
7	When some students are together, do you join them freely?			
8	Do you like to join your classmates working together?			
9	Do you try to attract the attention of your teacher to yourself in the class?			
10	Do you often like to be alone?			
11	Do you establish a friendly relationship with the students in the school?			
12	Do you like to sit in the front seats in the class?			
13	Do you have a friendly association with your fellow students?			
14	Do you openly take part in the school assemblies?			

15	Do you take part in the school sports?			
16	Are you shy of talking to the senior students in school?			
17	Do you have some intimate friends in this school?			
18	Are you always ready to help your classmates in every way?			
19	Do you enjoy irritating other students in the school?			
20	Do you lend your books or note-books gladly when your classmates ask for it?			

Note: Items marked with an asterisk should be reverse scored. The questionnaires on social adjustment were adopted from Adjustment inventory for school students (AISSss).

Appendix B: Amharic Version Questionnaire

ልዩ ኮድ -----

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የትምህርትና ስነ-ባህሪ ሳይንስ ኮሌጅ

የሳይኮሎጂ ትምህርት ቤት

ዓላማ

ይህ መጠይቅ የተዘጋጀው የቤተሰብ ግጭት እና ከ የማህበራዊ መስተጋብር ጋር በተያያዙ ጉዳዮች ላይ ከተማሪዎች መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው። በዚህ መጠይቅ በኩል የሚሰበሰበው መረጃ ለትምህርታዊ ዓላማ ብቻ የሚውል ስለሆነ ሚስጥራዊነቱ የተጠበቀ ነው። የአንተ/ቺ ታማኝ ምላሽ ተዓማኒነት ያለው የምርመራ ግኝቶችን ለማምጣት ወሳኝ መሆኑን ተረድተህ/ሽ መጠይቁን በእውነተኛነት እንድትሞላ/ዩ በአክብሮት እጠይቃለሁ። ለትብብርዎ እናመሰግናለን።

ከሰላምታ ጋር
ተመራማሪዎ

መጠየቅ አንድ፡ የግል መረጃ መጠይቅ

የሚከተሉት ጥያቄዎች የግል መረጃ መሰብሰቢያ ጥያቄዎች ናቸው። እባክዎን አስፈላጊውን መረጃ ባለው ክፍት ቦታ ላይ በመሙላት ወይም ባዶ ቦታዎች ላይ የ"X" ምልክት በማድረግ መረጃዎን ይስጡ።

1. ዕድሜ _____
2. ምታ፡ ወንድ _____ ሴት _____
3. ክፍል _____
3. ከማን ጋር ነው የምትኖረው/ረው?
 የምኖረው ከእናቱ እና ከአባቱ ጋር ነው _____
 ከወላጆቹ አንዱ ብቻ _____
 ሌላ ዘመድ (ለምሳሌ አያት፣ አክስት) _____

መጠየቅ ሁለት: የወላጆች/አሳዳጊ ግጭት መጠይቅ

በማንኛውም ቤተሰብ ውስጥ ወላጆች የማይግባቡበት ጊዜ አለ። ልጆች ወላጆቻቸው ሲጨቃጨቁ ወይም ሲጠሉ የተለያዩ ስሜቶች ሊሰማቸው ይችላል። ይህም መጠየቅ የተዘጋጀው የእንተ/የአንቺ ወላጆች ግጭት ውስጥ ሲሆኑ ምን አይነት የስሜት መረዳት እንዳለህ/ሽ ለመለካት ነው። ሰለዚህ እያንዳንዱን ጥያቄ ካነብብክ/ሽ በኋላ የእኔን ገጠመኝ መጠን በደንብ ይገልጻልኛል የምትለውን/ይውን መልስ በጥያቄዎቹ ትይዩ ከተሰጡት የመልስ ደረጃዎች አንዱ ላይ ምልክት በማድረግ ይመልሱ።

ወላጆችዎ አብረው የማይኖሩ ከሆነ እነዚህን ጥያቄዎች ሲመልሱ ወላጆችህ/ሽ አብረው ይኖሩ የነበሩባቸውን ጊዜያት አስበህ/ሽ መልስ ይጥ።

ተ.ቁ	ጥያቄ	ሀሰት1)	አልፎ አልፎ እውነት(2)	እውነት 3)
1	ወላጆቼ ሲጠሉ አይቼ አላውቅም።			
2	ያወቅሁ ባይመስለኝባቸውም ወላጆቼ በጣም ይጋጩሉ።			
3	አጠገባቸው እያለሁም ወላጆቼ ይጨቃጨቃሉ።			
4	ወላጆቼ ሲከራከሩ አያለሁ።			
5	ወላጆቼ ተጋጭተው አያውቁም።			
6	ወላጆቼ እርስ በርስ ሲወቃቀሱና ሲያማርሩ አያለሁ።			
7	ወላጆቼ ሲጠሉ የሚያደርጉትን አያውቁትም።			
8	ወላጆቼ ሲጋጩ ረጋ ብለው ስለ ጉዳዩ ይነጋገራሉ።			
9	ወላጆቼ ሲጋጩ ደስ የማይሉ ቃላትን ይመለሳሉ።			
10	ወላጆቼ ሲጋጩ ይጫጫሃሉ።			

11	ወላጆች ሲጋጩ ድምፃቸው ተሰምቶ አያውቅም።			
12	ወላጆች ሲጣሉ ዕቃ ይሰብራሉ /ይወራወራሉ።			
13	ወላጆች ሲጣሉ አንዱ ሌላውን ይገፈትራል ወይም ጭምድድ አድርጎ ይዞ ይወዘውዛል።			
14	ወላጆች ሲጋጩ በአብዛኛው ችግሩን በአግባቡ ይፈቱታል።			
15	ወላጆች ግጭቱን ካቆሙ በኋላ እንኳ አንዱ ሌላኛው ላይ እንደተናደደ ይቆያል።			
16	ወላጆች ከተጋጩ ነገሩን በራሳቸው ይፈቱታል።			
17	ወላጆች ሲጣሉ ወዲያው ይታረቃሉ።			
18	ወላጆች ከተጣሉም በኋላ ዳደኝነታቸው በሰላም ይቀጥላል።			
19	ግጭቱ ካበቃ በኋላም ወላጆች ይጨቃጨቃሉ።			
20	ወላጆች በተደጋጋሚ የሚጋጩት እኔ ት/ቤት በምሰራው ስራ ነው።			
21	ወላጆች ብዙውን ጊዜ የሚጣሉት እኔ በሰራሁት ነገር ነው።			
22	እኔ በምሰራቸው ነገሮች ወላጆች ይጋጩሉ።			
23	ወላጆች በተደጋጋሚ የሚጋጩት እኔ ስህተት ስሰራ ነው።			
24	ወላጆች ሲጋጩ ፍርሐት ይሰማኛል።			
25	ወላጆች ሲጋጩ ምን ይመጣብኝ ይሆን ብዬ እጨነቃለሁ።			
26	ወላጆች ሲጋጩ መጥፎ ነገር ይከሰታል ብዬ እፈራለሁ።			
27	ወላጆች ሲጣሉ በአንዳቸው ላይ ጉዳት ይደርሳል ብዬ እጨነቃለሁ።			

28	ወላጆቹ ሲጋጩ እኔም ላይ ይጮሁብኛል እያልኩ እፈራለሁ ::			
29	ወላጆቹ ሲጋጩ ሊፋቱ ይችላሉ እያልኩ እጨነቃለሁ::			
30	ወላጆቹ ሲጋጩ ለራሴ ጥሩ ስሜት እንዲሰማኝ የሆነ ነገር ማድረግ እችላለሁ::			
31	ወላጆቹ ሲጠሉ ምን ማድረግ እንዳለብኝ ግራ ይገባኛል::			
32	ወላጆቹ ሲጋጩ ችግሮቼን ቀለል አድርጌ ማየት እችላለሁ::			
33	ወላጆቹ ሲጋጩ ፀቡን ማስቆም አልችልም::			
34	ወላጆቹ ሲጠሉ ለራሴ ጥሩ ስሜት እንዲሰማኝ ላደርግ የምችለው ነገር የለም ::			
35	ወላጆቹ ሲጋጩ የምላቸውን ነገር አይሰሙኝም::			
36	ለወላጆቹ ግጭት እኔ ተጠያቂ አይደለሁም::			
37	ወላጆቹ የሚጠሉት በአብዛኛው በእኔ ጥፋት ነው::			
38	እነሱ ባይገልጹትም ለወላጆቹ ፀብ ምክንያት እኔ እንደሆንኩኝ አውቀዋለሁ::			
39	ወላጆቹ ሲጠሉ እኔን ጥፋተኛ ያደርጉኛል::			
40	ወላጆቹ የሚጋጩት በአብዛኛው በኔ ስህተት አይደለም::			

መጠይቅ ሶስት፡ የማህበራዊ መስተጋብር ግንኙነት መጠይቅ

ከታች ያለው ሰንጠረዥ ተማሪዎች በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ከሌሎች ጋር እንዴት እንደሚግባቡ የሚገልጹ መግለጫዎችን ይዟል። መግለጫው ለአንተ/አንቺ ምን ያህል እውነት እንደሆነ በጥያቄዎቹ ትይዩ ከተሰጡት የመልስ ደረጃዎች አንዱ ላይ ምልክት በማድረግ መልስ/መልሷል።

ተ.ቁ	ጥያቄ	ለኔ አይሰራም(0)	አልፎ አልፎ ለኔ ይሰራል(1)	ብዙ ጊዜ ለኔ ይሰራል(3)
1	ከክፍል ዳደሮቼ ጋር አብሬ ከመሆን እቆጠባለሁ።			
2	በተፈጥሮ ዓይን አፋር ነኝ።			
3	ያልገባኝን ጥያቄ ከመጠየቅ ወደኋላ እላለሁ።			
4	የተወሰኑ አስተማሪዎቼ አብረው ተሰብስበው እያሉ ያለ ፍራቻ ወደነሱ እሄዳለሁ።			
5	አንዳንድ ጊዜ በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ዳደሩ እንደሌለኝ ይሰማኛል።			
6	ከሰው ጋር በቀላሉ መግባባት እችላለሁ።			
7	አንዳንድ ተማሪዎች አብረው ሲሰበሰቡ በነፃነት እቀላቀላቸዋለሁ።			
8	አብረው በቡድን ከሚሰሩ የክፍል ዳደሮቼ ጋር መቀላቀል እፈልጋለሁ።			
9	በክፍል ውስጥ የአስተማሪን ትኩረት ለመሰብሰብ እሞክራለሁ።			
10	ብቻዬን መሆን እወዳለሁ።			
11	በትምህርት ቤቱ ውስጥ ካሉ ተማሪዎች ጋር ጥሩ ግንኙነት እመሰርታለሁ።			

12	በክፍል ውስጥ ከፊት ያሉ መቀመጫዎች ላይ መቀመጥ እወዳለሁ።			
13	ከሌሎች ተማሪዎች ጋር ጥሩ ግንኙነት አለኝ።			
14	በትምህርት ቤት ያሉ ክለቦች ላይ እሳተፋለሁ።			
15	በትምህርት ቤት የሚካሄዱ ስፖርቶች ላይ እሳተፋለሁ።			
16	በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ካሉ የሌላ ክፍል ተማሪዎች ጋር ለመነጋገር አፍራለሁ።			
17	በዚህ ትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ አንዳንድ የቅርብ ዳደሮች አሉኝ።			
18	የክፍል ዳደሮቼን በሁሉም መንገድ ለመርዳት ዝግጁ ነኝ።			
19	በትምህርት ቤቱ ውስጥ ያሉ ሌሎች ተማሪዎችን ማበሳጨት ያስደስተኛል።			
20	የክፍል ዳደሮቼ ሲጠይቁኝ መጽሃፌን ወይም ደብተሬን በደስታ አውሳለሁ።			

Appendix C: The Backward Translated Questionnaires from Amharic to English

UIC: _____

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Purpose

This questionnaire is designed to collect information on issues related to parental conflict and students' social adjustment. The information collected through this questionnaire will be used for educational purposes only and will be kept confidential. I respectfully request that you fill out the questionnaire truthfully, understanding that your honest response is critical to producing credible research findings.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Best regards,

The researcher

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following items are about biographic information. Please, give your biographic data by filling the required information or by putting a “X” mark in the blank spaces.

1. Age _____

2. Sex: Male___ Female_____

3. Grade_____

3. With whom do you live?

I live with both my mom and my dad _____

Only one of my parents_____

Another relative (e.g., grandmother, aunt) _____

SECTION B: PARENTAL CONFLICT

In every family, there are times when parents don't get along. Children can feel different emotions when their parents argue or fight. This question is designed to measure how you feel to your parents when they are in conflict. Therefore, after reading each question, answer that you think best describes the level of your experience by marking one of the answer levels given next to the questions.

If your parents do not live together, answer these questions by thinking about the times when your parents lived together.

No	Items	False	Sort of true	True
1	I have never seen my parents fight			
2	Though they don't think I know, my parents constantly fight			
3	My parents involve in a row always in presence			
4	I often see my parents argue			
5	My parents have never clashed			
6	I usually see my parents insulting and blaming one another			
7	When my parents fight, they cannot control themselves			
8	When my parents disagree over something they discuss about it calmly			
9	When my parents fight, they use improper language			
10	When my parents fight, they shout each other			
11	When my parents fight, they keep it to themselves			

12	When my parents quarrel, they break smash/ through things			
13	When my parents fight, one of them would push or strangle the other.			
14	When my parents fight, they mostly resolve the issue appropriately.			
15	Even after my parents stop the fight, one would stay angry over the other			
16	When my parents fight, they resolve the issue by themselves			
17	When my parents involve in a disagreement, they immediately make peace			
18	My parents would remain good friends after they fight			
19	My parents keep on arguing even after the fight is over			
20	My parents always fight because of what I do in school			
21	My parents usually fight because of my wrong doing			
22	My parents fight because of what I do			
23	My parents always set into a fight because of the mistake I commit			
24	My parents fight, I feel terrified			
25	My parents fight, I worry about what is going to happen in the future			
26	My parents fight, I am afraid that something bad will happen.			
27	When my parents fight, I worry that they would cause harm to each other.			
28	When my parents fight, I worry about them shouting at me			
29	When my parents fight, I feel distressed that they would divorce			
30	When my parents fight, I can do something that makes me feel good.			
31	I don't know what to do when my parents fight			

32	When my parents fight, I always try to do something better			
33	When my parents fight, there is nothing I can do to stop it.			
34	When my parents fight, there is nothing I can do to make me feel good			
35	When my parents fight, they don't listen to what I tell them			
36	I am not responsible for my parents dispute			
37	My parents always fight because of my wrong doing			
38	Though my parents never mention it, I know I am the cause for their fight			
39	When my parents fight, they blame me for it.			
40	My parents fight mostly not by my wrong doing. In most cases my wrong doing is not the cause for my parents fight.			

SECTION C: SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

The table below describes how students communicate with others at school. Indicate how true the statement to you is. Tick one answer per statement

No	Question	Never	Sometimes	Always
1	Do you avoid being with your classmates?			
2	Are you shy by nature?			
3	Do you hesitate to ask questions that you don't understand?			
4	When some of your teachers are gathered together, you go there without any fear?			
5	Do you Sometimes feel like you have no friends at school?			
6	Do you think you can easily communicate with everyone?			

7	When some students get together, do you feel free join them?			
8	When your classmates are working together in groups, do you like to join them?			
9	Do you try to get teachers attention in class?			
10	Do you like to be alone most of the time?			
11	Do you have a good relationship with the students in the school?			
12	Do you like to sit in the front seats in class?			
13	Do you have a good relationship with other students?			
14	Do you openly take part in the school gatherings?			
15	Do you participate in school sports?			
16	Are you shy to talk to other students in school?			
17	Do you have some close friends in this school?			
18	Are you always ready to help your classmates in every way			
19	Do you enjoy annoying the other students in the school?			
20	Do you gladly lend your book or notebook to your classmates when they ask?			

Appendix D: Regression Assumption or Diagnosis Tests

Normality Assumption Tests

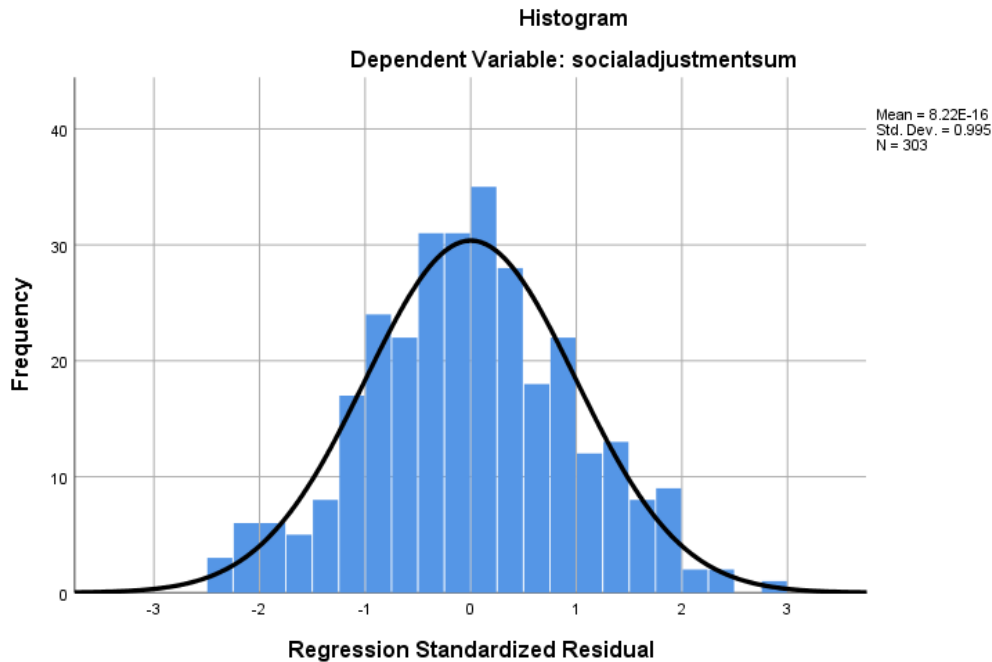


Figure 2: Normality assumption test using histogram

As shown in the above figure, the histogram suggests that the normality assumption for the regression residuals is reasonably met. The distribution of standardized residuals for social adjustment is a normal distribution with a bell-shaped curve. The mean is essentially zero (8.22E-16) and the standard deviation is 0.995. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data collected for this study met the requirement of normality distribution.

Multi-collinearity Assumption Test

Table 14: Multi-Collinearity Assumption test using Tolerance and VIF values

Constant	Tolerance	VIF
Conflict Property	.690	1.448
Self-blame	.389	2.571
Threat	.354	2.822

Table 9 shows that every tolerance value was greater than 0.1 and every VIF value was less than 5. As a result, there is little correlation between the independent variable and no multi-collinearity issue.

Homoscedasticity Test

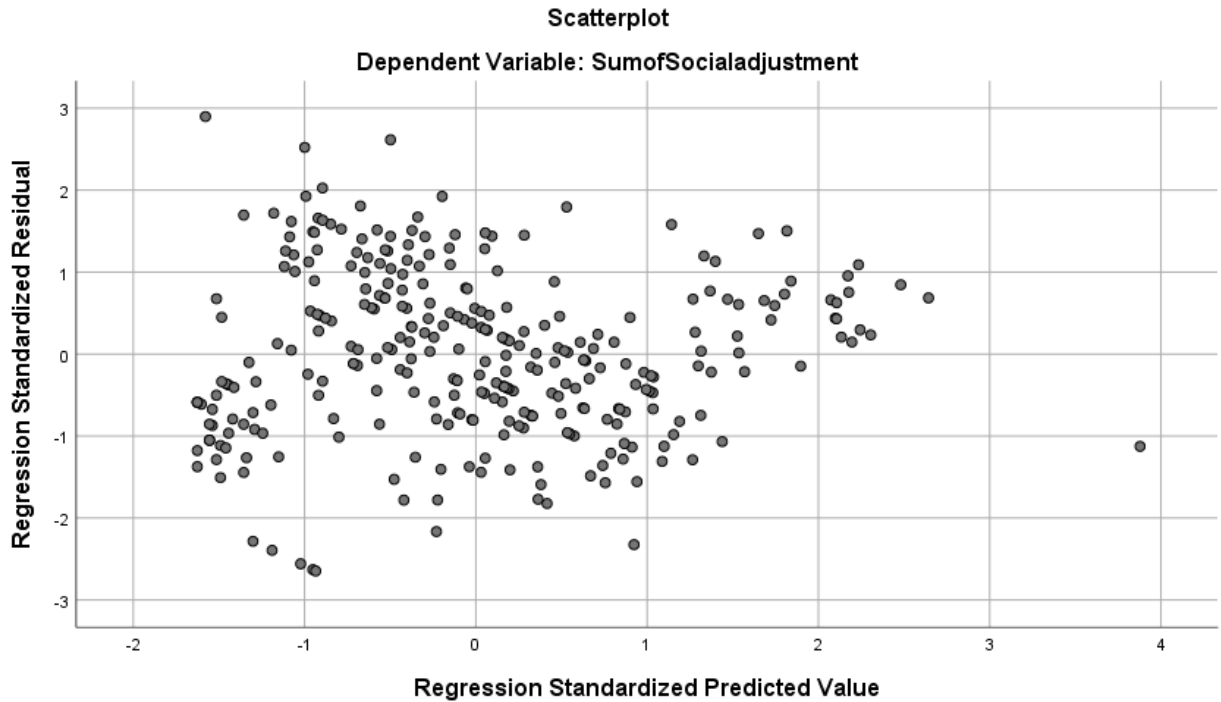


Figure 3: Homoscedasticity test

In the above residual plot, specifically showing the standardized residuals against the standard predictive values, the scatter plot points appear to be randomly scattered, without any clear pattern of systematic change in the spread of residuals as the predicted values increase. The spread of residuals seems fairly consistent across the range of predicted value. The standardized residuals mostly fall between -3 and 3, which is generally acceptable. In this case, the standardized predicted values mostly range from about -2 to 4 with only one point at the far right of the plot (around 4 on the x-axis). Therefore, the assumption of homoscedasticity appears to be reasonably satisfied.

Linearity assumption test

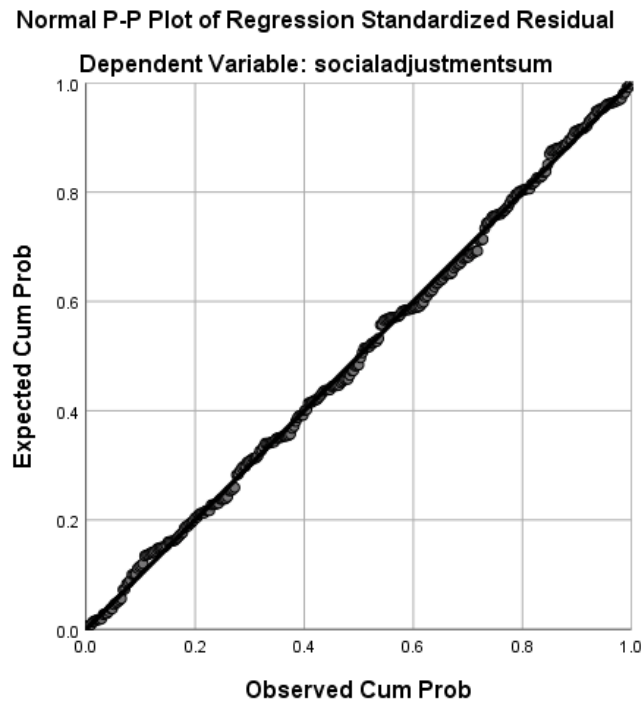


Figure 4: Linearity assumption test

Based on the above plot, we can conclude that the residual in this regression analysis is well satisfied. The residual appears to be normally distributed. Therefore, this Normal P-P plot strongly supports the assumption that the residuals in the regression model for the dependent variable (social adjustment) are normally distributed, which is a positive indication for the validity of the regression model.