

Introduction

Exam anxiety is one of the most important problems among moderate and low average students. In the time of examination, many students and parents approach counselors and psychologists which show the existence of the severity of this problem. It prompted the researcher to make an in depth study of this subject. Besides examination anxiety, students are facing problems like loneliness, learning disabilities, physical changes, emotional problems, peer group pressures, rebellious behaviours etc. Here comes the role of a school counselor.

Adolescence is a developmental transition between childhood and adulthood. It is the period from puberty until full adult status has been attained. Adolescence is also the stage in a person's life between childhood and adulthood. It is the period of human development during which a young person must move from dependency to independence, autonomy and maturity. The young person moves from being part of a family group to being part of a peer group and to standing alone as an adult. Generally, the movement through adolescence from childhood to adulthood involves much more than a linear progression of change.

Adolescence is a time of stress and crisis. So adolescence is described as troublesome period in life. The major cause of stress in adolescence is the physical and psychological change that takes place in them. It is multi-dimensional, involving a gradual transformation or metamorphosis of the person as a child into a new person as an adult.

Adolescence involves a process, which extends over a significant period of a person's life. However, there are individual differences, with some young people moving through adolescence quicker than others. Adolescence presents many challenges as biological, psychological and social changes are confronted. Important processes of change need to occur within the young person if these challenges are to be confronted adaptively and with success. When an adolescent is unable to confront and deal with a developmental challenge successfully, there are likely to be unhelpful psychological, emotional and behavioural consequences. In dealing with these,

counselling may be useful with the counsellor helping the young person to find new ways to proceed adaptively along the required developmental journey.

The school counselor is an important and integral member of the pupil personnel team. The responsibility of them is to diagnose and study individual children, who are usually experiencing problems in their educational or personal development in this role, the school counselor evaluates various aspects of a child's experiences and behavior that are relevant to an understanding of the child's school difficulties and achievements. For this role, the school counselor is trained in the use of psychological tests and also is prepared to engage in individual or group therapy with disturbed children.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Adolescence is considered as the most important period in the life span of an individual. They are experiencing many physical and psychological problems in this period. Adolescents are more prone to quarrels and impulsivity. It is also considered as an emotionally unstable period. So there is a helping hand is needed for the pupils to ventilate their problems.

The role of school counselors varies widely according to the goal, purpose and the requirement of education system of a particular country and the school system in which the counselor functions, which every age has its problems, those of adolescence are often especially difficult for boys and girls to with.

The problems of adolescents are increasing day by day, because of the changing family situations from joint family to nuclear family they are not able to

expresses their feelings. These suppressed feelings may cause the problem more badly. The maladaptive behavior patterns of the children may be due to family disputes, substance abuse, peer group pressure, infatuations towards other sex, physical and psychological changes and learning disability etc. Here comes the role of a school counselor because the child spent most of his time in school than his family members. A good counselor can find out the exact problems of pupils and there by leads them to a successful life.

The physical and psychological development creates a kind of tension in the mind of the adolescent. So he feels dissatisfaction and indifference quite frequently without any apparent reason which the elders fail to understand. The adolescent grow very sentimental, because he has not yet developed mature ideas, outlooks and attitudes about things¹.

Teenagers are very often susceptible to emotional distress due to exam anxiety. Teenage is a period of emotional instability, being the transition period from childhood to adulthood. It is of great importance as we know a man could be physically fit only if he is mentally fit. It is also important because only a mentally healthy person can create healthy environment in our society.

In India, even now in the post modern era, not giving importance to the professional school social worker. So we should give more importance to this area. In this, the researcher analyzes the relevance of school counselor in India is high lighting because this period of transition in a human being is so crucial that it is the turning point. If professional school counseling might be given to those pupils who are studying in High School would get the actual message to be better with respecting all the variables including exam anxiety.

¹ Elizabeth B. Hurlock, Developmental Psychology, Fifth Edition, Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Company, 1981,p-254

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The Before-After Experimental Research Design

Experimental research design where 160 regular school going students between the ages 13 to 17 were chosen as experimental group and another 160 students in the same age group having similar socio economic backgrounds were chosen as control group. Care was taken to ensure that those children having high exam anxiety were chosen in the both experimental and control group so chosen for the detail studies. The experimental group is subjected to regular counseling for a period of one year which includes both personal as well as group counseling with the help of qualified and trained counselors. The control group is not given any such counseling assistance.

The exam anxiety score of the experimental group were measured before and after giving professional counseling for a continual period of one year. Similarly the test anxiety score of the control group also ascertained. Then a comparison of the both groups were systematically carried out in order to ascertain or analyze whether any significant association between counseling and overcoming exam anxiety among adolescents. It may be noted that the test score of the experimental group before and after giving counseling will also be quantitatively measured so as to ascertain the impact of counseling in controlling exam anxiety among adolescent school students.

Sampling design

For selecting the sample for the study, convenient sampling technique was used. Accordingly, out of 43 High schools in Pathanamthitta District four schools were conveniently chosen. Ease of access was the main criteria in selecting these schools. These schools include one Government, one Aided, one CBSE and an unaided school was chosen.

The Government and one CBSE were selected as experimental group and those pupils studying in the aided and unaided school were taken as control group. From each one of the two experimental groups 20 children from each class were selected. This means 20 children from 8th, 9th, 10th and +2 standards were picked up. Thus there

will be 80 students from each school. Thus the total sample size for the detailed study will be 320 students.

The experimental group children will be continuously exposed to professional counseling with the help of professionally trained counselors. Such counseling with the help of professionally trained counselors will be given at periodic intervals. This includes both personal and group counseling. Besides their parents also will be given professional counseling. Exam anxiety test will administer at the commencement of the counseling and at the close of the respective academic year just prior to the final examination.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the socio - demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To find out the examination anxiety level among the adolescents
3. To analyze the effectiveness of the school counseling on examination anxiety level among adolescents.

Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant relationship between sex and examination anxiety among adolescents
2. There will be no significant relationship between living areas and examination anxiety among adolescents.
3. There will be no significant relationship between Class and examination anxiety among adolescents
4. There will be no significant relationship between religion of the students and examination anxiety among adolescents.
5. There will be no significant relationship between family type and examination anxiety among adolescents.
6. There will be no significant relationship between family income and examination anxiety among adolescents.

7. There will be no significant relationship between occupation of parents and examination anxiety among adolescents.

Conceptual Definitions

Examination Anxiety

According to Encyclopedia of Education, examination anxiety as the behavioural pattern of the individual manifests in examination situation which is characterised by action indicating an irrational fear of inferior performance in examination situation.

Adolescence

Adolescence is defined as the stage in a person's life between childhood and adulthood. It is multi-dimensional transition involving gradual transformation or metamorphosis of the person as a child into a person as an adult.²

Operational Definitions

School

School is an institution which provides all levels of basic knowledge of different disciplines to pupils. It helping to the all round development of students.

Adolescence

Adolescence is a developmental period from the age of 13 to 17.

Examination Anxiety

During and before the examinations pupils experiencing tension, anxiety ,over stress, irritation, or fear

School counselor

School counselor is a professionally qualified person who having MSW (Medical and Psychiatric social work) Degree or Degree in psychology or Counseling and who have the capacity to indentify the problems of students.

² Kathryn Geldard and David Geldard, Counselling Adolescents,Sage Publications,California,2004,pp-3-4

Tools of Data Collection

Questionnaire was used for the data collection. It is divided in to two as socio-Demographic Profile and Self Made Test Anxiety Scale.

1. Socio-Demographic Profile.

The first part consists of personal data of the respondents which include name, age, sex, class, religion, living area, type of family, monthly income, number of siblings, occupation of the parent etc.

2. Self Made Test Anxiety Scale

The second part consists of the self made Test Anxiety Scale was used. It is a five point scale and it consists of 25 statements. The scoring of the question was 0, 1,2,3,4. The maximum score is 100 and minimum score is 0. Based on the total score respondents were divided in to five 0-100

FINDINGS

- **Sex**

It is found from the data that the distribution of respondents according to their sex shows that 51 % of the respondents were females and only 49 % were males.

- **Area of living**

It is found from the data that the distribution of respondents according to their living area shows that 25% of the respondents are from Urban Area, 75% of the respondents are from Rural Area.

- **Type of Family**

It is found from the data that the distribution of respondents according to their type of family shows that 81.0 % of the respondents are from nuclear families and 19 % of the respondents are from Joint Family.

Religion

It is found from the data that the distribution of respondents according to their religion shows that 38.8 % of the respondents are Christians and 46.6% belongs to Hindus and remaining 14.6% are Muslims.

Income of Family

It is found from the data that the distribution of respondents according to their religion shows that 34.4 % of the respondents having family income below 7500, 15.9% of the respondents having family income between 7500-15000, 13.2% of the respondents having family income between 15000-25000, 36.6 % of the respondents having family income above 25000.

- **Father's Job**

It is found from the data that the distribution of respondents according to their religion shows that 1.6 % of the respondents whose fathers are expired or lost , 12.2 % of the respondents' fathers having Government job, 47.2 % of the respondents' fathers having private job 39.0 % of the respondents' fathers having no job or working in semiprivate area or working as coolies.

- **Occupation of Mother**

It is found from the data that the distribution of respondents according to their religion shows that 0.9 % of the respondents whose mothers are expired, 5.0 % of the respondents' mothers having Government job, 46.9 % of the respondents' mothers having private job 47.2 % of the respondents' mothers having no job or working in semiprivate area or working as coolies.

- There is no significant difference between exam anxieties with respect to sex. The Mean pre test exam anxiety of Boys is 64.40 and that of girls is 64.85. The Mean post test exam anxiety of Boys is 28.22 and that of girls is 29.31. The exam anxiety was found proportionally decreasing after the counselling. The Mean exam Anxiety of boys was less because they engage themselves in recreational activities such as games. Also, they were found to be a little indifferent about examinations.

- There is no significant difference between exam anxieties with respect to Living Area. The Mean pre test exam anxiety of urban adolescents is 63.95 and that of rural adolescents is 65.02. The Mean post test exam anxiety of urban adolescents is 27.16 and that of rural adolescents is 29.76. The exam anxiety is proportionally decreased after the intervention programme, the Mean exam Anxiety of urban adolescents is less because they get greater exposure to the extracurricular activities.
- There is a significant difference in exam anxiety with respect to class which they are studying. Facing public exams are affecting to different classes in different wave length. The multiple comparison table shows that the there is very significant difference in exam anxiety with respect to classes 8 & 10 and classes 9 &10. When we considering exclusively classes 8 & 12 and 9 &12, there is no significant difference in exam anxiety with respect to religion.
- There is no significant difference in exam anxiety with respect to religion.
- There is no significant difference in exam anxiety with respect to family income.
- The ANOVA and multiple comparison shows that the there is very significant difference in exam anxiety with respect to Father's Government Job and other jobs. There is significant difference in exam anxiety with respect to father's Private Job and other job.
- There will be no significant difference between Occupation of Mother and examination anxiety among adolescents.
- The pre test exam anxiety and post test exam anxiety of control group are 65.69 and 65.60 respectively because there is no intervention programme is conducted for them. It reveals that the average exam anxiety is not decreasing.
- Table 5.23 shows the pre test and post test exam anxiety of the Control Group and the t value is 0.404 which is not significant at 0.05. It is because is no intervention programme is held to reduce the exam anxiety.

- Table 5.24 includes the Experimental Group Pre test Anxiety, Post test Anxiety, its Mean, Frequency, Std. Deviation, and Standard Error Mean. It is crystal cleared that average exam anxiety of the above group is substantially decreased.
- Table 5.25 shows the experimental Group t value, degree of freedom and its significance. It is very significant at 0.01. Exactly the pre test and post test exam anxieties have significant difference. That means the School Counselling was so effective.
- Table 5.26 shows pre test and post test exam anxieties of the control group and experimental group, its frequencies, mean, standard deviations and t value. The pre test anxiety of the control group and experimental group is almost same when we analyse the Means. It is not significant at 0.05 levels. The post test anxiety of the control group and experimental group is in an extreme difference when we analyse the Means. It is extremely significant at 0.01 levels.
- The table 5.30 shows the frequency, Covariance, Pearson Correlation and its Significance. The correlation value is 0.386. So there is a positive correlation between variables. The value obtained is .000, which is significant at 0.05. So the hypothesis is accepted. And there is significant relationship between pre test exam anxiety and the post test exam anxiety with respect to both the experimental group and control group.
- The table 5.27 shows the frequency, Covariance, Pearson Correlation and its Significance. The correlation value is 0.386. So there is a positive correlation between variables. The value obtained is .000, which is significant at 0.05. So the hypothesis is accepted. And there is significant relationship between pre test exam anxiety and the post test exam anxiety with respect to both the experimental group and control group.
- The table 5.28 shows the frequency, covariance, Pearson Correlation and its Significance. The correlation value is 0.951. So there is a positive correlation between variables. The value obtained is 0.000, which is significant at 0.05. So

the hypothesis is accepted. And there is significant relationship between pre test exam anxiety and the post test exam anxiety with respect to control group.

- The table 5.29 shows the frequency, covariance, Pearson Correlation and its Significance. The correlation value is 0.640. So there is a positive correlation between variables. The value obtained is .000, which is significant at 0.05. So the hypothesis is accepted. And there is significant relationship between pre test exam anxiety and the post test exam anxiety with respect to experimental group.
- The table 5.30 shows The Ancova is done using the Pre test scores as covariant. The adjusted R squared is 0.941, which accounts 94.1 % of the covariance to the experimental intervention.

SUGGESTIONS

1. A good teacher student relationship should be maintained in school. Teachers manipulating students psychologically and physically (especially in sexual) leads them in to mentally depressed which may resulted in over tension in exams.
2. A multidisciplinary team consists of representatives of school teachers, school social workers, parents should be implemented in schools. They can discuss the problems in the same platform which dilutes the biggest issues to simple.
3. A school counselor is needed in each school to reduce the increasing behavioral and emotional problems of students. Now a days in Kerala only some CBSE schools appointed school counselors where economically well off students are studying. Actually the behavioral problems are seen mostly from the economically backward students. The relevance of school counseling is not yet understood by the Government or the public people.
4. Adequate diet practices and nutritious food is an important factor that uplifts the physical well being. And through which psycho- social balance can be achieved. The economical, educational and social situations in Kerala society should be substantially changed.

5. Adolescents are the asset of our future generation. So awareness about the physical, psychological, and social problems are needed among them. For this, we should conduct programmes among them.
6. As the study indicates after the intervention programme, the examination anxiety level is decreased. It indicates the effectiveness of the intervention programme. So the intervention programme should conduct to decrease the anxiety level. the planned intervention programmes will supplement the positive stroke.
7. Awareness about physical conditions, mental status and psychological needs of the adolescents is essential among parents and teachers. For example if the student is in under performance in studies parents and teachers may compels and torture the children. It will diminish the self esteem and self confidence.
8. Carry out campaigns / Seminars / Workshops to encourage support and positive expectations of life skills education. It enhances self esteem and self confidence of those who are depressed because of under performances.

CONCLUSIONS

- The experimental group has reduced exam anxiety levels as a result of intervention programme.
- Counselling was very effective and beneficial to enable the adolescents to pass through this phase of storm and stress.
- Group Counselling is effective and economical to work with adolescent problems in schools