AGGRESSION, SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC ANXIETY AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR SELF-CONCEPT, GENDER AND STREAMS OF STUDY

A Synopsis

Submitted to the Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla
For the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
EDUCATION

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SUMMER HILL, SHIMLA – 171005
2012
INTRODUCTION

Freud characterises adolescence as a period of internal conflict, psychic disequilibrium and erratic behaviour. Adolescents are on one hand egoistic regarding themselves as the sole object of interest and the center of the universe but on the other hand also capable of self sacrifice and devotion. Youth today are living in an increasingly anxiety ridden atmosphere. They live in a world where nothing seems to be guaranteed with certainty and at the same time they are expected to perform at every front, the main being the academics. Adolescents often lack in academic motivation and performance, as their attention is divided among a lot many things especially at creating an identity for themselves. This is a generation where everybody lives, breathes and eats competition. The all-pervasive competitive atmosphere, it social or academic, encourages adolescents to constantly compare themselves with their peers. Consequently their self-image is in a continual state of redefinition. Stress is partly created by parental pressure too when they expect the adolescents to perform and stand out among their peer groups. When they can't rise up to that expectation or are in process of meeting it, adolescents suffer from frustration, physical stress, aggression, undesirable complexes and depression. Academics are the major source of tension amongst the youth nowadays. In today’s competitive world, it is not uncommon to find academic achievement playing the most important role in a child’s growing up. Being academically successful and making a place for oneself in the society is their priority. It is also true that youth today, often lacks academic motivation as their attention is diverted and divided among many things like peer group, heterogeneous relations, fashion and incessant entertainment. It appears that desiring and requiring academic achievement on one hand, and getting diverted from thorough academic efforts, creates a situation of continuous stress and anxiety for the adolescents. The present research
too, reported all pervasive aggression, academic anxiety and social anxiety amongst adolescents.

**AGGRESSION**

Aggression, in its broadest sense, is behavior, or a disposition, that is forceful, hostile or attacking. It may occur either in retaliation or without provocation. In narrower definitions that are used in social sciences and behavioral sciences, aggression is an intention to cause harm or an act intended to increase relative social dominance. Predatory or defensive behavior between members of different species may not be considered aggression in the same sense. Aggression can take a variety of forms and can be physical or be communicated verbally or non-verbally. Aggression differs from what is commonly called assertiveness, although the terms are often used interchangeably among laypeople, e.g. an aggressive salesperson.

Aggression is defined as the delivery of a noxious stimulus to another person with the intent of harming that person, in the expectation that the aversive stimulus will reach its destination, and without the consent of the victim. In humans, aggression in human beings takes one of two general forms: (a) angry, or affective; and (b) instrumental. Numerous explanations for affective aggression have been formulated. One, based on an evolutionary and biological viewpoint, is that humans share with other animals certain genetically determined tendencies towards aggressive behaviour. Another, based on a behaviourist position, emphasizes the acquisition of aggression through experience, conditioning and learning. The two views are not mutually exclusive. Some aggressive behaviours in humans have biological origins, just as some are learned through observation of other people. Furthermore, aggressive behaviour, once it is part of a person’s repertoire, is shaped and developed through learning processes. Both biological inheritance
and learned tendencies serve as predisposing background conditions for aggression, which is a response to provoking conditions in the person’s environment.

**SOCIAL ANXIETY**

Social anxiety is the fear of social situations and the interaction with other people that can automatically bring on feelings of self-consciousness, judgment, evaluation, and inferiority. It is anxiety (emotional discomfort, fear, apprehension, or worry) about social situations, interactions with others, and being evaluated or scrutinized by other people. Put another way, social anxiety is the fear and anxiety of being judged and evaluated negatively by other people, leading to feelings of inadequacy, embarrassment, humiliation, and depression. If a person usually becomes anxious in social situations, but seems fine when they are alone, then "social anxiety" may be the problem.

This type of anxiety may be termed as the fear of attending social situations, interaction with others and being evaluated or scrutinized by other people. In other words, social anxiety involves intense feeling of fear in social situations and especially situations that are unfamiliar or in which he/she will be watched or evaluated by others. Some of the common symptoms of social anxiety are escaping from the group situations such as marriages, peer groups, continuously thinking that everyone is watching him/her, getting afraid to talk to the strangers, becoming too much self-conscious. People suffering from social anxiety hate to work within the groups because of lack of confidence in talking or because of lack of confidence in talking or working with others. Such individual has intense fear of social situations and especially situations that are unfamiliar to them. The persons suffering from this disorder tend to remain alone most of the time. Such type of fear and anxiety
leads to the feelings of inadequacy, embarrassment, humiliation and in the most severe cases, depression. The common types of social anxiety are specific and generalized social anxieties. A specific social anxiety is the fear of speaking in front of groups only, whereas, people suffering from generalized social anxiety are anxious, nervous and uncomfortable in almost all social situations.

**ACADEMIC ANXIETY**

The era of competition makes students more anxious and the eagerness of whether they can do well in their academic part or perform well in academic activities may adversely affect the mental health of students. It is the painful uneasiness of mind while doing or focusing on academic activities in school or at home. It is a kind of state anxiety which relates to the impending danger from the environment of the academic institutions including teaching certain subjects like mathematics, science, English etc. Academic anxiety afflicts students during school-related situations. If academic anxiety isn’t properly addressed, it can have many serious and lasting consequences, such as causing a student to procrastinate, perform poorly on school work, fail in classes and withdraw from socializing with peers or pursuing activities that interest him. Academic anxiety is, to a certain extent, unavoidable, necessary, and even productive, since it motivates to spend time for academic tasks. Academic anxiety has four components – worry, emotionality, task-generated interference, and study skills deficits. It’s stress or pressure that you experience based upon school related functions, such as presenting in front of a class. The method of reducing your anxiety depends upon which of these you are experiencing.
**SELF – CONCEPT**

The self is the core of the personality which gives meaning and coherence of personality. Self is not directly observable but it structure and content inferred from person’s behaviours, attitudes and feelings. Man’s self is the sum total of all that he can call his. The self includes his body, psychological process, cloths, belongings, family, friends, and colleagues and so on. Self concept means those perceptions beliefs, attitudes and feelings toward our selves. Self-concept refers to self-evaluation or self perception, and it represents the sum of an individual’s beliefs about his or her own attributes. Self concept reflects how an adolescent evaluates himself or herself in *domains* (or areas) in which he or she considers success important. An adolescent can have a positive self-concept in some domains and a negative self-concept in others. Research also suggests that each individual has a *global* (or overall) self concept that reflects how the individual evaluates his or her self-worth as a whole.

*Allport (1960)* self-concept is something or which we are immediately aware. We think of it as the warm central private region of our life.

Self-concept is a multi-dimensional construct that refers to an individual’s perception of "self" in relation to any number of characteristics, such as academics (and non academics), gender roles and sexuality, racial identity, and many others. Self-concept can be defined as “the view one has of him/herself and his/her abilities.” Self-concept is demonstrated in a variety of different ways. As an educator it is up to you to observe each child on a continuing basis to note his/her degree of self-concept. Self-concept is frequently positively correlated with academic performance, but it appears to be a *consequence* rather than a *cause* of high achievement (*Baumeister et al., 2003*). This suggests that increasing students’ academic skills is a more effective means to
boost their self-concept than vice versa. Another popular assumption is that aggressive students have low self-concept and use aggression as a means of raising it. Substantial research contradicts this assumption, showing that many aggressive students express adequate, if not inflated, self-concept (Baumeister et al., 2003).

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Long, Rice and Stermbach (1972) have proposed that human emotions in general and anxiety in particular involve responses in 3 main behavioural systems.

1. Motor behaviour e.g. increased or decreased gesturing, change in posture, trembling etc.
2. Linguistic behaviour e.g. fear, dread panic and associated complaints of worry, obsession, inability to concentrate, insecurity etc.
3. Psychological state e.g. increased sympathetic nervous system activity with resultant increase in heartbeat, respiration, sweat, gland activity etc. There was a relationship revealed between human emotions, anxiety and behavioural system.

Gupta (1978) concluded that groups belonging to low economic status have low achievement and correlation between anxiety and academic motivation was found to be positive.

Sharma (1978) conducted a comparative study of self-concept of high and low achievement and intelligence groups of students of class tenth in urban schools of Bareilly. The study was conducted on a sample of 1,427 students (690 male and 737 female) of class X whose age ranged from 14 to 18 years. The findings of the study were: (i) Intelligence showed strongest relationship with achievement but the relationship between intelligence and self-concept was not significant in extreme
intelligence and self-concept was not significant in extreme intelligence groups.

**Jaiswal (1980)** studied anxiety, frustration and adjustment pattern of girls students. Five hundred girl students (464 of literary group and 36 of science group) were selected by the stratified random sampling technique from ten institutions of five districts of Eastern U.P. Mean, standard deviation, percentile, correlation and critical ratio were used as statistical technique. Findings of the study were: (i) The educational achievement of low anxiety group of students was highest. (ii) There was no significant relationship between frustration level and educational achievement.

**Patel (1983)** conducted a study on the topic “anxiety among secondary school students of Sabarkantha district of Gujarat.” Findings of the study were:
1. The girls of class VIII, IX and X did not differ significantly with regard to anxiety.
2. The rural boys of class VIII had high anxiety level as compared to the anxiety level of urban boys of class VII.

**Silva, A. Da (1984-85)** found that females showed higher level of social anxiety than the males. He suggested that homogeneous grouping should be done in order to reduce social anxiety.

**Mehrotra (1986)** conducted a study on the topic ‘relationship between intelligence, socio-economic status, anxiety, personality adjustment and academic achievement of high school students.’ The findings of the study were:
1. Both for boys and girls, there was an inverse relationship between level of anxiety and academic achievement.
2. In general, the girls had a comparatively higher level of anxiety than the boys.

**Sharma and Vijayalaxmi (1990)** found that female students experience higher level of academic anxiety than to males irrespective of
cultural background. The study involved students from Asian cultures. The conclusion drawn from these findings was that a major causal factor involved in the gender-related differences in academic anxiety among students was greater role expectation conflict among females than among males.

Namrata (1992) studied the relationship of personality traits, situational stress and anxiety factors to students’ achievement. The finding of the study was that students having lower level of anxiety tended to score higher in high school examinations.

An important minority of young men and women and further supports the original findings of Stets and Straus (1992) obtained from the 1985 US National Family Violence Survey. These findings clearly run counter to the common assertion that female aggression in intimate relationships is uncommon and inconsequential.

Eubank, M. (1993) studied the relationship between academic anxiety, academic achievement and age among associate degree nursing students. The findings of this study revealed that as the academic anxiety increased, academic achievement of the students significantly decreased. No significant relationship between age and academic anxiety in the students was found.

With reference to Indian culture Pramod (1996) concluded that boys manifest more future orientations than girls, therefore boys have more academic anxiety.

Richards. A., Thomas (1999) found that social anxiety plays very important role in the overall development of the individuals. He suggested that social anxiety creates hindrance in the personality development of the individuals.

Russell and Owens (1999) reported evidence that boys and girl occupied “separate spheres”, these authors noted that cross-gender interactions might provide a parallel social context in which children learnt somewhat different behaviour patterns. In their study, Russell and
Owens (1999) found that in the cross-sex context, boys and girls tended to use a little more of the style of aggression typical of the other sex (that is, when compared with within-sex forms of aggression, girls tended to use a little more overt aggression to boys and boys tended to use a little more indirect or social forms of aggression toward girls).

Singh (2003) conducted a study on the topic of “a study of anxiety among medical post-graduate students in relation to sex, intelligence and socio-economic status.” He found;

1. Significant differences in anxiety of post-graduate medical students in relation to independent impact of sex.
2. No significant difference in anxiety of post-graduate medicos in relation to independent impact of intelligence.
3. Interaction of sex and intelligence on students’ anxiety was not found significant.

Ojha (2005) revealed that 25% boys have extremely high anxiety whereas only 6.7% girls have high academic anxiety.

Dr. Manoj C., Shastri (2010) conducted a study on the topic, “a study of the anxiety of the secondary school students of the Ahmadabad city”. In this study, he found that;

1. There is no significant effect of the sex on their anxiety level.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female students (having 13 years age) on anxiety.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female students (having 14 years age) on anxiety.
4. There is no significant difference between the 1st birth order male and female students on anxiety.
5. There is no significant difference between the 2nd birth order male and female students on anxiety.
6. There is no significant difference between the students with 1st and 2nd birth order on anxiety.
Parvathamma and Sharamma (2010) conducted a study entitled, ‘anxiety level and level of self-confidence and their relation with academic achievement’.

The findings of the study were;
1. There was a significant correlation between anxiety and academic achievement.
2. There was a significant difference between anxiety level of boys and girls.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present time is the time of harsh and cut throat competition in every sphere of life. If one has to excel or succeed in his career, he/she has to overcome a number of barriers which are of both external as well as internal in nature. The external barriers are related to the environment in which the individual resides and the facilities he enjoys over there. The internal barriers to one’s success are related to the personality traits of that individual. These personality traits or characteristics are very much essential for getting success. Some of the major personality characteristics that can hamper or prove to be detrimental in one’s success include aggression and anxiety level. If any individual has a higher aggression or anxiety above the threshold level then his performance will definitely be hampered.

The stage of adolescent is popularly known as the stage of stress and strain. On the one extreme, there is extreme pressure of parents and society on the adolescents to follow social norms and ethics. And, on the other extreme, the adolescent has to face pressure from his/her peer group. This result in great confusion and stress among the adolescents which ultimately results in creating aggression and anxiety among them. Not only this, such stress and strain also adversely affect their self concept. So, it was thought worthwhile by the investigator to study the level of aggression, social anxiety among the adolescents. Further, an
attempt will be made by the researcher to study the impact of self-concept on aggression, social anxiety and academic anxiety among the adolescents.

The results of the present study will help in devising ways and means of reducing aggression and anxiety among the adolescents so that they can contribute optimally for social as well as national development. This will also assist in refining their certain personality traits like academic anxiety that will finally lead to higher academic performance.

On the basis of the results of the present study, significant modifications and changes can be undertaken by the concerned authorities with regard to the curriculum content and its transactional process.

The review of the related studies revealed that a very few investigations have been undertaken by the previous researchers to investigate the impact of self-concept, gender and streams of study on aggression, social anxiety and academic anxiety of the adolescents.

Hence, the researcher decided to undertake present research problem which may be stated as under:
Aggression, Social and Academic Anxiety among Adolescents in relation to their Self-Concept, Gender and Streams of Study

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study and compare aggression level of adolescents with respect to their;
   (a) Self-concept
   (b) Gender
   (c) Streams of study

2. To study interaction effects of;
   (a) Self-concept and gender
   (b) Self-concept and streams of study
   (c) Gender and streams of study
   (d) Self-concept, gender and streams of study on aggression level of adolescents.

3. To study and compare social anxiety of adolescents with respect to their;
   (a) Self-concept
   (b) Gender
   (c) Streams of study

4. To study interaction effects of;
   (a) Self-concept and gender
   (b) Self-concept and streams of study
   (c) Gender and streams of study
   (d) Self-concept, gender and streams of study on social anxiety of adolescents.

5. To study and compare academic anxiety of adolescents with respect to their;
(a) Self-Concept
(b) Gender
(c) Streams of study

6. To study interaction effects of;
   (a) Self-concept and gender
   (b) Self-concept and streams of study
   (c) Gender and streams of study
   (d) Self-concept, gender and streams of study

on academic anxiety of adolescents.

**HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

1. Adolescents do not differ significantly in their aggression with respect to;

   (a) Self-concept
   (b) Gender
   (c) Streams of study

2. There exists no significant interaction between;

   (a) Self-concept and gender
   (b) Self-concept and streams of study
   (c) Gender and streams of study
   (d) Self-concept, gender and streams of study

With respect to aggression among adolescents.

3. Adolescents do not differ significantly in their social anxiety with respect to;

   (a) Self-Concept
   (b) Gender
   (c) Streams of study
4. There exists no significant interaction between;

(a) Self-concept and gender
(b) Self-concept and streams of study
(c) Gender and streams of study
(d) Self-concept, gender and streams of study

With respect to social anxiety among adolescents.

5. Adolescents do not differ significantly in their academic anxiety with respect to;

(a) Self-Concept
(b) Gender
(c) Streams of study

6. There exists no significant interaction between;

(a) Self-concept and gender
(b) Self-concept and streams of study
(c) Gender and streams of study
(d) Self-concept, gender and streams of study

With respect to social anxiety among adolescents.

**DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

1. The study will be delimited to 11th class students only who will be considered as adolescents.

2. The study will be restricted to only four districts of Himachal Pradesh i.e. Kangra, Chamba, Una and Shimla.

3. The study will be confined to the adolescents studying in the government schools located in the state of Himachal Pradesh.
4. The study will be delimited to following independent and dependent variables:

**Independent Variables:**

Self-Concept, Gender and streams of study.

**Dependent Variables:**

Aggression, Social Anxiety and Academic Anxiety.

**OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED**

**Aggression:** It refers to feelings of anger or antipathy resulting in hostile or violent behaviour; readiness to attack or confront; the action of attacking without provocation; forcefulness. It will be measured with the help of aggression scale by Bhardwaj (2007).

**Social Anxiety:** Social anxiety is the fear of social situations and the interaction with other people that can automatically bring on feelings of self-consciousness, judgment, evaluation, and inferiority. It will be measured with the help of self-developed research tool.

**Academic Anxiety:** It is stress or pressure that you experience based upon school related functions, such as presenting in front of a class. It will be measured with the help of Academic Anxiety Scale for children by Singh & Sen Gupta (2008).

**Adolescents:** These refer to students studying in 11th class of Govt schools located in the state of H.P.

**Self –Concept:** The self concept is how we think about and evaluate ourselves. To be aware of oneself is to have a concept of oneself. The term self-concept is a general term used to refer to how someone thinks about or perceives themselves. It will be measured with the help of self-concept questionnaire by Saraswat (1998).
Streams of Study: The streams of study refer to the subjects of studies generally taken by the students studying in 11\textsuperscript{th} class. These streams are Science Stream (medical and non-medical), Arts stream, and commerce stream.

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology involves the systematic procedures by which a Researcher starts from the initial identification of the problem to its final conclusion. The role of methodology is to carry on the research work in a scientific and valid manner; the method of research provides the tools and techniques by which the research problem is attacked. Methodology consists of procedures and techniques for conducting a study. Research procedures are of little significance until and unless they are not used properly. Research methodology involves such general activities as identifying problems, deciding about objectives, formulating hypothesis, review of literature, procedure for testing hypothesis, measurement, data collection, and analysis of data, interpreting results and drawing conclusion. It consists of all general and specific activities of research. Mastery of research methodology invariably enhances understanding of the research activities. Thus; it seems that research design and methodology have the same meaning i.e., mapping strategy of any research.

RESEARCH METHOD TO BE USED

To conduct the present study, the ‘survey’ technique under the descriptive method of research will be used by the researcher. Descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena. They collect
and provide the type of information of what exist with respect to variables or conditions in a given situation.

**SAMPLING**

Sampling is the process by which a relatively small number of individuals, objects or events is selected and analyzed in order to find out something about the entire population from which it was selected. It is an indispensable technique of behavioural research. The research work cannot be undertaken without the use of sampling. The study of total population is not possible and it is also impracticable. The concept of sampling has been introduced with a view of making the research findings economical, accurate and precise. If we intend to evaluate the population by inferences drawn from sample, it is essential that the sample should be the true representative of the population.

In the present study, multistage sampling technique in combination with stratified random sampling technique will be adopted. At the first stage four districts i.e. Kangra, Chamba, Una and Shimla will be selected on the basis of convenience to the researcher. At the second stage, Govt. Sen. Sec. Schools will be sampled from the selected districts by following random sampling procedure. At the third and last stage, the students of 11th class will be selected through systematic random sampling technique. Overall, a sample of about 1500 students will be selected for conducting the present investigation.

**RESEARCH TOOLS TO BE USED**

1. Aggression Scale by Bhardwaj (2007).
RESEARCH TOOL TO BE DEVELOPED

1. Social Anxiety Scale will be developed and standardized by the investigator himself.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES TO BE EMPLOYED

To study the main effects and double as well as triple interaction effects of independent variables i.e. self-concept, gender and streams of study, the statistical technique of Analysis of Variance will be applied. Wherever F value will came out to be significant, the ‘t’ test will be applied to test the significance of difference between mean scores on dependent variables.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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