

INSTITUTIONAL INFLUENCE ON BEHAVIOURAL DISORDERS IN EARLY ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

Early adolescence a period of transition between childhood and late adolescence, is where one experiences dramatic changes physically, and psychologically. These transitions cause cognitive, emotional, and social changes. The developmental changes that occur during this period cause varying degrees of disturbance in them. The period of transition leaves its mark on the individual's behaviour, as they feel unsure of themselves and insecure in their status. This intrudes them to be aggressive, self conscious and withdrawn. When an individual's behaviour is unusual for a particular age, this leads to poor adjustment, and is termed as behavioural problems. Schools play a significant role in the early adolescents' development because of the environment they provide. Though researches have been carried out focusing school environment of early adolescents, the investigators were interested to find if institutional variables can be significant contributors to the behavioral disorders exhibited by early adolescents. The study was designed to investigate the impact of institutional variables on behavioral disorders in early adolescents, studying in Standard IX. Random Sampling Technique was done on the basis of nature of the school, locality of school, type of school and medium of instruction to draw the sample size of 1275. Self constructed tool on Behavioral Disorders was used. Collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as t-test, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). The statistical results revealed that institutional variables significantly contributed to the behavioural problems in early adolescents. There should be some guidance service in each school, in order to provide some strategies for managing the behavioral problems among early teens as well as reducing the problem at this stage.

Keywords: Behavioural Disorders, Early Adolescents, Institutional Variables

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is one of the most fascinating periods of all stages of human development. Teenage or adolescence generally extends from 12 to 19 years of age and can be broadly categorized into three stages which are early adolescence aged between 12 and 14, middle adolescence between 14 and 17 and late adolescence between 17 and 19. With one foot in childhood and the other in adolescence, the early adolescents undergo changes that can be scary and confusing. So many changes occur within a short time. These changes open the door for both positive and negative consequences. This phase of transition from being a child to an adult offers opportunities for growth not only in physical dimensions but also in cognitive and social competence, autonomy, self esteem and intimacy (Papalia et al., 2004). The needs

of early adolescents are dynamic and in frustration they may lead to behavioural problems. Hall & Elison (2003) define behavioural problems as 'behavioural or distressed emotions, which are common and normal in children of some stage of development, but become abnormal by virtue of their frequency or severity of their inappropriateness for a particular child's age compared to the majority of ordinary children' (Department of Health & Children, 2006). The behavioural difficulties include inability to learn, helplessness to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships, be self injurious, aggressive, irritable and socially withdrawn.

Schools are the first formal place outside the family where a child shows how his/her abilities related to achievement and adjustment. Schools teach the children to think in different ways; it can influence the child's moral value

orientation (Minchen & Shapiro, 1983); and it has a major influence on the ways in which children organize their thoughts and cognitions. The concerns of the school go far beyond knowledge enhancement. It is equally concerned with disciplining the child, providing behavioral inputs and fulfilling various social needs such as the need for achievement, the need for affiliation and the need for power (Jayalekshmi & Raja, 2011). For early adolescents school is a central organizing experience in most adolescents' lives. It offers opportunities to learn information, master new skills, and sharpen old ones, to participate in sports, and arts, to explore vocational choices and to be with friends. It widens intellectual and social horizons (Papalia et al, 2005). School exerts its influence not independently, but in interaction with other salient agencies such as the family and the peer group. Institutional variables like locality of the school, type of management and unisex or co-education nature of the school significantly contribute to behavioural problems in early adolescents. Early adolescent boys and those studying in unisex- boy's schools exhibit more behavioural and emotional problems (Rao & Raju, 2012).

1. Objectives

The major objectives of the study is to find out the significant difference, if any, in the behavioural disorders of early adolescents with regard to institutional variables.

The institutional variables include nature of the school, type of the school, locality of the school and medium of instruction.

2. Population and Sample

The population of this study included Standard IX students in the Southernmost three districts of Tamilnadu. The sample taken was 1275 IX Standard students aged 13-14, selected by stratified random sampling technique. With the knowledge of the characteristics of the population, the investigators divided the population into strata in such a manner that the differences between the strata are as large as possible, but within the strata as homogenous as possible. The various stratification factors selected were nature of the school, locality of school, type of school and medium of instruction.

3. Methodology

The tool used to measure behavioral disorders in early adolescents aged 13-14 was developed by the investigators. Though early adolescence extends from 11-14, the behavioral problems are prominent during 13-14 (Caissy, 2005). Hence the investigators targeted early adolescents aged 13-14. The investigators consulted psychology books, 'Diagnostic Statistics Manual IV' (2000) and 'Underwood report' (Heward, 2006) for reference in constructing the tool. The characteristics of early adolescents namely maladjustment, emotional disturbance and behavioral disorders were recorded. The tool comprised four dimensions namely conduct disorders, attention immaturity problems, anxiety withdrawal disorders and motor excess. The tool had 64 items on a five point rating scale. Content and concurrent validity of the tool were ascertained and the reliability was established using split half and test-retest method, and found to be 0.81 and 0.88 respectively.

Statistical techniques such as t-test, one way ANOVA were used to analyze the scores. Post-hoc test was applied to find out the direction and degree of difference. For testing the hypotheses, the level of significance was set at 0.01 and 0.05.

4. Results

The results of Tables 1 and 2 reveal that behavioral disorders in early adolescents had significant difference with regard to medium of instruction and locality of school as the p value is significant at 1% level.

Table 3 presents the significant difference with regard to

Locality of school	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P value
Urban	610	75.26	11.47		
Rural	665	79.08	8.89	6.673	0.000**

** Significant at 1% level

Table 1. Significance of difference in the behavioural disorders of early adolescents with regard to locality of school

Medium of instruction	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	P value
Tamil	793	78.47	9.67		
English	482	75.25	11.16	5.443	0.000**

** Significant at 1% level

Table 2. Significance of difference in the behavioural disorders of early adolescents with regard to medium of instruction

nature of the school as the p-value was found to be 0.00. 'Scheffe Test' was applied as a post hoc test to find which of the paired mean scores differ significantly. Scheffe post hoc comparison in Table 4 shows that early adolescents in girls' schools revealed less behavioral problems than early adolescents in coeducation and boys' schools.

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It can be observed from Table 5 that there is significant difference in the behavioral disorders of early adolescents with regard to type of school. Since the p-value is significant at 1% level, Scheffe test is used as post-hoc test to find the significant difference between paired means. Scheffe post hoc comparison in Table 6 showed that early adolescents in matriculation schools revealed more behavioral problems than early adolescents in government and aided schools.

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Scheffe posthoc comparison showed that early adolescents in matriculation schools revealed more behavioral problems than early adolescents in government and aided schools.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of square of variance	F -value	P value
Between	13695.15	2	6847.57	70.47	0.000**
Within	123596.5	1272	97.17		

** Significant at 1 %

Table 3. Significance of difference in the behavioural disorders of early adolescents with regard to nature of school

Mean value of behavioural disorders			M.D	Std. Error	P value
Co-education	Unisex-boys	Unisex-girls			
75.29	75.04	---	0.25	0.666	0.930
---	75.04	82.45	7.41	0.730	0.000**
75.29	---	82.45	7.16	0.668	0.000*

** Significant at 1 % level

Table 4. Scheffe test for difference in behavioural disorders of early adolescents with regard to nature of school

5. Interpretation and Discussion

The results of this study carried out by the investigators disclose that institutional variables like medium of instruction, type of school, nature of school and locality of school has much to contribute to the behavior development in early adolescents. Institutional variables have a strong influence on the way of development and learning. In the lives of early adolescents in urban schools, as a result of modernization, infiltration of digital devices is more and its impact often comes out as behavioural disorders. Early adolescents in English medium schools are economically in a better position when compared to early adolescents in Tamil medium schools. English medium have better economic status when compared to their counter parts and are provided with all possible comforts. The pampering of parents and access to media usage, less restrictions in school campus are supposed to be inducers of behavioural problems in early adolescents of English medium schools. Unmonitored activities of early adolescents from wealthy families often end up with behavioural problems. Restrictions, rules and regulations imposed by the school authorities on girls are more than those imposed in boys. The early adolescents of unisex-girls schools are deprived of opportunities to socialize with opposite gender and reveal less behavioural problems. A study (Bierman ,2010) revealed that increased adult monitoring decreased the bullying behaviour in early adolescent girls. Coddling early adolescents by parents and undue pressure for academic achievement on early adolescents by parents and teachers, lack of equipping

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean of square of variance	F -value	P value
Between	2125.98	2	1062.99	10.00	0.000**
Within	135165.68	1272	106.26		

** Significant at 1 % level

Table 5. Significance of difference in the behavioural disorders of early adolescents with regard to type of school

Mean value of behavioural disorders			M.D	Std. Error	P value
Matriculation	Government	Aided			
74.07	77.84	---	3.765	0.886	0.000**
---	77.84	77.72	3.644	0.886	0.981
74.07	---	77.72	0.121	0.623	0.000**

** Significant at 1 % level

Table 6. Scheffe test for difference in behavioural disorders of early adolescents with regard to type of school

early adolescents with social problem solving skills is soaring in matriculation schools and it results as behavioural problems in early adolescents. This finding goes well with the result of Woolley et al. (2009) revealing that the parental and teacher monitoring of educational issues were associated with early adolescents' school behaviour.

6. Recommendations

Value education in schools should be revamped to address real issues that students contend with schools. In addition to academic in-service programs, education departments should organize compulsory programs for teachers in psychological aspects of adolescents. In curriculum there should be provision for student counseling which covers educational, vocational and personal issues. Educators should take into account the long term changes needed to create a healthy school environment for all members of the learning community. Besides general meetings, school should provide time to teachers to have individual meetings with parents, whose early adolescents are with behavioural disorders. There should be some guidance service in each school, in order to provide some strategies for managing the behavioural problems among early teens as well as reducing the problem at this stage (Jayalekshmi, Raja, 2010).

Conclusion

Major physical and cognitive changes during early adolescence are accompanied by social and emotional development. As a matter of these developments, early adolescents experience huge swings in mood and turbulent outburst of emotion. They exhibit aggression, inattentive behaviour, withdrawal symptoms and antisocial behaviour. The journey through this period is easier when teachers learn about their need and support early adolescents. At present due to the complexity of modern society, schools are gradually losing their importance in the behavioural development of early adolescents. Less importance given by the schools in identifying early adolescents with behavioural problems is generating considerable discussion nowadays. In Indian context, the school personnel provide better care to

elementary and higher secondary level when compared to middle and high school levels (aged 11- 15). Students of this age usually lack safe environment in school both physically and psychologically. They are often denied to express their thoughts and feelings to their teachers and remain often confused and frustrated. In this era, as early adolescents are digitally native, teachers have to monitor and guide them in all aspects and inculcate moral values to be socially acceptable.

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