

Asian Resonance

Differentiating Youth Problems across Gender, Government and Private Schools



Chandra Shekhar
Sr. Assistant Professor,
Deptt. of Psychology,
University of Jammu,
Jammu -Tawi.



Rajinder Kumar
Junior Research Fellow,
Deptt. of Psychology,
University of Jammu,
Jammu -Tawi.

Abstract

Youth is an important asset for any nation but at the same time adolescence is a period of stress and strain so the problems experienced by youth is a major concern for general line as well as educational psychologists. Present study is an attempt to compare youth problems between government and private school students. Youth Problem Inventory (Verma, 2004) consisting of 80 statements belonging to four dimensions/areas viz. family problems, school/college problems, social problems, personal problems and over sensitivity, is used to collect data from a sample of 80 students (40 males & 40 females) of higher secondary schools. With the help of t-test statistically significant difference is found between the means of government and private school samples. When dimension wise comparisons were made for the same samples only two dimensions discriminated significantly namely, Family problems and Social problems.

Keywords Education, Youth Problem, Adolescence.

Introduction

Youth is a human treasure and a largest possible resource of any nation. The future of any nation depends on the quality of its youth which is characterized by innumerable and unique problems. Youth age is very active and unstable as disturbed. It includes both experimentation with outer world and adjustment with psychophysical changes through which they pass through. "Youth is not only a time of life; it is also a state of mind and a matter of will" (Hangal & Aminabhavi, 2007). "Adolescence is the period through which a growing person makes transition from childhood to maturity" (Sharma, 1992; p. 239). Many researchers called it a period of stress and strain and changes at this age include change in height, weight & appearance. Production of sex hormones triggers sexual desire, arousal and urge in adolescents. Psychosocial changes include formation of new identity, self concept, and self regulation, need to find a place in society, and expectations, Mabey & Sorensen (1995) Up to 15 percent of individuals under the age of 18 years experience emotional problems (Firdous, Altaf, Paul, Kumar & Shah, 2011). In some cases they face some problems in school and show decreased interest in studies, negative attitude, discipline problems, and drop in performance (Rice & Myer, 1994). Questions arise that who will find time to solve their problems. Family and society are too busy to spend time and energy for them and teachers of government managed or aided schools/colleges are deeply absorbed with their organizational problems and academic activities. Stromswold and Wren (1948) found freshly admitted students face number of new adjustment problems for which they are usually uninterrupted (Rao & Harshitha, 2004: p. 9). Group adjustments as well as socio-personal adjustments were found to be factors responsible for explaining total variance in the case of under-achievers (Rao, 1995: p. 80).

Adolescence is derived from the Latin word "adolescere", which means to grow, or to grow to maturity. Adolescence is a developmental period characterized by physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, and contextual changes (Morris & Steinberg, 2001). This is a time of profound changes for individuals as it involves difficult transformations of children to adulthood (Newman & Newman, 1997; Neilsen, 1996).

Commonly Experienced Problems of Youth

There may be practically uncountable problems that emerge in the period of adolescence. For the better comprehension of these problems experts usually categorize them as:

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Family Problems

Parents usually report that their children become more rebellious less responsive, and less involved in the life of the family after 13 or 14 year of age. Adolescents who have a good relationship with their parents are less likely to engage in various risk behaviors, such as smoking, drinking, fighting, and/or unprotected sexual intercourse. In addition, parents influence the education of adolescence. A study conducted by Blondal Adalbjarnardottir (2009) showed that adolescents at the age of 14 who identify their parents as authoritative figures are more likely to complete secondary education by the age of 22 (Gorard & See, 2013: pp. 153).

Peer Group Related Problems

The preschool years form the basis for later relational experiences, as social skills and peer relations get more and more important in the school years (Hay, Payne, & Chadwick, 2004). Peer interactions during early and middle childhood tend to be gender segregated (Zahn-Waxler, Crick, Shirliff & Wood, 2006). Preschool girls establish dyadic and emotionally oriented relationships, while boys in general seem to concentrate on instrumentality and physical dominance in social interactions at this age (Crick & Zahn-Waxler, 2003). Relational difficulties that occurred in friendships have been associated more strongly with internalizing problems for girls than for boys (Rose, 2002; Crick & Zahn-Waxler, 2003; Crick & Nelson, 2002).

Social Problems

Social scientists and psychologists believe that the period is characterized by "storm and stress". They claim that emotional stress; psychological strains are inherent components of adolescence (Berger, 1965, p. 358. Shouldering responsibility sometime may give way to over responsibility among adolescents that may become one of the reasons for conflicts with parents. One way to look at adolescents is that there are very few places or social situations where adolescents feel that they belong and where they believe they are appreciated are valued (Pearl, Grant & Wenk, 1978). He is able to live with his fellowmen without undue stresses, strains and conflicts (Engle & Snellgrove, 1969, p. 320). The poorly adjusted adolescent is an unhappy individual. He plays the role of a social isolate and misses the fun his contemporaries are having (Hurlock, 1955, p. 498).

School/College Problems

In almost any area of life often manifest as school problems. Particular school problems include fear of going to school, truancy, dropping out, and academic under achievement. Sometimes inappropriate academic placements especially of those adolescents who are having learning disability or mild mental retardation also create lot of problems. Adolescents today, confront maximum number of problems in schools. Yet they have to develop a competitive spirit thus developing achievement motivation (Nagarathanamma & Thirumala Rao, 2007).

Two major factors those are central to the orchestration or otherwise of these problems of adolescence are: *Peer group* pressure and the *Media*. Peer groups provide an important social structure for most adolescents (Brown, Clasen & Eicher, 1986). Adolescent peer groups vary in size and interest, and adolescents often belong to more than one group at a time. Peer groups may consist of a few close friends of the same sex or a large group of both the sexes. Such groups can be sources of ready companionship, adventure, and standards against which adolescents compare them. As a result, a peer group can have a powerful effect. Its influence on adolescents is a worldwide phenomenon (Newman & Newman, 1982).

Objectives

To assess the gender differences in youth problems among the students of senior secondary schools.

To assess the differences in youth problems between the senior secondary students of government and private schools.

Hypotheses

There will be no significant gender differences in youth problems among the students of senior secondary schools.

There will be no significant youth problem differences between the senior secondary students of government and private schools.

Sample

For present study we selected a total sample of 80 students of 11th and 12th class from both Government and Private Schools. Among these 80 students 40 are males and 40 females. Also, 40 students are taken from Government and 40 from Private Schools. All of these students fall in the age group of 17 to 20 years.

Variables

Independent Variables

1. Gender
2. Institutionalization (Govt./Pvt. Schooling)

Dependent Variable

Youth Problem scores of students

Tool

Youth Problems Inventory (Y.P.I)

The Y.P.I is a self administering inventory, developed by M. Verma (2004) for the students of 16 to 20 years of age. The inventory contains 80 statements belonging to four areas and a number of sub-areas under each main area. The four main areas are Family Problems, School/College Problems, Social Problems and personal problems/over sensitivity. The reliability coefficient of Y.P.I. was found to be 0.80. After standardizing the test with other reliable test the validity of Y.P.I. came out to be about 0.68.

Statistical Analysis

Mean, standard deviation and t-test of significance are used to analyze the collected data.

Results and Discussion

There is very large difference between the mean scores of youth problems obtained by male and

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female but when we calculated t-ratio for the aforesaid two means we found it 0.481 which is less than 1.96 as shown in table-1. So we can easily conclude that there is no statistically significant difference in the means of male and female students. So our first null hypothesis of no difference in youth problems across gender is supported. But we cannot ignore the big difference in the means of two samples. We will be in the better position if we have managed all the resources to choose the larger samples for the study.

Table-1

Following Table Showing Mean Scores, Standard Deviations, and T-Ratio of Male and Female Samples.

S. No.	Samples	Class	N	Mean	S.D.	T-Ratio
1.	Male	Both 11 th & 12 th Class	40	82.300	20.9862	0.481
2.	Female	Both 11 th & 12 th Class	40	69.225	17.21283	

Table-2 shows that mean calculated for government school sample is 65.63 whereas mean calculated for private school sample it is 85.90 which shows the difference of 20.27. Calculated t-ratio for these two means is 2.11 which is greater than 1.96. It shows that difference of 20.27 is significant at 0.05 level of significance. From table-2 it is quite evident that there are statistically significant differences between the means of government and private school samples. At this we point we are not in a position to make comment on the reasons behind these differences but one thing is obvious that our null hypothesis of no difference will be rejected at 0.05 level of significance in the favor that there is statistically significant differences in youth problems faced by government and private school students of senior secondary classes. These differences are not proved significant at 0.01 statistical level of significance as the calculated t-ratio is smaller than 2.58. Larger samples might have given better results.

Table-2

Following Table Showing the Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and t-ratio for Government and Private School Sample.

S. No.	Samples	Mean	S. D.	t-Ratio
1.	Government	65.63	20.41	2.110*
2.	Private	85.90	14.04	

Dimension Wise Comparison of Government and Private School Samples

We also tried to compare government and private school samples on all the four the dimensions of problems viz. *family, school, social and personal problems*. Results are discussed in the following table-3.

Table-3

Following Table Showing Dimension Wise Comparisons of Government and Private School Samples and Respective T-Ratio.

Dimensions	Samples	Mean	SD	Variance	t-ratio
A (Family)	GOVT.	22.85	9.124636	83.258	1.844
	PVT.	31.13	6.850744	46.932	
B (School)	GOVT.	12.98	7.234134	52.332	0.004
	PVT.	17.38	6.121369	37.471	
C (Social)	GOVT.	03.90	1.850849	3.4256	6.893
	PVT.	10.70	9.557384	91.343	
D (Personal)	GOVT.	07.30	6.254434	39.117	0.550
	PVT.	26.70	5.67586	32.215	

Further in table-3 we can see clearly that there are big differences in the means of both samples in case of dimension A (Family), C (Social) and dimension D (Personal). However, in spite of large differences we cannot obtain any statistical significance except the dimension C. In case of C we found the difference is statistically significant at both the levels that is alpha and beta level. It is because the calculated t-ratio is 6.893 which is largely greater than 2.58 (t-ratio for 0.01 level of significance). Hence in this case we have to reject null hypothesis of no difference. Also we can see the means obtained by private school samples are larger than that of government samples so we can have an idea that students of private schools are facing more social problems than the government school students. In a study by Walker, Cross, Heyman, Ruch Ross, Benson & Tuthill (1982) significant differences between the two socioeconomic groups were found for responses about health information, health concerns and problems, and health status and service utilization. Sex-related issues were of greater concern to the private school youth and they desired more help with depression-sadness and birth control.

Conclusions

Following conclusions can be drawn from the present study:

1. There is no statistically significant gender difference in the youth problems experienced by the students of 11th and 12th class i.e. senior secondary students.
2. Even when we compared the variable across the two classes i.e. 11th and 12th class, we again found no significant difference.
3. We also made comparison of each dimension across the gender and found same results.
4. But in case of comparison between government and private school samples we found statistically significant differences. In order to get more into depth we also made dimension wise comparisons and found that dimension C (Social) shows maximum differences of significance.

Limitations

Following are the few limitations of the present study:

1. Samples selected were small and it is felt during the analysis that sample should be larger than we taken for such comparisons.

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- We included only State Government and Private school students and not the schools run by Central Government like Kendriya Vidyalaya, Navodaya Vidyalaya etc. It certainly can hamper our insights.

Suggestions for Further Work

- Include Central Government school students both male and female in the sample.
- Select larger samples.
- Include students both male and females from rural area also.

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