Personal Problems of Adolescent Students and Academic Achievement in Earthquake Effected Areas of Kupwara District (J&K)

Author

Dr. Bilques John
Ph.D, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
E-mail: shahrufeedah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to find out the personal problems and academic achievement among adolescent students in earthquake affected areas of Kupwara District, Kashmir (J&K). In order to collect information the investigator visited various schools of District Kupwara especially in Tehsil Karnah, the worst hit area. Self-constructed questionnaire on personal problems was administered to a sample of 600 adolescent students (300 male and 300 female) pursuing their education in various high school and higher secondary’s of Tehsil, Karnah District Kupwara, Kashmir (J&K) to assess their personal problems and academic achievement on the dimensions of Personal problems viz, Responsibility, Liberty, Possession, Mental, Emotional excitement. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant difference between male and female adolescent students on composite score of personal problems and also found that there is a positive relationship between Personal Problems and Academic Achievement of adolescent male and female students.

Keywords: Personal Problem, Academic Achievement, Adolescent Students, Earthquake effected areas.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of development during which the behavior of the people is frequently found to be “unbalanced”, “unpredictable” and “unstable”. Often the child becomes unreasonable. Sometimes, they are very tough and challenge the authority. For these reasons most societies have regarded this stage as difficult phase of growth and have shown some degree of anxiety over the development of the child during this period. It is the period during which radical changes take place within the individual as he emerges from childhood into maturity. Learning an appropriate sex-role getting along with the age mates and developing a conscience are considered important for children at this stage in almost all the progressive societies but these behaviors are not easy to learn and present many problems.

A personal problem pertains to the problems in daily life of an individual like someone dying or losing the job of a person. For the present study personal problem means when a living organism doesn’t maintain balance between its need and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction and the harmonious relation with the environment.

The valley of Kashmir shook violently on October 8th 2005, when a devastating earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale caused more than 87000 deaths, while making millions more homeless. The earthquake occurred in Indus-Kohistan seismic zone (Armbruster et al., 1978) with its epicenter in Kishanganga (Neelam Valley) and suddenly struck over Northern Kashmir in the areas adjoining to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK). It resulted in wide spread devastation in the affected areas and reached the
Baramulla and Kupwara District headquarters and other adjoining towns to rubble, while resulting in countless deaths. The first tremor of 7.6 scale was followed by 22 aftershocks within 24 hours including a 6.2 magnitude trembler. Although the United States Geological survey Richter scale measured it as 7.6 degrees and the Japanese meteorology Deptt. office gauged it as 7.8. Jammu and Kashmir has been witnessing a continuous mass trauma situation for more than 23 years, with thousands of people dead, injured and mutilated many missing or confined. Thousands of children have been orphaned, and women widowed, a colossal damage to the property and damage to the cultural ethos including en-mass migration of a minority community. The amount of trauma incurred, hence, remains anything but hard to imagine. The fury unleashed by natural disasters (snowstorm and earthquakes to recount a few) during the same time cannot be undermined either.

When disasters strike they are sudden, unexpected, and "earth-shattering" to those affected by them. Often those who are exposed directly talk about how their life of relative tranquility before the disaster has been radically changed, and how the peace of mind has evaporated and replaced by worry and catastrophic expectations. They describe their new post-disaster reality as living life "upside down," in a state of confusion, and pervasive anxiety, and helplessness. Disasters are generally defined as mass environmental stress, affecting a large number of people. Mass disaster event, smashes a victim's sense of normality and reality, while eroding the sense of safety and general well-being.

Every individual has a unique personality, which is distinct from every other personality. Thus an individual has some striking qualities or traits, in which he differs from others i.e., in appearance, in aggressiveness or pleasant manners etc. But these are not the only points that make up the person. Every individual has a typical and distinctive style of behaving. This unique quality of his behaviour imparts a shape to his personality i.e. feelings, values, reactions, prejudices, attitudes, perception etc. These all are the basis of one’s behaviour. Thus personality includes physique, habits, temperament, sentiments, will and intelligence etc. Personality pervades every aspect of human life and influences every behaviour. It is on this ground that Wordsworth calls personality as the quality of one’s behaviour. Hence personality is not only, what we do in relation to others, but something more than that. Psychologically, personality is all that a person is. It is the totality of his being and includes physical, emotional, mental and temperamental make up.

Thus, a number of environmental factors react upon the organism of the individual and ultimately give a quality to his personality. These factors may be summed up as the home atmosphere, the parent child relationship, social and cultural factors and other political-economic factors, which exert a great influence upon the personality development. During pre-adolescence period (12-15) the child lives a self sufficient life with new physical strength and mental vigour making its appearance, but conscience still remaining undeveloped. In later adolescence (15-25) the youth in the eyes of Rousseau has a new birth, as it were and with sexual functions emerging true social life begins. “Soul is now added to intellect and sense of beauty, goodness and truth acquires a personal value. Conscience rules life and virtue becomes possible”. Stanley Hall as the pioneer of child study movement of America writes the period as “life” after puberty is no longer egocentric but ultra-centric”. Adolescence is often considered as a terrible period, which in most societies presents many problems. It is a phase of development, which parents and teachers fear and the behaviour of the people during this period is frequently found to be unbalanced, unpredictable and unstable.

Many personal environmental conditions exert varying degree of influence on the way, the adolescents view themselves and their society. These are the conditions in which their needs, desires and ambitions are thwarted. This produces a tension and anxiety within them, with the result they react to these situations emotionally. All adolescents do not have a uniform pattern of needs or psychological goals. These may vary according to their innate nature and cultural environment in which they have grown up. An adolescent’s gestalt view about himself may be that he is worthless, while another individual may view himself as having limitless potentialities. Similarly one person’s gestalt view of his world may be that it is a “wonderful”
place. While another’s view may be that the whole world is “doomed”. In order to understand the mechanism underling emotional problems of adolescents, the researcher may like to probe deeper into the potentialities of the younger students. There has been a constant warfare between the hereditarians and the environmentalists as regards the contribution of these factors in the development of personality. Man is the bye product of a complex system of variables, which constantly interact with personality and shape it.

The Individuals who experience or simply witness traumatic events can develop posttraumatic reactions. It has been shown that after a catastrophic natural disaster, post-traumatic reactions in children may reach epidemic proportions, remain high for a prolonged period, and jeopardize the well being of the child population of the affected region. There is ample evidence that personality structure and experience such as neuroticism or childhood adversity in the period before the traumatic event also influence the risk of developing posttraumatic disorders. Once the basic needs are regained such as food, clothing, and shelter, help is needed for the emotional and psychological well being of survivors.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following objectives are proposed for meaningful evaluation of the present study.

To study the personal problems of adolescent students of earthquake affected areas of Karnah (District: Kupwara) J&K.

To study the academic achievements of adolescent students of earthquake affected areas of Karnah (District: Kupwara) J&K.

To compare male and female adolescent students on personal problems of earthquake affected areas of Karnah (District: Kupwara) J&K.

To compare male and female adolescent students on academic achievements of earthquake affected areas of Karnah (District: Kupwara) J&K.

To find the co-relation between personal problems and academic achievements of adolescent students of earthquake affected areas of Karnah (District: Kupwara) J&K.

**Hypothesis**

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the preset investigation:

There would be a significant difference between male and female adolescent students of earthquake affected areas of Karnah (District: Kupwara) J&K on personal problems.

There would be a significant difference between male and female adolescent students of earthquake affected areas of Karnah (District: Kupwara) J&K on academic achievements.

**Operational Definition of the Variables:**

**Personal Problem:** For the present study personal problem means when a living organism doesn’t maintain balance between its need and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction and the harmonious relation with the environment.

**Adolescents:** For the present study Boys and girls meant the school going adolescents falling in the age range of 14 & 18 years.

**Academic Achievements:** For the present study Academic achievement refers to the average of aggregate marks obtained by the students in the 9th to 10th class examinations.

Earthquake affected areas: For the present study the researcher will highlight particularly those areas of Tehsil Karnah District: Kupwara, (J&K), which were intensely affected by the terrible earthquake on 8th October 2005.

**Sample**

The investigator took 600 adolescent students (300 male) and (300 Female) reading in ninth and tenth grades as sample for the present study. The list of secondary School educational institutions, located in Tehsil
Karnah was obtained from the Directorate of School Education Kashmir, Srinagar. Accordingly ten Government Secondary school institutions, having Co-education were selected for the purpose.

**Tools Used**

Following tools were used for the present study.

- A self constructed questionnaire on personal problems.
- A self constructed information blank to collect information regarding family background and personal particulars of the subject.
- An aggregate marks of pervious class for the sample subjects.

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Table 1: Showing the Mean difference between Male and Female adolescent students on Responsibility dimension of personal problems (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male adolescent</td>
<td>8.21</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female adolescent</td>
<td>11.64</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>Significant at 0.05 level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perusal of the above table shows the significance of mean difference between male and female adolescent students on Responsibility dimension of personal problems. Since, the ‘t’ calculated value (2.48) is greater than the ‘t’ critical value (1.95), which shows significance at 0.05 level. Further the mean difference favours female adolescent students (11.64), which reveals that female adolescent students are confident enough than male adolescent students in every sphere of life.

Table 2: Showing the Mean difference between Male and Female adolescent students on Liberty dimension of Personal Problem. (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male adolescent</td>
<td>11.64</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>Non Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female adolescent</td>
<td>9.87</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perusal of the above table shows the significance of mean difference between male and female adolescent students on Liberty dimension of personal problem. Since the ‘t’ calculated value (1.23) is less than the ‘t’ critical value (1.95), which reveals that there is not a significant difference between male and female adolescent students on the Liberty dimension of personal problems, which means that both male and female adolescent students of earth quake affected areas display similar level of Liberty dimension. Further, the mean value favours adolescent males (11.64), which reveals that male adolescent have better desirable freedom including permission to choose one’s own friends and partner. They are also being provided at least a little spending money as compared to their counterparts.

Table 3: Showing the Mean difference between Male and Female adolescent students on Possession dimension of Personal Problem. (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male adolescent</td>
<td>7.43</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>Significant at 0.01 level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female adolescent</td>
<td>12.72</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perusal of the above table shows the significance of mean difference between male and female adolescent students on Possession dimension of personal problems. Since the ‘t’ calculated value (4.12) is greater than the ‘t’ critical value (2.58), which shows significance at 0.01 level. Since the mean difference favours the female adolescent student (12.72), which reveals that, the female adolescent students exhibited
more feeling of belongingness than male adolescent students. Because of having female characteristics, they are very much attached to their siblings and other family members. Due to the ill effects of earthquake female adolescent students are more attached to their parents especially their mothers.

Table 4: Showing the Mean difference between Male and Female adolescent students on Mental Mechanism dimension of Personal Problem. (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male adolescent students</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>Significant at 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female adolescent students</td>
<td>11.21</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perusal of the above table shows the significance of mean difference between male and female adolescent students on mental mechanism dimension of personal problems. Since the ‘t’ calculated value (3.41) is greater than the ‘t’ critical value (2.58), which shows significance at 0.01 level. Since the mean difference favours the female adolescent student (11.21), which reveals that, the female adolescent students are more satisfactorily adjusted than male adolescent students.

Table 5: Showing the Mean difference between Male and Female adolescent students on Emotional Excitement dimension of Personal Problem. (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male adolescent students</td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>Significant at 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female adolescent students</td>
<td>11.31</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perusal of the above table shows the significance of mean difference between male and female adolescent students on sense of Emotional Excitement dimension of personal problems. Since the ‘t’ calculated value (3.48) is greater than the ‘t’ critical value (2.58), which shows significance at 0.01 level. Since the mean difference favours the female adolescent students (11.31), which justifies that female adolescent students are satisfactorily adjusted in this area as compared to male adolescent students, who have been observed suffering from the nervous symptoms. In this sense they face many personal problems. For instance, they experience dizzy spells, bad dreams and soreness in their eyes. They are also found biting their nails. They are suffering from loss of appetite and feel tiredness before noon. Consequently they fail to concentrate upon their studies and thereby show low academic achievement in their academic sphere in comparison to female adolescent students.

Table 6: Showing the Mean difference between Male and Female adolescent students on Composite Score of Personal Problem (N=600)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male adolescent students</td>
<td>42.07</td>
<td>7.93</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>Sig. at 0.05 level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female adolescent students</td>
<td>61.12</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perusal of the above table shows the significance of mean difference between male and female adolescent students on composite score of personal problems. Since the ‘t’ calculated value (2.23) is greater than the ‘t’ critical value (1.95). Which shows significance at 0.05 level. Since the mean difference favours the female adolescent students (61.12). Which reveals that the female adolescent student of earthquake affected areas of Karnah District Kupwara is better personally adjusted than male adolescent student.

CONCLUSION
- It was found that there is significant difference between male and female adolescent students on the Responsibility dimension of personal problems.
• It was found that there is an insignificant difference between male and female adolescent students on the Liberty dimension of personal problems.
• It was found that the female adolescent students are very much attached to their siblings, their family members and are more attached to their parents due to ill effects of the earthquake as compared to male adolescent students.
• It was found that there is a significant difference between male and female adolescent students on the Possession dimension of personal problems.
• It was found that there is a significant difference between male and female adolescent students on the Mental Mechanism dimension of personal problems.
• It was found that female adolescent students are more satisfactorily adjusted in this area as compared to male adolescent students.
• It has been found that there is a significant difference between male and female adolescent students on the emotional excitement dimension of personal problems.
• It was found that female adolescent students are better personally adjusted than male adolescent student of earthquake affected areas of Karnah District Kupwara.
• It was found that there is a significant difference between male and female adolescent students on composite score of personal problems.
• It was found that there is a positive relationship between Personal Problems and Academic Achievement of adolescent male and female students.

SUGGESTIONS
On the basis of findings of the present study, the investigator feels that the following suggestions be taken into consideration while conducting further research in this field:
The number of variables should be increased to study some other causes of problems of adolescent students of earthquake affected areas.
A comparative study should be conducted on adolescent students of earthquake affected areas and adolescent students of non earthquake affected areas of District Kupwara, to see the impact of disaster on their mental health and academic achievement.
The study should be replicated on a large sample on different grades and age groups in order to generalize the results.

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