

Early Adolescents: Emotional and Behavioural Problems

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The present study was conducted to examine the emotional and behavioral problems and also to find out the relationship between demographical variables such as class, gender, medium, type of school with emotional and behavioral problems among early adolescents studying in high schools. The sample size included 343 (Boys =162; Girls=181) in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh. Achenbach's Youth Self Report (YSR) was used for the study. The data were obtained and analyzed by means of t-test, one-way ANOVA, Post Hoc Tests and Multiple correlations. The results indicated that 10th standard adolescents were having emotional and behavioural problems. Further, boys were having emotional problems than girls. It was also observed that private school were having emotional and behavioural problems. But emotional problems were evident in Government school adolescents. A strong relationship has been found between emotional and behavioural problems among adolescents. The findings of the present study suggested for regular psychological testing and implications in high schools through assertiveness training, family counseling and enhancing teacher-pupil and parent- teacher relationships.

The term 'adolescence' is derived from the Latin verb *Adolescere*, which means 'to grow to maturity'. Adolescence is a period of biosocial transition between childhood and adulthood. During this period the body grows very rapidly; as a result the movements, the voice etc., turn awkward. Adolescence period is universally known as a period of fundamental biological, cognitive and social changes (Hill, 1983). According to Erikson (1963), the chief task of the adolescent is to develop a sense of personal identity. Early adolescent period extends from about twelve years to fifteen years. The important theme in adolescence is the rediscovery of one's self. The early adolescent has to incorporate into his self-concept the new feelings, the new body image and the new conceptions about his role. The behavioral problem may be identified as such reaction-patterns of a child which are not up to the expectation of the parents, members of the family or community.

It is a deviant or distorted behavior. It doesn't fit in with or conform to the accepted norms of behavior appropriate to the age, sex and cultural background of the child and also differ from culture to culture and society to society. Behavioral problems are of a wide variety viz, emotional-behavioral problems are anxiety-depression, withdrawn-depression, social problems, somatic complaints, attention-thought problems, rule breaking and aggressive behavior problems. According to a survey conducted by the National Educational Association in USA in (1975) the factors leading to emotional and behavioral problems were found to be irresponsible parents, poor home conditions, irrelevant curriculum, over crowded class rooms, lack of service for exceptional children and lack of authority of teacher (Malavika Kapur, 1995).

Emotional and behavioral problems of students in schools are much emphasized

agenda for research in education in general and psychology in particular. In spite of many attempts to understand and to know the severity of emotional and behavioral problems of school students by the psychologists, still the problem is not understood completely, when compared to the best research in emotional and behavioral problems of school children in India is at a low level. Not many studies have been carried out to find out the different behavioral problems of school going children and the severity of the problem. This topic has become a major concern for psychologists as they are finding it difficult to tackle the problem (Malavika Kapur, 1997).

Among emotional problems, anxiety, excessive fear, phobia, extreme sensitivity, shyness and timidity, difficulty in maintaining friends, social withdrawal, moodiness, depression, day dreaming, nail biting, thumb sucking, compulsion, jealousy, school refused, soiling, emotional factors and physical illness. But coming to high school students all these emotional problems may not be seen and in some case unusual emotional problems are seen.

There are a number of research findings that indicate that boys and girls are not affected equally by emotional and behavioral problems. Twice as many adolescent girls as boys were reported to have emotional problems (Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1979). Males have significantly higher emotional problems than females where as females score significantly higher score in behavioral problems. High school level have significantly higher emotional problems than their counter parts from prepare to school level student is different school levels also differ significantly from each other in behavioral problems (Ahmed & Raju, 2009). Krupa Hiremath, Saraswathi and Gaonkar (2008) indicated that majority (81.48%) of the adolescents was found to have the normal behavior. About 9-18 percent of adolescents were found with a

difficult behavior. Boys had significantly more externalizing problems ($x^2 = 6.7$) while girls had significantly more of internalizing problems ($x^2 = 12.92$). Raju, et al., (2004) results found that students from private schools were found to exhibit more truancy and late coming to school than students from government schools. Prakash et al., (2006) showed that female children had behavior problems like "too concerned with neatness or cleanliness", "feels has to be perfect" and "argues a lot" where as male children had behaviour problems like "Does not feel guilty after misbehaving", "argues a lot" and "restless". Woo et al. (2007) results found that boys obtained significantly higher scores on the social problems, thought problems, attention problems, delinquent behavior, aggressive behavior and externalizing problems.

Objectives

The present study aimed at examining the relationship between emotional and behavioural problems among early adolescents.

- i. To assess the emotional and behavioral problems among early adolescents.
- ii. To find out the significant difference between emotional and behavioral problems among early adolescents with class, gender, medium and type of school.
- iii. To study the relationship between emotional and behavioral problems among early adolescents.

Method

Sample:

The total sample consisted of 343 early adolescents (Boys =162; Girls=181) student population in Government Zilla Parishad High Schools from Kintali and Tekkali towns. Private schools are Sri Surya Public School and Aruna Vidhyanilayam in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh were randomly selected.

Tools :

Youth Self Report developed by Achenbach (2001) was used. The tool assesses emotional and behavioral problems of early adolescents between (11-18 yrs). The YSR syndrome scales are anxious-depressed, withdrawn-depressed somatic complaints, social problems, thought problems, attention problems, rule breaking behavior and aggressive problems. The emotional problems are anxious-depression, withdrawn-depression and somatic complaints, behavioural problems are social problems, thought problems, attention problems, rule breaking behavior and aggressive behavior. There are 112 items in this self report measure.

The test-retest reliability reported for the internalizing, externalizing and total problem scales of the instrument are 0.80, 0.89 and 0.87 respectively. The internal consistency reliability (alpha coefficient) of these scales is 0.90, 0.90 and 0.95 respectively. The content validity of the of the YSR items has been supported by research and feedback. The items of the YSR were found to significantly discriminate ($p < 0.01$) between referred and no referred subjects with demographically similar characteristics (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2003)

Procedure:

The principal and head master of the schools were contacted. After obtaining permission, the student population which included early adolescents were explained fully the purpose of the study and the researcher gave instructions to them about filling of the questionnaire. They were asked to read the instructions carefully and give their authentic responses after reading each of the items and select responses as 'Zero' indicate to 'not true', '1' indicated to 'somewhat' and '2' indicates to 'very true'. Student was informed to respond only to one option to

every item. They are also told to answers all the items without fail. These student adolescents were administered the Youth Self- Report developed by Achenbach (2001) and the reports were collected and scored by computer. The results are described in the next section.

Results and Discussion

The results one way analysis of variance displayed that the differences among the mean score of 10th, 9th and 8th classes in the dimension of withdrawn-depressed and F'-value is ($F=6.97, p < 0.01$) which is highly significant. The mean score showed that early adolescents studying in 9th class experienced withdrawn-depressed is higher when compared with mean score of 10th class and means score of 8th class. The mean score differences among the 10th, 9th and 8th classes in the dimension of somatic complaints were significant and F value is ($F=3.37, p < 0.05$), which is significant. The mean scores differences among the 10th, 9th and 8th classes in the dimension rule-breaking found to be highly significant behavior and F'-value is ($F=7.53, p < 0.01$), which is highly significant. Role breaking behavior has be observed in 8th class students.

Table 1 results observed that boys experienced anxiety-depression problems ($t=2.19, p < 0.05$) tend to be withdrawn-depressed ($t=2.36, p < 0.05$), social problems ($t=2.64, p < 0.01$), thought problems ($t=4.54, p < 0.01$), rule-breaking behavior ($t=3.29, p < 0.01$) and aggressive behavior ($t=3.19, p < 0.01$). When compared with girls similar results were found by Raju et al., (2004) that there are more behavioral problems rule breaking behavior truancy among boys as compared to girls. Aggressive behavior is related to fighting with others, suspicious and disobeys school and home. Bongers et al., (2003), Mesman et al., (2001) findings of the study have reported that boys showed more externalizing problems.

Table-2 Youth Self Report and Gender

Sub scales	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Anxiety-Depression	Boys	162	9.64	3.64	2.19*
	Girls	181	8.75	3.85	
Withdrawn-Depression	Boys	162	4.85	2.45	2.36*
	Girls	181	4.21	2.58	
Somatic complaints	Boys	162	5.8	3.44	0.95
	Girls	181	5.45	3.24	
Social problems	Boys	162	7.36	3.12	2.64**
	Girls	181	6.49	3.03	
Thought problems	Boys	162	7.19	3.49	4.54**
	Girls	181	5.54	3.24	
Attention problem	Boys	162	6	2.91	1.4
	Girls	181	5.58	2.64	
Rule-breaking behaviour	Boys	162	6.35	4.2	3.29**
	Girls	181	5.01	3.37	
Aggressive behaviour	Boys	162	10.56	5.1	3.19**
	Girls	181	8.9	4.54	

Table-3 Youth self report and Medium

Sub scales	Medium	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Anxiety-Depression	Telugu	195	9.6	3.33	2.46*
	English	148	8.59	4.24	
Withdrawn-Depression	Telugu	195	4.45	2.37	0.52
	English	148	4.59	2.75	
Somatic complaints	Telugu	195	5.89	3.12	1.77
	English	148	5.25	3.57	
Social problems	Telugu	195	7.41	3.09	3.55**
	English	148	6.23	2.1	
Thought problems	Telugu	195	6.59	3.09	1.69
	English	148	5.96	3.87	
Attention problem	Telugu	195	6.01	2.59	1.78
	English	148	5.47	2.97	
Rule-breaking behaviour	Telugu	195	5.46	3.02	-1.03
	English	148	5.88	4.7	
Aggressive behaviour	Telugu	195	9.76	3.83	0.35
	English	148	9.57	5.99	

**p<0.01 *p<0.05

Table-3, Results observed that early adolescent students studying in Telugu medium experienced anxiety-depression (t=2.46, p<0.05) and social problems (t=3.55, p<0.01) when compared with English medium students. Table-4, Results observed that early adolescents studying in Private schools are

anxious-depressed (t=2.11, p<0.05) experienced somatic complaints (t=-2.71, p<0.01), social problems (t=-3.51, p<0.01), thought problems (t=-3.10, p<0.01), aggressive behavior (t=-2.76, p<0.01) when compared with Government school early adolescents.

Table-4 Youth self report and type of school

Sub scales	Type of school	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Anxiety-Depression	Government	183	8.76	3.75	2.14*
	Private	160	9.63	3.76	
Withdrawn-Depression	Government	183	4.78	2.73	2.11*
	Private	160	4.21	2.26	
Somatic complaints	Government	183	5.16	3.21	2.71**
	Private	160	6.13	3.41	
Social problems	Government	183	6.36	3.07	3.51**
	Private	160	7.52	3.03	
Thought problems	Government	183	5.79	3.43	3.10**
	Private	160	6.93	3.4	
Attention problem	Government	183	5.52	2.75	1.86
	Private	160	6.06	2.77	
Rule-breaking behaviour	Government	183	5.39	3.77	
	Private	160	5.93	3.9	1.31
Aggressive behaviour	Government	183	9.01	4.7	2.76**
	Private	160	10.45	4.97	

Table 5. Inter correlation among Youth Self Report and emotional and behavioral problems

Sub-scales	Anxiety-Depression	With-Depression	Somatic Complaints	Social problem	Thought problem	Attention problem	Rule-breaking behavior
With-Depression	.296**						
Somatic complaints	.456**	.251**					
Social-problem	.522**	.315**	.415**				
Thought problem	.450**	.417**	.427**	.553**			
Attention problem	.445**	.139**	.359**	.441**	.396**		
Rule-breaking behavior	.424**	.279**	.484**	.542**	.569**	.418**	.
Aggression behavior	.466**	.313**	.435**	.488**	.622**	.441**	.540**

** p<0.01

Table-5, Results shows that Youth Self Report sub- scales are positively correlated. Strong positive relationship was found among YSR sub - scales of emotional problems such as anxious-depressed, withdrawn-depressed and somatic complaints and behavioral problems such as social problem, thought problems, attention problem, rule breaking behavior and aggressive behavior. This means the higher the emotional problems, the higher the behavioral problems likely to be. There is always interaction between cognitive, affective and behavior.

Emotional arousal is indicated through behaviour or through on actions. Emotional problems especially negative emotions gives rise to behavioural problems such as rule-breaking behaviour , not obeying rules, aggressive behaviour such as using abusing words or some times physical abuse as well. Hence, there is a close relationship between emotion and behaviour.

Recommendations

Involving psychometricians for psychological assessment of adolescent students in schools. Human emotional and

behavioral problems and management are to be introduced as part of education curriculum. Training workshops on “emotional and behavioral problems in adolescent” shall be conducted to parents and teachers and adolescents as well. School should protect and maintain social, moral and educational values by organizing cultural programmes, debates, elocution etc. Psychologists and counselors should work and conduct research and community workshops for giving services and suggest educational institutions towards adolescents behavior modification. Parents should observe and try to modify their adolescent’s emotions and behavior or can refer to a Developmental Psychologist or Educational Psychologist.

Conclusion

It concludes that 10th standard adolescents were having emotional and behavioural problems. Further, boys were having more emotional problems than girls. It was also observed that private school were having emotional and behavioural problems. But emotional problems were evident in Government school adolescents. A strong relationship was established between emotional and behavioural problems among adolescents.

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