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Behavioural Problems of Secondary School Students – A Pakistani Scene

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Abstract

The quality of any personality is based on individual's behavior. One of the aims of education is to develop the personality of students. The present paper reports the findings of a study conducted on examining behavioral problems of students.

The study was initiated through survey method. Population of the study comprised of secondary school teachers and students of grade IX (age groups 14+ years). A representative of 50 students was drawn using random sampling procedure with 20 teachers. Two questionnaires were developed and used for data collection purposes. The results of the study show that students have many problems regarding interaction and their individual differences are not being managed in the classroom situation.

The study concluded that teacher's attitude affect student's performance and personality development. The study recommended that teachers and parent properly attend the students in classroom and home respectively.

Key words: Behavioural problems, secondary school, secondary students

Introduction

Every individual has the right that his physical, social and emotional needs should be satisfied in society as well as in class room environment. The desire to be accepted and protected in childhood is natural. He or she needs help for adjustment. This is his/her right that s/he should be provided with an environment in which his/her natural capabilities flourish so that s/he may become useful member of the society.

Through education individuals' behaviors are shaped. In formal or conventional mode of education, teacher plays a pivotal role in this regard. Moreover, it is again overwhelming at primary and secondary school levels. It is, therefore, necessary that a teacher should know his or her pupils thoroughly as to their abilities, limitations, motives, aspirations, needs and physical development patterns, so that teaching can be made interesting and effective. Teacher should be able to know all such things through the study of educational psychology. It is a fact that without such background a teacher cannot modify the cognitive and effective behaviour patterns of his/her pupils. Such knowledge can contribute to the promotion of learning process and developing students' personalities positively by understanding about individual behaviour.

Literature

According to Skinner (1938), behaviour is the movement of an organism or of its parts in a frame of reference provided by organism by various external objects or fields. It is a continuous process which moves through these developmental stages with time.

- i. Continuous and orderly.
- ii. Results in long lasting changes.
- iii. Results in more advanced superior type of functions.

Every growth is similar but also unique while socializer's reinforcement. Punishment and modeling also share in psycho-social adjustment. Society approves some types of behaviour while it also condemns some other types of behaviour.

Human behaviour remains extremely difficult subject matter (Skinner. 1969) while research has proved that study of abnormal behaviour is much more difficult and it may be due to some disorder of chemical or structural balance of body i.e. bio-chemical Bio-Physical.

Explaining Human Behaviour

Many explanations of behaviour pattern may be found in Sigmund Freud's stage theory, theory of Piaget, Kohlberg and Tureen's theory of mood development. So adaptive and maladaptive behaviour pattern are learned an a result of consecutive events.

Analysis of behaviour is an aspect which ultimately counts in. adjustment. Pupils face specific learning difficulties or present some forms of behavior all problems. Its main aims are to develop the understanding of the teacher so that they are aware of highly specific needs of children and to apply this knowledge in a practical way with in the class room situation.

There are three types of behavior: moral behavior, immoral behavior and unmoral behavior.

The children cannot be expected to know all the mores of the group nor can they be expected to behave in a truly moral way. By the time children reach adolescence, however, the members of the social group expect them to behave in accordance with the mores of the group. When they fail to do so it is generally because they do not want to rather than because of ignorance of group expectations.

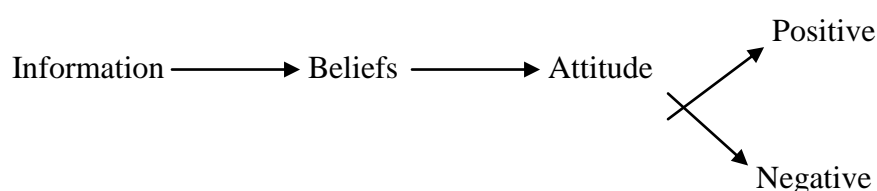
Loneliness

The warmth by the parents has positive effect on children otherwise they feel loneliness in adulthood as Eastwood study presents. Ironically, college students suffer more from loneliness than any other age group. Having loosened the ties with their parents, people of this age are actively seeking intimacy with their peers, especially those of the opposite sex. The idealism of youth, plus the desire for intimacy and a happy marriage, makes them especially sensitive to the discrepancy between their expectation, intimacy and their actual relationships.

Many factors contribute to loneliness. People who have grown up with warm and helpful parents are less likely to report loneliness in adulthood than those who describe their parents as disagreeable and unhelpful. Some of the loneliest people are those whose parents divorced when they were younger than 6 year old (Atwater& Duffy, 1999).

Attitudes

According to Morgan (1994, p. 450), “An attitude is a predisposition to behave in a consistent evaluative manner toward a person, a group of people an object, or a group of objects”. To have a more comprehensive view of attitude, it may be studied in terms of its different aspects, i.e. components and factors, as stated by Ruch (1984, p. 544). Attitude has often been defined by social psychologists in terms of three affective or evaluative feelings about that person or object, and behavior toward that person or object.



It is very much clear from the above discussion that attitude; either defined simply or in terms of its different components, represents individual's orientation toward or away from an object, person, concept, idea, or situation. In general terms it is positive or negative response made by a person toward an object, person , group of people , idea, concept, or situation. The determination of relationship between attitudes and behavior is difficult because they cannot be measured precisely.

Behaviour and Attitude

Moreover, in some instances, attitude predicts behaviour and at some other time behavior specifies the attitudes. A common thinking that behavior is the reflection of attitudes (Morgan et al 1984, p. 548) but, according to Plotik (1980, p.458) attitudes are slightly related to behavior. He says that although attitudes may generally be used to predict behavior, there are some cases in which these predictions will be wrong.

As an example, most of the smokers have negative attitude toward smoking yet they smoke frequently.

Similarly, many people do not fulfill religious duties although they do have a positive attitude toward their religion. Behavior, according to Papalia & Sally (1978, p. 611) and Wrench & Chris (1973, p. 279), can be best predicted from attitudes when following conditions are fulfilled:

- The person must have relevant attitudes and must know what they are. If he has never thought about his attitude toward something, the attitude will be a less useful predictor of behavior.
- The behavior we are predicting should take place in an environment free from other influences like fear or pressure.
- If attitude are to predict behavior, you must have adequate measures of these attitudes.

Emotions

Research studies indicated that the infant's response to stimuli designed to arouse emotions that are very diffuse and lacking in organization. Like other aspects of the behaviour of a child soon after birth when a child comes to school, if he falls into the hands of unsympathetic teachers then his earlier attitudes will preserve him from feelings of hostility and self distrust.

On the other hand, he comes with attitudes of hostility and distrust based on hardships earlier in his life. The emotions can also occur as moods that last a long time and affect particular systems in the brain. The literature also identified different factors of behaviour as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 Factors of behavior

Emotions	Social goal that is at issue	Plan, second moment of emotions
Happiness	Be with others	Co operate, show affection
Sadness	Loss of relationship	Do nothing seek help
Anger	Insult, Loss of respect	Try harder, flight
Fear	Separation, Social rejection	Freeze, Defer to others support, help

During the emotional development stage teacher's contribution play a vital role to overcome the crises. The research literature identified eight stages of emotional development and Language in India www.languageinindia.com 75

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characterized then by the kinds of psychosocial crises likely to occur in those stages. If each crisis is handled successfully by the teacher, parent, or both, the child is able to move on to the next stage.

For example, the psychosocial crisis in adolescence would involve issues of identity; teachers must be aware of the crises the student is then undergoing and handle it appropriately. Such an approach places the teacher in the position of therapist, in effect, placing greater pressure on the teacher (Arnold & Krasner, 1987, page 133). Corporal punishment by the teacher or parents promotes aggressive attitude as described (Quinn.1995):

Corporal Punishment

Corporal refers to the body, and corporal punishment involves inflicting bodily harm when a person behaves in an undesirable way. A spanking, a whipping with a switch, a slap across the face, and a punch punishment teach their children that physical force leads to control. As a result their children are likely to become hostile and aggressive and use violence to gain control.

Withdrawal of Approval

Parents sometimes reprimand their children for misbehavior by threatening to remove their love from the children. Statements Like. “If you go outside the yard again, I won’t love you anymore” or “I hate you because you just spilled your juice” are examples. If this technique is used persistently, the child will feel that the parents’ love is weak and undependable. The child is given the impression that love and affection have to be earned. As a result the child may become anxious and show such symptoms as nail biting, bed-wetting, or thumb-sucking (Quinn.1995, page 86).

Adolescence is a carefree period and wilderness is very common in this age. It used to be common belief that adolescence was a carefree period, a stage of life when people would “sow their wild oats” before settling down to the demands of adult maturity. What do teenagers themselves believe their chief problems are?

Spirito and associates (1991) asked (9 to 14 years) old to identify the problems they had experienced in the last month. It is interesting to note the changes in the frequency of the various problems types with age. Only (parents/child conflict and boyfriend/girlfriend problems) increase with age. Problems with siblings decline and then increase, parent/parents conflicts and extracurricular activity problems go up, and then decline and the rest decline with age.

Finally, it should be noted that when adolescents do have problems, the till effects percolate throughout society and continue for years after the original problems occur (Dacey, 1997, pp.9-11).

If teenagers are sexually abused they mistrust adults. Teenagers who have been sexually abused often express feelings of not fitting in with their peers. They say that they are different, strange, dirty, and evil. They say that they will never marry or have children. Some also talk intensely about feelings of mistrust and say they can never have faith in an adult.

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Others feel that they are always wrong and deserving of criticism from adults. Teens and adults who have been sexually abused as children tell me that they felt this way even as young children, but they didn't have the words then to express their feelings (Brooks & Siegel, 1996).

Similarly, Zimbardo & Radl (1981) believed that the pain and pressure of the teenage years are considerably greater for today's young people than they have been for most previous generations. First of all, society is in a state of great transition, there are so many freedoms without attendant responsibilities. The turmoil of adolescence is due to newly attained thinking capacities as well as emotional changes. It was proposed that the super-high degree of self-consciousness that seen in youngsters around their early teen years is a result of the teen-ager having developed an ability to think about what other people may be thinking (Zimbardo & Radl, 1981).

In general, peer ratings of sociability tend to be linked with positive school behavior among children. On the other hand, links were found in the opposite direction within adolescent. High sociability showed significant cross-sectional links with peer ratings of disruptive, aggressive behaviors, suggesting that teenage peer group was somewhat admiring of individuals who had the gumption to buck the system. Similarly, negative prospective links with academic performance were also found. Students who were popular early in the year were likely to show significant declines in grades over time, again suggesting that the peer group disdained what was valued by the establishment (Lerner, Taylor & Von Eye, 2002).

Rao (2004) reported that many studies have stated that poor adjustment was one of the primary causes of poor performance in any educational institution. Some other studies have also identified a close association between adequate adjustment and better academic achievement. He further described that proper adjustments can be developed by the students through direct methods such as:

1. Increasing the trails or improving efforts to solve the problems.
2. Adopting compromising means depending on the complexity of the situation.
3. withdrawal and submissiveness according to the situation and

making proper choices and decisions which suits to his or her talents and through indirect methods of defensive mechanisms such as repression, regression, compensation, rationalization, projection, identification, withdrawal, sympathizes, reversing the motives, fantasy, displacement, sublimation, undoing, and intellectualization (Rao, 2004, pp. 39-40).

Rao further elaborated that as maladjusted students become a major problem or threat to the institution, the students must be made adjusted personalities through proper guidance and counseling.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- Examine the nature of students behavior,
- Analyze various behavioral problems of students and

- Strategies adopted by teachers to handle behavioral problems of students

Method of the Study

The study was initiated through survey method. Population of the study comprised of secondary school teachers and students of grade IX (age groups 14+ years). A representative of 50 students was drawn using random sampling procedure with 20 teachers. Two questionnaires were developed, one for students and the other for teachers. Each statement of the questionnaire was checked by using Chi-Square technique and has been shown in the respective tables under the caption of data analysis.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the participants is presented below with statistical treatment. Each statement was checked at level 0.05 for degree of freedom (2). Responses of students are presented in below table 2:

Table 2 **Detail of students' responses**

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Chi Square	Table Value of X ²
You like praise	35	10	5	30	5.99
You dislike the punishment of teacher in response to some error in studies.	30	14	6	18	5.99
The kindness and sympathetic behavior of the teacher increase your interest towards studies	45	-	5	72	5.99
Undesirable behavior of fellows hurt you.	22	12	16	3	5.99
You feel difficulties in new environment.	45	5	-	57	5.99
You like discussions in class room.	23	18	9	6	5.99
You react in case of unexpected treatment from your teachers and fellows.	37	10	3	38	5.99

Table 2 indicated that:

- ✓ Respondents like praise.
- ✓ Respondents dislike the punishment of teacher.
- ✓ Sympathetic behavior of the teacher increase interest towards studies.
- ✓ Undesirable behavior of fellows hurt students.
- ✓ Respondents feel difficulties in new environment.
- ✓ Respondents dislike discussions in class room.
- ✓ Respondents react in case of unexpected treatment from teachers and fellows.

Responses of students are presented in below table 3:

Table 3 **Summary of teachers' responses**

	Chi	Table Value of
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Statement	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Square	X²
Students behave friendly with their fellows.	15	3	2	15	5.99
Students like formal behavior of fellows.	12	4	4	6	5.99
Some students are emotional due to their home environment.	15	5	-	17	5.99
You take special measures to eradicate the emotional problems of students.	15	5	-	17	5.99
Scolding problematic students at their mistake brings positive change in their behavior.	6	8	6	3	5.99
Behavior of any person is the product of learning.	20	-	-	38	5.99
During classroom management/school management the issue of dealing with different behavioral matters is being considered.	18	2	0	28	5.99
During classroom management/school management the issue of dealing with different behavioral matters is considered.	18	2	0	28	5.99

Table 3 revealed that:

- Students behave friendly with their fellows.
- Students like formal behavior of with fellows.
- Some students are emotional due to their home environment.
- Teachers took special measures to eradicate the emotional problems of students.
- Scolding problematic students at their mistake brings positive change in their behavior.
- Teachers considered behavioral matters during classroom management/school management

Findings of the Study

1. Students disliked discussion in class room and behavior of their class fellows.
2. Most of the students expressed their deep concern over punishment of teachers without some reason.
3. Almost all students favored their praise, hurdles in a new environment and kind-hearted behavior of their teachers.
4. Majority of the teachers highlighted the hostile and aggressive behavior and unsatisfactory educational performance of emotionally disturbed students.
5. Home environment is a key factor of either development or destruction.
6. Special attention, friendly behavior, carefully designed set of training and a task oriented learning system for emotionally disturbed students
7. All teachers considered someone's attitude and behavior—an outcome of his learning.

Recommendations

The study recommended that:

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1. Teachers and parents may pay special attention towards abnormal behaviour of students.
2. At school level carefully designed set of training and a task oriented learning system may be provided to manage the behavior of students.
3. A counseling and guidance may be arranged for some targeted students to overcome their problems.
4. Provision of healthy and competitive environment based on extra curriculum activities may be assured at school.
5. A continuous encouragement and appreciation may be helpful to boost up the moral of students.
6. A close coordination may be established among teachers and parents to plan and monitor all the developments regarding students' matters.

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