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Comparison of peer relationship of adolescents in relation to their gender and residential area

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Abstract

Adolescents is the most vulnerable stage to the emotional problems. During adolescence period, peers play a large part in a young person's life. Teenagers have various peer relationships and they interact with many peer groups. Through these relationships, children and adolescents explore their self-identities and develop skills in forming and maintaining peer relationship. This study examines the impacts of Peer Relationship in relation to their residential area and gender of adolescents.

The study was conducted in Hisar district of Haryana state. Two areas were selected purposively *i.e.*, rural and urban, from urban area Hisar city and from rural area two villages namely Gawar and Shamsukh were taken for collection of data. From each schools 30 boys and 30 girls of 13-15 year (240 adolescents) were included in final sample. Peer Relations Questionnaire (PRQ) by Rigby and Slee (1993) was used for assessing Peer Relationship. The results reveal that statistically significant differences were observed in mean score of adolescents for pro- social behaviour against residential area and non-significant differences were observed against gender in all aspects of peer relationship.

Keywords: peer relationship, adolescents, residential area, gender

Introduction

Adolescence is the most vulnerable stage to the emotional problems. Thus, teaching the adolescents to understand the emotional problems and how they deal with others as well as their actions can be very helpful in their daily struggles and maintaining good relationships. Adolescents' progress through early, middle, and late adolescence, mood, body image, cognitive development, family relationships, interactions at school and with peers, and participation in health-risk behaviors are critical developmental considerations. Exercising their growing autonomy in school and organized programs, children learn about the world outside the family, match themselves against the expectations of others, compare their performance with that of their peers, and develop customary ways of responding to challenges and learning opportunities.

During early adolescence, peers play a large part in a young person's life. Teenagers have various peer relationships and they interact with many peer groups. Through these relationships, children and adolescents explore their self-identities and develop skills in forming and maintaining peer relationship, children and adolescents with strong and supportive peer relationship have been found to perform better academically than those without such support (Wentzel, 1991) [6]. Positive peer relationship interactions have been found to reduce depression, stress and delinquency. Social system perspective, viewing the family as a complex set of interacting relationships influenced by the longer social context. Adolescents have always been exposed to peer influence, but the kinds of peer influence that they encounter have changed tremendously in the past years. Peers can influence everything from what an adolescent chooses to wear to whether or not an adolescent engages in drug related or other delinquent behaviour.

Hence, the present investigation was undertaken to find out the peer relationship of adolescents in relation to their residential area and gender, so that efforts can be made to improve the peer relationship of children and hence, helping the adolescents to make this period a more adjusting and enjoyable time leading to success in adolescents life.

Objectives of the study

- To study the Peer Relationship of adolescents in relation to their Residential Area.
- To study the Peer Relationship of adolescents in relation to their Gender.

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Research Methodology

The study was conducted in Hisar district of Haryana state where two Government Senior Secondary Schools from rural area and three from urban area were selected. From each schools 30 boys and 30 girls of 13-15 year (240 adolescents) were included in final sample. Self-prepared questionnaire was used to delineate residential area and Peer Relations Questionnaire (PRQ) by Rigby and Slee (1993) [4] was used for assessing peer relationship.

Results

(1) Comparison of peer - relationship of adolescents as per Gender

The glance of Table 1 displays the comparison of adolescents' peer- relationship as per Gender. Statistically non-significant differences were observed against gender. Further, mean scores comparison indicated that boys to a higher level were involved in bullying and being victimized (M=8.3 and M=9.56 respectively) against their counterparts. Girls comparatively used more pro- social behavior at higher level (M=14.98) than males.

Table 1: Peer- relationship of adolescents as per Gender

Aspects of peer- relationship	Gender		Z Value
	Boys Mean±SD	Girls Mean±SD	
Bullying	8.3±2.92	7.75±2.53	0.77
Victim	9.56±2.96	9.09±3.2	1.23
Pro-social behaviour	14.72±1.66	14.98±1.74	1.17

*Significant at 5% level

(2) Comparison of peer - relationship of adolescents as per Residential Area

The perusal of Table 2 displays the comparison of adolescents' peer- relationship as per Residential Area. Statistically significant differences were observed in mean score of adolescents for pro- social behaviour against residential area (Z=2.02*) at 0.05 level of significance. Further mean scores comparison indicated that adolescents of rural areas were more involved in bullying (M=8.05) as compared to adolescents of urban areas (M=7.73) and used pro- social behavior at higher level (M=15.7) whilst urban adolescents were more being victimized (M=9.44).

Table 2: Peer-relationship of adolescents as per Residential Area

Aspects of peer- relationship	Residential Area		Z Value
	Rural Mean±SD	Urban Mean±SD	
Bullying	8.05±2.96	7.73±2.49	0.92
Victimization	9.23±2.79	9.44±3.20	0.54
Pro-social behaviour	14.64±1.86	15.7±1.50	2.02*

*Significant at 5% level

Conclusion

It was concluded that that statistically significant differences were observed in mean score of adolescents for pro- social behaviour against residential area and non-significant differences were observed against gender in all aspects of peer relationship. Children and adolescents with strong and supportive peer relationship have been found to perform better academically than those without such support (Wentzel, 1991) [6]. Mean scores comparison indicated that adolescents of rural areas were more involved in bullying as compared to adolescents of urban areas and used pro- social behavior at

higher level whilst urban adolescents were more being victimized.

Further, mean scores comparison indicated that boys to a higher level were involved in bullying and being victimized against their counterparts. Girls comparatively used more pro- social behavior at higher level than males. Results of the studies by Rothon *et al.*, (2011) [5] also strengthen the present results which reported that the boys and girls equally reported bullying, and Papafratzeskakou (2008) found non- significant differences between boys and girls in terms of victimization. Comparatively bullying and victimization behaviour in the present study was to a slightly higher level in males as compare to females.

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