

A Study of Alienation In Relation To Personality And Social Acceptance of Rural Adolescent Girls

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ABSTRACT

In recent times, the term alienation has been used by researchers, teachers, counselors and parents to explain a variety of negative adolescent behaviors. School is one of the most important learning environments for adolescents. They play an important role in the creation of positive emotional environment as well as learning motivation among adolescents which decreases alienation. Alienation results from personality characteristics and lack of sociability in young people. The aim of the present investigation was to study the alienation of students in relation to personality and social acceptance of students. For this, stratified random sampling technique was used for 1043 rural girls from different rural schools of Patiala district of Punjab. The objective was to compare the alienation and non-alienation groups of rural adolescent girls in relation to various dimensions of Personality and Social Acceptance. To analyze the data, t-test was used. The results of the study showed significant difference in relation to psychoticism dimension of personality but it was non-significant in case of neuroticism and extraversion. Also there was non-significant difference in relation to social acceptance of rural adolescent girls.

Keywords: rural girls, alienation, personality, social acceptance

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the transition period from dependent childhood to self-sufficient adulthood. It has often been labeled as the period of stress and strain. According to Ross (1951), "Adolescence is best regarded as recapitulation of the first period of life". The period of adolescence not only brings physical change but psychological changes too that make the child a qualitatively different person. These changes affect the personality and adjustment in later life. Very noticeable changes in intellectual development take place during adolescence. The adolescent becomes able to think in more abstract and logical terms. The quality of thinking in terms of great ideals also emerges during the period. The adolescent is exposed to new social situations, patterns of behavior and societal expectations which bring a sense of insecurity. It has been found that there is increase in the incidence of depression. The adolescents show the tendency of impulsive urge to take immediate action which often leads to risk taking behavior. The peer group support emphasizes the decision of risk taking behavior. Adolescence is characterized by a number of cognitive, emotional, physical and attitudinal changes, which can be a cause of conflict on one hand and positive personality development on the other. The home environment and parents are still important for the behaviors and choices of adolescents. Because adolescents spend a significant portion of their time at school, it is the role of the school to see that they are prepared for society and future employment. Yet, many students are intermittently disengaging from or completely

dropping out of school before they have been adequately prepared for society or future employment. Moreover, adolescents who are alienated often become adults who are socially alienated, who live in propriety, and who are politically powerless.

Alienation is a feeling of not belongingness. This feeling can be physical, mental, religious, spiritual, psychological, political, social or economic and often it tends to be a combination of more than one of these types. To be alienated is to lack a sense of belonging and to feel cut off from family, friends, school, or work in the world of childhood. At some point in the process of growing up, many have probably felt cut off from one or another, but usually not for long and not from more than one sphere at a time. If things weren't going well in school, they usually had family, friends or some activity to turn to. But if, over an extended period, a young person feels unwanted or insecure in several of these spheres simultaneously, trouble may lie ahead. An alienated person, as a result of certain causes, the interplay of events and circumstances in relation to man, is involved in socio-psychological problems.

Alienation is deeply rooted in a personal human experience driven by subconscious motivations, biological drives and social developments. In each case alienation is a source of lack of trust in one's social or physical environment. To some extent all human beings are alienated. However, at times they develop a type of feeling that they have been left all alone on a planet in the cosmos and challenged to make meaning from a potentially meaningless situation. The conscious struggle to overcome this sense of alienation is the mark of a healthy person. Conversely, the inability to face this challenge within the subconscious level leads to a deepening sense of alienation. Alienation is also an expression of the fragmentation of one's personality, where the self wears different masks each day, never claiming a unique identity. Alienation is described as student estrangement in the learning process (Brown, Higgins and Paulsen 2003). Mann (2001) defined alienation as "the state or experience of being isolated from a group or an activity to which one belongs or in which one should be involved". Newmann (1981) identified four fundamental aspects of student alienation : powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness and isolation. Powerlessness refers to student perception of absence of personal control in learning. Normlessness or anomie reflects lack of appropriate rule-governed behaviour (academic dishonesty). Meaninglessness describes alienation student's interpretation of curriculum as irrelevant to their current and future needs. Loneliness and separation from peers and teachers characterizes social isolation. Alienation is one of the greatest problems confronting us today (Mohan et.al.,1999). He found that, adolescents high on alienation differed significantly from those who are low on alienation on all the dimensions of personality viz Psychoticism, Extraversion, Neuroticism and lie scale as well as on aesthetic values, home, social emotional and total adjustment and also self-esteem. Seeman (1959) found five basic ways in which the concept of alienation has been used i.e. powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation and self-estrangement.

The alienation of young people is one of society's most urgent problems. Their numbers increase as the structure and priorities of society are challenged. They are faced with altered sexual patterns, drug abuse, and family violence and decreased success in school. In the social setup alienation is more apparent amongst some sections of the society i.e. schedule-castes, scheduled tribes, economically deprived and socially disintegrated sections of the society and gender inequalities. The gender

discrimination adds fuel to the fire for the spread of alienation amongst the adolescents of the fair sex in our social set-up. It is more so with the rural girls who have little socio-psychological outlets to express. Thus the present investigation explores the socio-psychological characteristics of alienation amongst rural adolescent girls.

OBJECTIVES

1. To compare the alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls in relation to personality dimensions of psychoticism, neuroticism and extraversion.
2. To compare the alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls in relation to social acceptance.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There will be no significant difference between the personality dimensions of psychoticism, neuroticism and extraversion of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls.
2. There will be no significant difference between the social acceptance of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method:

In the present study, descriptive method of research was followed to find out the relationship between alienation, personality and social acceptance.

Sample:

A sample of 1043 rural adolescent girl students studying in class +2 in schools of Patiala district (Punjab) were selected by random sampling technique.

Tools Used:

1. Student Alienation Scale (SAS) developed by Sharma, R.R. This scale consists of 54 items. Student Alienation Scale measures the alienation behaviour of school students. It has been developed on the basis of five dimensions of alienation (Powerlessness, Self-estrangement, Isolation, Meaninglessness, Normlessness).
2. Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire (r). It is designed to give measure to the three important personality dimensions: Psychoticism, Neuroticism and Extraversion. These three traits were scored by means of 90 questions.
3. Social Acceptance Scale by Chopra, S.L. This scale consists of 4 questions. It is a method to determine the degree to which an individual was accepted in a group.

Data Collection:

The universe of the study was the senior secondary school adolescent girls studying in various schools situated in Patiala district of Punjab. In order to make the data representative, stratified random sampling technique was applied to select 1043 rural girls, from different rural schools of various Tehsils of Patiala district. The Adolescent girls studying in 10+2 who were in the age group of 16-20 years of age

were made the respondents of the present study. After collecting data from various secondary schools, statistical treatment was given to work out their Mean, SD and t-Values.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The two groups of students i.e. alienated and non-alienated were compared on the basis of personality dimensions (psychoticism, neuroticism and extraversion) and social acceptance.

Table 1 : Comparison of Psychoticism Dimension of Personality of Alienated and Non-Alienated Groups of Adolescent Girls

| Group Description | N | MEAN | S.D. | t-value |
|----------------------|-----|------|------|---------|
| Alienated | 279 | 5.72 | 2.22 | 3.34** |
| Non-Alienated | 297 | 5.10 | 2.23 | |

**Significant at .01 level

The data compiled in table 1 showed that the mean value of Psychoticism dimension of Personality of alienated group was 5.72 and S.D. was 2.22. For non-alienated group mean was 5.10 and S.D. was 2.23. The calculated t-value (3.34) depicted significant difference between alienated and non-alienated group of rural adolescent girls in relation to psychoticism dimension of Personality.

Table 2 : Comparison of Neuroticism Dimension of Personality of Alienated and Non-Alienated Groups of Adolescent Girls

| Group Description | N | MEAN | S.D. | t-value |
|----------------------|-----|-------|------|-----------|
| Alienated | 279 | 13.48 | 2.66 | 0.7 NS |
| Non-Alienated | 297 | 13.62 | 2.78 | |

*Non-Significant at .05 level

The data compiled in table 2 showed that the mean value of Neuroticism dimension of Personality of alienated group was 13.48 and S.D. was 2.66. For non-alienated group mean was 13.62 and S.D. was 2.78. The calculated t-value (0.7) depicted non-significant difference between alienated and non-alienated group of rural adolescent girls in relation to Neuroticism dimension of Personality.

Table 3 : Comparison of Extraversion Dimension of Personality of Alienated and Non-Alienated Groups of Adolescent Girls

| Group Description | N | MEAN | S.D. | t-value |
|----------------------|-----|-------|------|------------|
| Alienated | 279 | 13.26 | 2.19 | 0.42 NS |
| Non-Alienated | 297 | 13.32 | 2.09 | |

*Non-Significant at .05 level

The data compiled in table 3 showed that the mean value of Extraversion dimension of Personality of alienated group was 13.26 and S.D. was 2.19. For non-alienated group mean was 13.32 and S.D was 2.09. The calculated t-values (0.42) depicted non-significant difference between alienated and non-alienated group of rural adolescent girls in relation to Extraversion dimension of Personality.

On the basis of results obtained, regarding the comparison of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls on the basis of personality dimensions of extraversion and neuroticism, there was non-significant difference between them. In case of personality dimension of psychoticism, there was significant difference between the alienated and non-alienated adolescent girls. Therefore Hypothesis-1, “There will be no significant difference between the personality dimensions of extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls” was partially accepted.

Table 4 : Comparison of Social Acceptance of Alienated and Non-Alienated Groups of Adolescent Girls

| Group Description | No. | MEAN | S.D. | t-value |
|----------------------|-----|-------|------|-------------|
| Alienated | 279 | 11.33 | 4.30 | 1.38 N.S |
| Non-Alienated | 297 | 11.76 | 3.51 | |

*Non-significant at .05 level

The compilation of data in table 4 showed that the mean value of Social Acceptance of alienated group was 11.33 and S.D. was 4.30 and for non-alienated group, mean was 11.76 and S.D. was 3.51. The t-value (0.26) was insignificant even at .05 level. It indicated that no significant difference existed between alienated and non-alienated group of rural adolescent girls in relation to social acceptance. So the Hypothesis-2, “There will be no significant difference between the social acceptance of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls” was accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

1. There existed significant difference between the psychoticism dimension of personality of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls ($t=3.34$) which was significant even at .01 level of confidence. As the mean of the alienated group was higher ($M=5.72$) as compared to the non-alienated ($M=5.1$) group, it depicted that alienated group had more of psychoticism in their behavior. So, the adolescents who are high on alienation are psychotic in their behavior.
2. There existed non-significant difference between the extraversion dimension of personality ($t=0.42$) and neuroticism dimension of personality ($t=0.7$) of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls which was non-significant at .05 level. That means extraversion and neuroticism are not significantly related to alienation.
3. There existed non-significant difference between the social acceptance of alienated and non-alienated groups of rural adolescent girls ($t=1.38$) which was insignificant at .05 level. So, social acceptance is not significantly related to alienation.

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