

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR PEER PRESSURE

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ABSTRACT

Academic performance is considered as one of the major achievements in students' life. It is among the several components of academic success. It determines and contributes to happiness, satisfaction, comfort and well being of the individual. Among several factors like socio-economic status, anxiety, motivation and parental support, Peer pressure is one of the important factors affecting the performance of the child in his academic journey. The aim of the present study was to find out the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of adolescents. Descriptive survey method was used to find out such relationship. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample consisting of 100 male and 100 female adolescents of class X from secondary schools of district Gurdaspur in Punjab state. To assess the peer pressure, Peer Pressure scale by Singh and Saini (2010) was used while the performance of adolescents was measured from the marks obtained by them in their final examination. Correlation and t-value as statistical techniques were employed to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed negative and significant correlation between peer pressure and academic performance of adolescents. No significant difference in academic performance was found with respect to the gender while significant difference was there in peer pressure. Male adolescents were found more pressurized by their peers than their counterpart female adolescents.

Keywords: *Academic performance, adolescents, Peer pressure.*

INTRODUCTION

Academic Performance

Academic performance plays an important role in one's life because it pushes an individual towards his goal. It enables him to choose appropriate profession in this modern age of competition. It has also been noticed that individuals who perform academically higher also arrive at a high status in the society. It is a term used to indicate the degree of success attained in some general or specific area. It represents the acquirements of knowledge and skills and may employ the ability to make appropriate use of such knowledge or skill in a variety of present and future situations. The dictionary of education by C.V Good (1973) defines achievement as "accomplishment or proficiency of performance in a given skill or body of knowledge". It is also known as attained ability in the school subjects, although this is a restricted use of the term which may be applied to the entire endeavor.

Among all developmental stages, the adolescent stage is considered as very crucial stage. In this age the adolescents have so many challenges to face which lay different type of stresses on their mind. Peer pressure is one of them and its negative influences play very significant role in their academic performance as well as the development of their personality. There are different types of pressures on the mind of the school students which are responsible for their lowering academic performance i.e. pressure from school, pressure from parents and pressure from their peers. Sometimes a student has to do what he or she does not want to do and sometimes he or she is interested to do what is being done by his/her other mates. In this situation they remain unable to utilize their full energy to improve his academic performance. Peer pressure is one of them that lowers his/her academic performance.

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is the pressure exerted by other age mates to do or tries to do something harmful for others and self. It is defined as the attempt by the peers to compel an individual to obey the decisions or behaviours favoured by the pressurizing individual or group (Sim & Koh, 2003). Peer pressure occurs due to a group when the group forces someone to do something which is inappropriate. The group gives clear message that the person will be thrown out of the group or

will be targeted for taking revenge if the person does not act according to the group. The peer group influences the speech, moral values, clothing, eating habits, modes of talking and behaving etc of each member. Its approval is so alluring to an individual member that he becomes a virtual slave of it. With the passage of time, the peer group becomes dominant reference group, which to a considerable degree, regulates his activities, attitudes, interests and aspirations.

TYPES OF PEER PRESSURE

According to Owuamanam (2011), there are three different forms of peer pressure in secondary schools and higher institutions namely;

- 1. Direct Peer Pressure:** In this type of peer pressure, peers of a student confront and directly tell him/ her, what to do and how to do it.
- 2. Indirect Peer Pressure:** This is not essentially verbal peer pressure but visual peer pressure. One student who is hanging out with a group of students who smoke or do drugs is exposed to this kind of negative behaviour and may think it is acceptable.
- 3. Individual peer pressure:** Individual peer pressure is when a student is trying too hard to fit in and doing things because other students are doing them.

CAUSES OF PEER PRESSURE

According to Castrogiovanni (2012), peer pressure can have many causes, some of which are:

- 1. Curiosity:** It refers to the desire to know. Most of the students are very curious and interested not only to know but also to do such things what their mates are doing. This is a major cause of peer pressure leading them to do what they do not want to do.
- 2. Desire to fit in:** Many students have strong desire of being accepted by their peers, so they do certain things to fit in among their peers. On the other side they have pressure that if they do

not do such thing being done by their friends like smoking or drinking alcohol, they will be expelled from such group.

3. Lack of clear set of guidelines: Students coming from troubled homes may be more susceptible to peer pressure. Families having no clear set of guidelines or belief structures may produce children who are more likely to turn to social groups for their norms and guidelines.

4. Insecurity: Majority of students in schools and higher institutions feel insecure. As a result, they follow their peers and begin to perform acts they are not comfortable with. Moreover they think of the need to be accepted among same peers and this makes them to do what they do not want to do.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The investigator collected some review regarding the research problem as under:

Chen, Chang, and He (2003) investigated the relationship between peer influence and academic progress of children of China. It was found that the attitude of the group towards academics determines adolescent's success in academics. Elizabeth (2007) conducted a study on the topic, "Friendship Quality and Peer Attachment as Predictors of Adolescents' Subsequent Academic Achievement", The finding revealed that peer influences in adolescence, specifically friendship quality and peer attachment, predict improved academic achievement over time. Boehnke, (2008) conducted a study titled "The consequences of high peer pressure on academic performance in mathematics" on students belonging to three countries; Germany, Canada and Israel. The findings of the research indicated that in academic performance in the subject, mathematics, the prime victims of peer pressure were girls. Akhtar and Aziz (2011) studied "The impact of peer and parent pressure on the academic achievement of students." The population of the study comprised of 156 students of masters" class of both the sexes male and female. The results revealed that parent pressure had positive effect while peer pressure had negative effect on the academic achievement of female students. On the other side peer pressure and parent pressure had no effect on the academic achievement of male students. Deepika and Prema (2017) studied "Peer pressure in relation to academic achievement of deviant students". 145 deviant

students from classes IX, X, XI and XII were selected as sample from the population of 7546 students. The results revealed that academic achievement of deviant students was lowered under the effect of their peer pressure. Vangie et.al (2019) conducted a study on the title “Students, Peer Pressure and their Academic Performance in School” using survey method. It was revealed that peer pressure of students affects the academic performance of students with respect to different contents.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Peer pressure is often seen during the adolescence stage because the adolescents often seek comfort among their peers and intend to do what their peers do without knowing if it is good or bad for them. Academic performance of adolescents is badly affected by the pressure from their peers. In the present scenario young adolescents spend most of their time with the company of their peers and study under the influence of their peer groups. They don't utilize their whole mental energy in their academics but waste their precious time in the vulgar activities under the influence of their peer groups. The results of the reviewed studies in the present research were contradictory and most of the studies were conducted in abroad. The investigator felt a dire need to conduct such study on local level and he thought there is need to make more efforts in this direction. That is why the investigator chose this topic for research.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were framed for the study:

- 1) To study the difference in Academic Performance of male and female adolescents
- 2) To study the difference in Peer Pressure of male and female adolescents
- 3) To study the relationship between Academic Performance and Peer Pressure of adolescents

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- 1) There exists no significant difference in Academic Performance of male and female adolescents.
- 2) There exists no significant difference in Peer Pressure of male and female adolescents.
- 3) There exists no significant relationship between Academic Performance and Peer Pressure of adolescents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey method was employed by the investigator for the present study.

Sample

The sample consisted of 200 adolescents (100 male and 100 female) of X class was selected from 10 secondary schools of district Gurdaspur (Punjab) which were randomly selected. From each school only 20 students were selected randomly.

Tools used

Peer Pressure Scale developed by Singh and Saini (2010) was used for measuring peer pressure of students and for assessing the academic performance of adolescents, the marks of final examination of X class were taken as index of academic performance.

Statistical techniques used

Mean, Standard Deviation, 't' value and Product Moment Correlation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table I: Difference in Academic Performance of male and female adolescents

To study the significance of difference between the mean score on Academic Performance of male and female adolescents, t-value was calculated and the values were entered in the table 1.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value
Academic Performance	Male	100	57.51	9.20	.220
	Female	100	57.09	7.77	

The above table represents the Mean scores of Male (N=100) and Female (N=100) adolescents on academic performance. The Mean score of male and female adolescents on academic performance was found to be 57.51 and 57.09, S. D. for the same was found to be 9.20 and 7.77 relatively. The calculated t-value i.e. 0.220 which is less than the table value 1.96 showing insignificant difference between the academic performance of adolescents with respect to gender. Thus, it is evident that there exists no significant difference in the academic performance of male and female adolescents. There may be more or less difference in the academic performance of male and female adolescents. It may be due to the better educational facilities available in the co-educational schools. Hence, the null hypothesis-1 *There exists no significant difference in the academic performance of male and female adolescents* is accepted.

Table II: Difference in Peer Pressure of male and female adolescents

To study the significance of difference between the mean score on Peer Pressure of male and female adolescents, t-value was calculated and the values were entered in the table II.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value
Peer Pressure	Male	100	57.89	9.93	2.26
	Female	100	54.68	7.59	

**Significant at 0.05 level*

Above table represents the mean scores of male (N=100) and female (N=100) adolescents on peer pressure. The mean score of male and female adolescents on peer pressure was found to be 57.89 and 54.68, S. D. for the same was found to be 9.93 and 7.59 relatively. The calculated t-

value i.e. 2.26 which is less than 2.54 for $df = 198$ at 0.05 level of significance, showing significant difference between the peer pressure of adolescents with respect to gender. Thus, it is evident that there exists significant difference between the peer pressure of male and female adolescents. Male adolescents feel more peer pressure than the female adolescents. It may be due to the more independence for male adolescents than the independence given to female adolescents by their parents. Hence, the null hypothesis-2 *There exists no significant difference in peer pressure of male and female adolescents* is rejected.

Table III: Relationship between Peer Pressure and Academic Performance of adolescents

To study the relationship between Peer Pressure and Academic Performance of adolescents, the co-efficient of correlation (r) between the mentioned variables was calculated.

Variables	N	r	Level of significance	Remarks
Peer Pressure & Academic Performance	200	- 0.72	0.01 level	Significant

***significant at 0.01 level*

Table III. Represents the co-efficient of correlation (r) between Peer Pressure and Academic Performance of adolescents i.e. - 0.72 which is significant at 0.01 level shows that Peer Pressure and Academic Performance are significantly correlated. The magnitude of correlation indicates that Peer Pressure and Academic Performance of adolescents bear negative and significant correlation. It is evident that the more peer pressure the adolescents have, the less academic performance will be there. Hence, the null hypothesis-3 *There exists no significant relationship between the Peer Pressure and Academic Performance of adolescents* is rejected.

FINDINGS

Following are the findings on the basis of results of the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the Academic Performance of male and female adolescents.
2. There is significant difference in Peer Pressure of male and female adolescents. Male adolescents feel more Peer Pressure than the female adolescents.
3. Peer Pressure and Academic Performance are significantly correlated. The correlation found between Peer Pressure and Academic Performance of adolescents is negative and significant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are following recommendations on the basis of the findings of the study.

- Strong and proper counseling in the schools is recommended to guide the adolescents to protect them from negative influences of peer pressure.
- Effective and regular supervision by the parents as well as the teachers on their young students is recommended.
- Strict rules and regulations are essentially required to be applied by the school authority so that the students may not be victim of pressure from the peers and they may utilize their whole energy to improve their academic performance.

CONCLUSION

Peer group plays significant role in the academic performance of students as peer pressure is seen as a key part of the developmental process of the students. Peer pressure has more negative influence than positive influence on academic performance of students. A number of factors responsible for peer pressure influencing academic performance of students are isolation, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, lack of parental care etc. Problems of negative influences of peer pressure can be reduced or solved through the proper effective counseling in schools.

LIMITATIONS

The present study was delimited with respect to the following:

1. The study was delimited to X class school adolescents only.
2. The study was delimited only to Gurdaspur district in the state of Punjab.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The investigator proposes the following suggestions for further research.

1. An evaluative study may be carried out to see the effect of other variables like multi-media, socio-economic status and parental care on the academic performance of adolescents.
2. A research may be carried out to study the academic performance of students in relation to their emotional intelligence, social stress, family stress and anxiety.
- 3.

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