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PEER PRESSURE AND ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR LEARNING: A STUDY OF ADOLESCENTS IN GUJRAT CITY

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ABSTRACT

The study aims at discovering the influences of Peer Pressure on adaptive behavior learning in the adolescents. For the purpose two scales, Adaptive behavior scale (ABS) and Peer Pressure Scale (PPS) were developed to measure both variables. The Sample of the study was purposive in nature and comprised of late adolescents (n=120) i.e. 60 males and 60 females, from Gujrat city. Cronbach alpha was calculated and found to be significant for Peer Pressure Scale(PPS) and its subscales i.e. Belongingness Subscale, Influential Learning Subscale and for Influential Consequences Subscale while Cronbach alpha was also found significant for Adaptive Behavior Scale(ABS) and its subscales i.e. Interpersonal skills Scale, Self Discipline scale. Factor analysis was applied for the reduction of items. The significant correlation was found between ABS total and its subscales scores, with PPS total scores and its subscales scores. Inter correlation between PPS and its subscales revealed that Peer Pressure scale scores were highly significantly correlated with its four subscales. Inter correlation of ABS and its sub scales showed that total ABS scale scores are highly correlated with its all subscale scores. The results shows that Peer Pressure has a positive influence as those who received high amount of Peer Pressure, have better adaptive abilities.

Key Words: Peer Pressure, Adaptive behaviour Learning, Interpersonal skills, Belongingness, Influential learning, Self discipline,

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INTRODUCTION

Peer pressure means being influenced or pushed over by friends/age fellows to do something you do or do not wish to do. It is the pressure an individual feels to conform to the ways of a social group, into which he/she wants to be accepted. (Petal, 2007; Clasen, & Brown, 1985) Humans are social beings and they spend most of their lives associating and forming a close relationship with each other” (Brown, 1982).They are surrounded by the people such as parents, sibling, teachers, and friends. Henrich,et al., 2001

Basically these are the social forces influencing an individual’s life in different ways and exert him to learn adaptive behavior (Chemiss & Sluke, 2002). Family is primary force that fulfills primary and basic needs of an individual like love and nurture. In a family he learns to conform to the demands of society, execute appropriate behaviors (adaptive behavior), formulation of healthy relationships, and social norms and rules. (Biddle, Bank, & Marline, 1980) School is the second most important force that enhances an individual’s learning of social values and academic skills etc. There is also a power of friends, peers or age fellows being experienced by a person that is called Peer Pressure.

Peer Pressure is an important socializing factor for the adolescents. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that Peer Pressures surpass virtually all parental socializing efforts (Antonishak, 2008; Morton, et al. 1999).Phrases like “pressure to conform’ and the attraction of “being part of a group identity” are often used to describe what makes Peer Pressure so potent (Greenspan, 1998, p. 104).

Adaptive behavior is defined as “the age-appropriate behaviors necessary for people to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life (Reynolds, & Kamphaus, 2003). Adaptive behaviors include real life skills such as: Grooming, Dressing, Safety, Safe food handling, School rules, Ability to work, Money , management, Cleaning, Making friends, Social skills. Similarly Gresham & Elliot (1987) explained that “Adaptive behaviors are everyday living skills such as walking, talking, getting dressed, going to school, going to work, preparing a meal, cleaning the house, they are skills that a person learns in the process of adapting to his/her surroundings . Adaptive behavior is a type of behavior which indicates that the individual is able to take care of themselves and manage independent living, for example in terms established self care skills, adequate social skills and self control” (Hawley & Vaughn, 2003).

Adaptive behaviors is the ability to effectively meet social and community expectations for personal independence, physical needs and interpersonal relationships expected for one’s age & cultural group (as cited in Horvart, Block & Kelly 2007). It is performance of daily activities that are required for social and personal sufficiency (Renolds & Kamphaus, 2003). It can be said that

effectiveness or degree with which the individual meets the standards of personal independence and social responsibility” (Merrell, 2003).

The development of adaptive behavior takes place with age and experiences and these behaviors become complex as age increases. As a child grows the expectations for adaptive behaviors also increased and others people standards defined the assessment and measurement of these adaptive behaviors. Mostly adaptive behaviors development took place in early age of childhood, social responsibility, self help skills, and community self-sufficiency and social adjustment are included in this development of adaptive behaviors. (Dishion et al, 2001)

Previous Research

Clasen & Brown (1985) conducted a study to assess’ perception of peer pressure in five areas of behaviors, involvement with peers, school involvement, family involvement conformity to peer norms and misconduct. It was perceived that pressure towards peer involvement were strong while peer pressure towards misconduct were comparatively ambivalent. The results of the study revealed that pressure towards misconduct increased across grade levels while pressure towards norms diminished. They further suggested that peer pressure towards school and family involvement were stronger than misconduct moreover it was shown by them that the peer the process of Peer Pressures in adolescence had a strong role in socialization and identity development

Brown, Lohr, and McClenahan (1986) conducted a research to examine the nature of peer pressure perceived by early adolescents. They showed that peers encouragement towards misconduct was less than other type of behaviors. Females peer pressure was strong towards conformity than males but no genders differences were formed in perception of misconduct. They also revealed that perceived pressure and personal attitudes and behaviors were significantly associated but modest and mediated by gender and grades.

Biddle, Bank, & Marlin (1980) conducted a research to examine the parental and influence on adolescents. Different ways in which peers are effected by the peers and parental (1) the expression of normative standards or the modeling of behaviors (2) adolescents may respond directly or by internalizing norms or preferences for conduct (3) pressure norms and preferences have different effects on adolescent behavior depending on topic of the behaviors considered. Results revealed that peers influences are modeling on the other hand parental influences are through norms.

Smith & Fowler (1984) conducted a research to examine that classroom peer can serve a powerful source of reinforcement in increasing or maintaining both the positive and negative behaviors of their classmates. They examined that the effectiveness of a peer –monitored token system as hypothesized by them it can reduce disruptive and non participation for behaviorally impaired child. Results revealed that both teachers and peers monitors systems was successful in decreasing

disruptive behaviors. It was also concluded that peers are also successful in increasing participation.

Brown (1982) examined the extent and effects of peer pressure among high school students. The current study examined that how much pressure peer exerted in numerous areas of high school life and how this pressure influenced teenagers' attitudes and behaviors. The results revealed that peer pressure was strongest for females than males. The results showed that perception of peer pressure were in these areas as listed below dating attitudes, sexual activity, use of drugs, alcohol, but not with relationship

Topping (1998) examined peer assessment between students in colleges and universities. Results revealed that peer assessment of writing and peer assessment using marks, grades, and tests are positively related with students' achievements and attitudes. It was also concluded by research that the effects of peers are better than the effects of teachers.

Lau, Quadrel, & Hartman (1990) explored the sources of stability and change in young adults' health beliefs and behavior concerning drinking, diet, exercise, and wearing seat belts. Researcher showed that there were considerable changes in health behaviors during first years and peers have strong impact on that change. It was also suggested that parental influences were much more important than the peers on these beliefs and behaviors. The results revealed that influences from direct modeling of behaviors was most important for peers and parents

RESEARCH METHODS

Correlation research methodology was employed in the current study The main focus of the research was on the establishment of Peer Pressure Scale and Adaptive Behavior Scale.. The study consisted of two phases, phase-I and phase-II. Phase one was to generate the item pools for the construction of the research tools (PPS, &ABS). The procedure was same for the development of both scales. Thus by the end of phase-I, two scales namely Peer Pressure Scale (PPS) having 15 items and Adaptive Behavior Scale (ABS) having 20 items were finalized. The phase-II of the study focused on establishment of validity and reliability of Peer Pressure Scale and Adaptive Behavior Scale.

Aims and objectives

- To explore peer pressure influences on adolescents.
- To find out adaptive behavior learning among adolescents.
- To explore relationship between peer pressure and adaptive behavior.

Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that;

- Peer Pressure persuades adaptive behavior learning among adolescents

Sample

The Sample of the study was purposive in nature and comprised of late adolescents from University of Gujrat and Gujrat city. The students of with an age range of 18 – 24 years were included in the study. The total sample consisted of 120— Adolescents. The sample was drawn from the UOG (males = 30, female = 30) and Gujrat city (males = 30, females = 30). Thus in the phase II, Peer Pressure and Adaptive Behavior Scale were administered on the students ,each scale had four response categories i.e., Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The students were administered these forms individually.

Table-1. Frequencies and percentages of Demographic Variables (n=120)

<i>Sr.#</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>f(%age)</i>
1	Age	
	18 years	14 (11.7%)
	19 years	21 (17.5%)
	20 years	25 (20.8%)
	21 years	25 (20.8%)
	22 years	15 (12.5%)
	23 years	13 (10.8%)
	24 years	07 (5.8%)
2	Gender	
	Male	60 (50.0%)
	Female	60 (50.0%)
3	Education	
	Under matriculation	08 (6.7%)
	Matriculation	23 (19.2%)
	Intermediate	29 (24.2%)
	Graduation	33 (27.5%)
	Masters	27 (22.5%)

The table revealed frequency of demographic variables. The mostly sample belong to 20 (20.8%) and 21 (20.8%) years old. Second highest frequency of sample belong to 19 years old (17.5%). Third frequency belonged to 22 years old adolescents (12.5%).sample belong to age 18 years old showed forth highest frequency (11.7%). Sample of 23 years old showed fifth highest frequency (10.8%). At last sample belong to 24 years old frequency is (5.8%).Second demographic variable is gender which is consisted upon 50% males and 50 % females. Third demographic variable is Education, first highest frequency belonged to graduation (27.5%), Second highest frequency belonged to intermediate (24.2%), third highest frequency belonged to masters (22.5), and fourth frequency belonged to matriculation (19.2), at last under matriculation showed (6.7%).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out to discover the influences of peer pressure on adaptive behavior in adolescents. In the present study a Peer Pressure Scale (PPS) consist of 15 item and Adaptive Behavior Scale (ABS) consist of 20 items were developed to conduct research in two phas es (phase

I and phase II). The basic aim of the study was to find out relationship between impact of peer pressure and adaptive behavior learning among adolescents and to explore the gender differences to accepts peer pressure.

The internal consistency of these two constructed scales to determine the reliability was calculated. Cronbach alpha was found to be significant for Peer Pressure Scale and its three subscales i.e., for whole scale ($\alpha = .66, p < .0001$), for Belongingness Subscale (.61), for Influential Learning Subscale (.58), and for Influential Consequences Subscale (.58) while Cronbach alpha was also found significant for Adaptive Behavior Scale and its subscales i.e., for whole scale ($\alpha = .62, p < .0001$), for Interpersonal skills Subscale (.62), for Self Discipline Subscale (.65), for Self Discipline Subscale-II (.52), for Social Skills (.57), for Decrease Self Discipline Subscale (.60) and for Antisocial Subscale (.51).

To enlist the principle component of Peer Pressure scale factor analysis was employed. Three factors for PPS were constructed to fulfill the criteria of study. The factors having minimum frequency of two were selected for this study. Rest of the factors were excluded because that have only one item and one factor was excluded because it was not interlinked with each others. Total remaining items in this scale were 11 that were loaded in three sub scales Belongingness Subscale (BSS), comprised of 3 loadings, Influential Learning Subscale (ILS) comprised of 5 items, and Influential Consequences Subscale (ICS) comprised of 3 items.

After that factor analysis was also employed to enlist the principle component of Adaptive Behavior (ABS) that resulted into six factors. Factors which were chosen for the current study were Interpersonal Skills Subscale (ISS) loaded with 4 items, Self Discipline Subscale-I (SDS-I) loaded with 3 items, Social skills Subscale (SSS) loaded with 3 items, Decrease Self Discipline Subscale (DSDS) loaded 4 items, Self Discipline Subscale-II (SDS-II) loaded 2 items, and Anti Social Subscale (ASS) loaded 2 items. One factor was removed as it was not interrelated with each other.

After factor analysis correlation between the PPS and its sub scales with ABS and its subscales were also computed. The significant correlation was found between ABS total and its subscales scores, with scores PPS total scores and its subscales scores. The results showed that the subscales had high significance between them were BS, ISS, ILS & ISS, ILS, SD-I & SDS-II, SSS & ILS. There were also some Subscales which had not significant correlation between them were ICS had no correlation with all other Subscales and no correlation was found between BS & SDS-I; BS & SDS-II; BS & DSDS; ILS & DSDS; and ILS & ASS. Overall results showed that PPS total score was highly significantly correlated with ABS total score.

This positive correlation strongly supported the research hypothesis “those who received high amount of peer pressure had better adaptive abilities”. Stormshak, Bieman, Bruschi, Dodge, & Coie (1999) reported that deficiencies in adaptive behavior skills reduced peer preferences, while

adaptive behavioral competencies enhanced the peer preferences. In another study Schunk (1987) reported that peer influence can promote various types of behavioral changes in adolescent.

Inter correlation between PPS total score and its subscales were revealed, that peer pressure scale scores were highly significantly correlated with its four subscales. The subscales that were significantly correlated with each others were BS & ILS, and ILS & ICS. Results also revealed that least correlation was found between BS & ICS. Connor & Eleanor (2001) reported that adolescents who are low accepted in peer group have a low level of belongingness. Barbara, Breda & Philip (2007). Reported that adolescents for whom peer group membership is very important, they had also a positive sense of belongingness. Peer Group Membership and a Sense of Belonging: Their Relationship to Adolescent Behavior Problems.

Inter correlation of ABS total score and its sub scales were showed that total ABS scale scores are highly correlated with its all subscale scores. ISS was highly significantly correlated with SDSI, SDS-II and SSS scores while it was least correlated with DSDS, and ASS scores. SDS-I was highly significantly correlated with SDS-II and significantly correlated with SSS scores, while it had no correlation with DSDS, & ASS. SDS-II was also highly significantly correlated with SSS had no correlation with DSDS, & ASS scores. Highly significant correlation was found between ASS & DSDS. Gresham & Elliot (1987) reported in their study that there is a relationship between adaptive behavior and social skills. Dishion, Loeber, Loeber, & Patterson (1984). Reported in their study that adolescents who are academic skills deficit may be have strong covariates of antisocial behavior. In his literature he also showed that adolescents who are antisocial will be lacking in academic, interpersonal and work skills. Morton, Crump, Haynie & Saylor (1999). Reported in their study that adolescents who have constructive social bonds in school, they are more likely to avoid doing misbehavior and antisocial behavior. Taylor, Eddy & Biglan (1999) reported in their study that interpersonal skills training are very common approach to avoid aggressive and antisocial behavior and this can play an important supportive role.

PPS scores and its subscales scores were further analyzed to read Mean and *SD*. Mean of total Peer Pressure Scale scores was 41.65 (*SD* = 4.01), second highest *Mean* was ILS it was 14.63 (*SD* = 2.18), third highest *Mean* was for BS was 10.22 (*SD* = 1.62) and ICS *Mean* was very low it was 10.17 (*SD* = 1.56).

ABS and its six subscales scores were further analyzed to read Mean and *SD*. Mean of ABS was 53.62 (*SD* = 5.22), second highest mean of its subscale was ISS 13.69 (*SD* = 1.83) third highest mean was 9.97 (*SD* = 1.15) for SSS, fourth was 9.41 (*SD*= 1.76) for SDS-I, fifth was for DSDS, it was 9.38 (*SD* = 9.36), sixth was for SDS-II, it was 6.46 (*SD* = 1.12) and lowest level mean was of sub scale of ASS it was 4.71 (*SD* = 1.23).

Through investigation for gender differences it was revealed that both genders reported in same manners on PPS. As there was no significant difference was found between male and female, both accept Peer Pressure equally. *Mean* of male respondent was 34.589 (*SD* = 3.84), females respondent's *Mean* was 35.45 (*SD* = 3.291). Brown, Lohr, and McClenahan (1986) reported in their study that females peer pressure was strong towards than males but genders were not different in perception of misconduct. Thus results of present study showed that females and males equally accept peer pressure, thus it is possible because of cultural variation. Every culture has its own values and customs so peer pressure effects can be vary according to a cultural and a society.

The current study also found out the one way analysis of variance on peer pressure Scale scores for five educational groups (under-matric, matric, intermediate, bachelor, masters). It was investigated that which educational group accept peer pressure more, the results showed the frequency of Bachelor educational group is 3.64*, that is highly significant in educational group. The highly significant educational group which accepted influences from peer pressure is bachelor. Mean of bachelor group is 36.12 (*SD* = 3.38) on the other hand which group is on low level is intermediate group, Mean of this Educational group was 33.00 (*SD* = 3.955).

The study also investigated the ABS scores that which gender accepted adaptive behaviors more strongly. The results showed that both gender showed equally accepted adaptive behavior, there is no significant difference between both genders. The mean of males group was 53.40 and mean of females group were 53.83.

The current study also found out the one way analysis of variance on Adaptive Behavior Scale scores for five educational groups (under-matric, matric, intermediate, bachelor, masters). The present study investigated that which educational group accepted adaptive behavior more. It has been concluded from the results that educational differences do not play a role in accepting adaptive behaviors. The results are not significant that showed that no educational group is related to adaptive behaviors learning.

Thus all of these results showed that there is significant relationship between Peer pressure and Adaptive behavior that support the research hypothesis that, those who received high amount of peer pressure have better adaptive abilities.

LIMITATIONS

- Due to limited time period only one age group (adolescence) was included in the study while other age groups were ignored.
- Focus of the study was only educated people while uneducated were ignored due to limited time period.

- There were not culturally standardized scales to measure Peer Pressure and adaptive behavior.

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