

PREVALENCE AND COMPARISON OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AMONG HOSTELITES AND DAY SCHOLARS OF UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study was to investigate the prevalence and comparison of psychological problems among hostelites and day scholars of university. With regards to comparison of psychological problems, it was assumed that there would be a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to anxiety, impulsivity, dependency, guilt, withdrawn and aggression. The sample of one hundred and twenty students (n = 120) was drawn from the University of Gujrat. About sixty (n = 60) students were taken from hostel of Gujrat University. Other sixty students (n = 60) were selected from different departments of the same university through convenient sampling technique. Data was gathered through Personal Information Form and using Human Figure Drawing Test (HFD). Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) was employed to examine the prevalence of psychological problems among students. Comparative analysis of psychological problems was done through chi-square that showed a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to only impulsivity. However, hostelites and day scholars did not significantly differ on the variables of anxiety, dependency, guilt, withdrawn and aggression. The present study has implications for teachers, parents and university administration.

Keywords: Hostelites, Day scholars, Psychological Problems, University

INTRODUCTION

At university level, students feel more pressure of work and challenges that develop physical, social and emotional difficulties among them (Rodgers & Tennison, 2009). Owing to social and emotional changes, students are at risk of developing different mental health problems (Eisenberg, Gollust, Golberstein, & Hefner, 2007). Previous evidences have documented different mental health problems among college and university students (Stanley & Manthorpe, 2001). In numerous studies, students reported stress, anxiety, depression and eating problems which impaired their academic performance, too (Tosevski, Milovancevic, & Gajic, 2010). Students are suffering from depression, anxiety and stress all over the world (Wong, Cheung, Chan, Ma, & Tang, 2006). Both male and female university students reported anxiety and depression as per criteria of DSM-IV (Price, McLeod, Gleich & Hand, 2006). Scientific literature also demonstrated alcohol use among university students (Smart & Ogborne, 2000).

University students, both hostelites and day scholars, are experiencing different environmental and social problems. Students dwelling far away from university campus have to choose hostel as a living place. Living far away from family for a long time is a tough experience for young students. They have to strive hard to depend on themselves. Usually, in Pakistani society, mothers do all of the tasks for the sake of their children' future. Parents

want their children getting distinction and making them feel proud among kith and kin. Therefore, they try their best to provide comfort and ease to their children. Scientific literature also demonstrated that parental support and family cohesiveness increase the chances of more positive outcome in academics (Bowlby, 1973). Values, attitudes and expectations of parents/families keep influencing students, even in the physical absence of family member (Adams, Berzonsky & Keating, 2006). Social, psychological, physical and family problems of hostel students influence their learning ability and academic performance (Chew- Graham, Rogers & Yassin, 2003).

Among medical students, hostelites were suffering from more anxiety than day scholars (Rupari, Kamble & Kurwale, 2012). A student examined depression among new and old hostel students of college. A significant difference was emerged among fresh hostel student in pre and post semester. In post semester, the level of depression was low as compare to pre semester. Besides, researches also show positive impact of good hostel condition and facilities on students (Bekurs, 2007). Therefore, in a study, a non-significant difference was emerged among female university students of advantaged and disadvantaged communities dwelled in hostels in relation to positive self-evolution, perception of reality and group oriented attitude as well (Kalhotra1 & Sharma, 2013). Another study also has shown female hostelites exhibiting more resilience than female day scholars. However, both hostelites and day scholars reported equal level of stress in the same study (Singh, 2014).

Abolfotouh, Bassiouni, Mounir and Fayyad (2007) studied 600 university students who were living in hostels. Among them, 28% students appeared to have risk behaviors, 23% low health status and 80.3 % had low social support. Students were not happy being residents of the hostel and reported bad health services there. Among 200 students, about two third students living onshore in Australia also reported loneliness and isolation (Sawir, Marginson, Deumert, Nyland, & Ramia, 2007). A study examined adjustment problems among new boarders in girl's hostel of university. Results have shown that new boarders were having less adjustment problems related to home, health, emotions and education but having problem in social area of adjustment (Sharma, 2013). Female hostelites of another university appeared to have average level of all dimensions of mental health (Durgesh, 2007; as cited in Sharma, 2013) worked on a study of mental health of university female students living in Hostels of Himachal Pradesh University.

Previous researches show mixed results regarding psychological health status of hostelites and day scholars of university. Some studies have documented psychological and social health of hostelites as equal to day scholars and some studies have shown day scholars with less emotional and behavioral problems as compare to hostelites, as mentioned above. In the same way, the current study has focused on exploring the prevalence of psychological problems among hostelites and day scholars of university. Following research questions have been framed to explore the answers of first objective of the present study;

1. Are hostelites of university suffering from psychological problems?
2. Are day scholars of university suffering from psychological problems?

Second objective of the current study is to make comparison among hostelites and day scholars with regards to psychological problems. Therefore, following hypotheses have been framed;

1. There will be a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to anxiety
2. There will be a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to impulsivity

3. There will be a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to dependency
4. There will be a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to guilt
5. There will be a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to withdrawn
6. There will be a significant difference among hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to aggression

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The current study explored the prevalence of the psychological problems that employed exploratory research method. Furthermore, comparison of psychological problems was done wherein two groups of participants (hostelites and day scholars) were compared with each other in respect to psychological problems that employed comparative research method. Two groups of students, hostelites and day scholars, represented independent group design.

Sample

The sample of the present study was one hundred and twenty ($n = 120$) university students. Among them, sixty ($n = 60$) students were taken from hostel of Gujrat University. Sixty ($n = 60$) students were selected from five different departments of same university through convenient sampling method. Day scholars of university were the residents of Gujrat city. Sample of the present study was taken on the following inclusive/exclusive criteria;

- Students who were living in hostel for last one year were considered as hostelites
- Students who were living in their own home located in Gujrat city were considered as day scholars of university
- Students without physical illness or disability
- Students who were 18 years old or above

Measures

Personal Information Form was used to explore demographic characteristics of the participants, for instance; age, gender, educational level, department, current residency (hostel/home), duration of living in hostel, University.

In the present study, Human Figure Drawing Test (HFDT) was used to screen out the psychological problems in terms of anxiety, impulsivity, dependency, guilt, withdrawn and aggression among hostelites and day scholars of Gujrat University. HFD is a projective test (Koppitz (1969). Person is instructed to draw a complete Human Figure with pencil on a blank paper that, later on, is psychologically interpreted.

HFD is a non-verbal measure that is used to detect psychopathology via graphic production of self-projection (Koppitz, 1968; Machover, 1949). Scientific literature highlights that HFD test is one of the most frequently used assessment measures (Kahill, 1984). It ranked two among sixty two projective and objective tests used to diagnose a person (Sundberg, 1959). HFD also has been used in diagnosis of psychoses, anxiety, depression and schizophrenia (Deslauriers & Halpern, 1947; Baldwin 1964; Arieti, 1974). In a study, rating of two kinds of scoring procedures of HFD (Koppitz, 1968) was compared (Fuller et al.1997). It was concluded that the HFD has inter-rater reliability of .85 that depicted HFD as a useful measure for the generation of hypotheses which further help in evaluation and treatment.

Procedure

Students of Gujrat University, both hostelites and day scholars were approached with permission. Before data collection, the purpose and benefits of the research were elucidated to them. Ethics of confidentiality and risk/benefit ratio were also briefed. When students gave their consent for participating in the study, personal information form was given to them to be filled. After that, they were given complete instruction how to perform on Human Figure Drawing Test. Instructions were given as, “Draw a whole person on a piece of paper. It can be any kind of person you want to draw, just make sure that it should be a whole person and a not a stick figure or a cartoon figure”.

All participants, individually, tried to draw a complete human figure on the given paper as per instruction. There was no time limit to do draw a figure. No interruption was made and privacy was maintained throughout the administration. When participants completed the given task, they were thanked for showing interest and cooperation in the present study.

RESULTS

Figures drawn by participants were interpreted in terms of psychological problems. To find out the prevalence of psychological problems, frequencies and percentages were calculated. Then Chi-square test was applied to find out the difference between hostelites and day scholars in respect to each problem such as; anxiety, impulsivity, dependency, guilt, withdrawn and aggression.

Table:1 Prevalence and difference of psychological problems among hostelites and day scholars of university

<i>Psychological problems</i>	<i>Hostelites (n = 60)</i>		<i>Day Scholars (n = 60)</i>		<i>Obtained Chi-Square Value</i>
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	
Anxiety	37	61.6	28	46.6	2.7
Impulsivity	15	25	6	10	4.6*
Dependency	19	31.6	27	45	2.2
Guilt	13	21.6	17	28.3	0.68
Withdrawn	11	18.33	08	13.3	3.04
Aggression	20	33.3	24	40	1.7

Analysis of the research data (Table 1) indicated the prevalence and comparison of psychological problems among hostelites and day scholars of university. Greater numbers of students (both hostelites and day scholars) reported anxiety as compare to other psychological problems. Reported anxiety among hostelites is 61.6% and among day scholars is 46.6%. Dependency was more reported by day scholars (45%) than hostelites (31.6%). About 40% of day scholars and 33.3% hostelites reported aggression. About 28.3 % day scholars and 21.6 % reported guilt. Withdrawn was reported by 18.33 % hostelites and by 13.3% day scholars of university. Impulsivity was more reported by hostelites (25%) than day scholars (10%).

While comparing hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to psychological problems, it was found out that hostelites and day scholars of university significantly differed

only on the variable of impulsivity ($x^2 = 4.6$, $n = 120$, $p > 0.05$). A non-significant difference was found out among hostelites and day scholars with regards to anxiety ($x^2 = 2.7$, $n = 120$, $p < 0.05$), dependency ($x^2 = 2.2$, $n = 120$, $p < 0.05$), guilt ($x^2 = 0.68$, $n = 120$, $p < 0.05$), withdrawn ($x^2 = 3.04$, $n = 120$, $p < 0.05$) and aggression ($x^2 = 1.7$, $n = 120$, $p < 0.05$).

DISCUSSIONS

Throughout the world, a significant portion of university population reported psychological problems (Nordin, Talib, & Yaacob, 2009; Seim & Spates, 2010). However, prevalence of psychological problems among students varied from 4% to 85% (Gallagher et al., 2001). In the current study, anxiety appeared to be affecting more both hostelites and day scholars of university as compare to other psychological problems. Previous studies also revealed the anxiety proneness (52% moderate, 36% severe and 12% very severe) among university students (Saleem, Mahmood & Naz, 2013). Anxiety is a mental health disorder causing suffering and impairment in daily functioning. People with anxious thoughts and feelings have a sense of uncontrollability and unpredictability regarding aversive life events (Wilson, Nathan, O'leary, & Clark, 1996).

Though, the prevalence of anxiety is greater than other psychological problems, despite that a non-significant difference was appeared between hostelites and day scholars of university in respect to anxiety. Anxiety is triggered by variety of environmental factors such as; stress, parental divorce, loss/death of significant one, immigration, a disaster, change of school, shift in home and leaving parents' home, as mentioned in Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Health Disorders (DSM, 2013). Students living in university hostel moved from their own home, where they have full time parental support and affection. This shift in dwelling place and staying away from immediate family became the cause of stress and continuous tension along with burden of academic tasks and work pressure among hostelites. In 2002, Gisele also proved that life in hostel is full of stressors that may harm judgment, concentration, self-esteem of students and cause anxiety and depression. On the other hand, students dwelling in their own home might have encountered different kinds of environmental factors that made them susceptible to anxiety. Therefore, both hostelites and day scholars of university reported more anxiety in the present study as compare to other psychological problems.

Another psychological problem is impulsivity that was reported more by hostelites as compare to day scholars. Impulsivity refers to unreliable and poorly controlled behavior (Campbell & Werry, 1986). Premature expression, risky and inappropriate actions according to the situation may constitute to impulsivity (Daruna & Barnes, 1993). The problem of impulsivity usually includes low inhibitory control, poor attention ability, showing intolerance in response to delay rewards or quick decision making. Due to impulsivity, person may try to grab the valuable opportunity. However, impulsive person can make a devastating decision for which, later on, he or she may lament (Winstanely, Eagle, & Robbins, 2006). Hostelites remain far away from their home without full time parental guidance. They are expected to make decision by own, that's why, there are chances to take hasty decisions resulting in inappropriate actions. On the other hands, day scholars remain with elders observing them taking decisions and solving daily matters. They have guidance and full time support concerning personal matters. All these factors might have played the key role in developing impulsive behavior among hosetilites than day scholars of university in the present study.

Although, hostelites and day scholars of university did not significantly differ on the variable of Dependency but in the current study, the problem of dependency was reported by both

hostelites (31.6%) and day scholars (45%) of university. Dependent people need approval and acceptance from others (Bornstein, 1995). They emotionally and behaviorally dependent on others, even, concerning minor matters. Dependent people desire for proximity to others in order to have their attention and approval (Ainsworth, 1969). Prevalence of dependency among participants, in the present study, has shown that day scholars seemed to more dependent on others because, most of the time, they have significant figures around them. In our culture, family members (mother figure) do help their children in solving daily matters. In hostels, students who are living without their family members, therefore, most of the work, they have to do by their own self. However, they show proximity to roommates or other students living in hostel like them. In such relations, at least they have opportunity for self-expression. While expressing feelings and personal problems, hostelites became emotionally and behaviorally dependent on other hostelites and roommates. Due to that reason, both hostelites and day scholars of university reported dependency that could not create a significant difference among them.

The problem of guilt was also appeared as one of the psychological problems among hostelites (21.6 %) and day scholars (28.3%) of university. Guilt constitutes unpleasant feelings and beliefs (Kubany & Watson, 2003). University students seemed to be considering themselves, more or less equally, responsible for their actions, mistakes and failures. Though, during student life, the prime goal of the majority of students is to achieve academic excellence, therefore, any mistake or failure related to their learning task might have induced guilt among students who have reported guilt. Situational factors, for example, directly harming any close relationship may also produce guilt (Kubany & Watson, 2003). Mistakes, unfair dealing with others in their daily lives or in specific situation might contribute to guilt among both hostelites and day scholars of university in the current study.

Psychological problem of withdrawn was also reported by hostelites (18.33%) and day scholars (13.3%) of university students but significant difference was not emerged between both groups. Withdrawn refers to the act of going away from something granted. Results show that less number of both hostelites and day scholars reported the problem of withdrawn. It depicts that students continuously seemed to strive for achieving their goals, maintaining relationships and to be in touch with leaning and living environment. Students, either hostelites or day scholars, who reported “withdrawn” seemed to be uncomfortable or disturbed owing to some other problems such as; anxiety. Previous studies also reported that withdrawn behavior is associated with anxiety and depression (Goodwin, Fergusson & Horwood, 2004). Therefore, reported prevalence of withdrawn, in the present attempt, can be better explained in the connection of other psychological problems.

In the present study, 33.3% hostelites 40 % day scholars reported aggression with a non-significant difference among them. But both groups did not significantly differ from each other in respect to aggression. Variety of factors contribute to aggression among people such as; impulsivity, poor control over emotions and aggressive impulses and self (Moffitt et al., 2011), violent environment within home, neighbors and country (Aguilar et al., 2000), not having supportive and enduring relationships, social exclusion or rejection (Warburton et al., 2006), authoritarian parenting, permissive parenting, and parents’ income (Batool, 2013). Causing factors vary individual to individual but in the context of aggression among university students, it can argue that when students (hostelites/day scholars) felt difficulty in controlling environmental stressors, they might become frustrated. That frustration resulted in aggressive behavior among both hostelites and day scholars of university.

Overall findings of the present study imply that university students including hostelites and day scholars are prone to develop psychological problems. The psychological status is

fundamental part of personal, social and academic functioning of students. Therefore, university administration, parents and teachers need to take preventive measures to make learning and living environment more productive for the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the current study, psychological problems were examined by Human Figure Drawing Test (HFDT) that merely screens out the problems. Other tests, for instance; objective tests may be more helpful in determining psychological problems among university students, both hostelites and day scholars.

Hostelites and day scholars of single university (University of Gujrat) were included in the study. University environment and hostel facilities have significant impact on students' health and academic performance. Students, day scholars and hostelites, from other universities should be examined in respect to their psychological health.

Impact of psychological health on academic performance can also be studied among both hostelites and day scholars of university. Gender difference need to be explored in respect to psychological problems among both hostelites and day scholars of university.

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