

Assessment of Shyness among Tribal and Rural Adolescents and Its Relationship with Vocational Interests

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to find out the prevalence of shyness among adolescents in tribal and rural areas as well as to find out the relationship between of occupational preference among adolescents of tribal and rural areas, influence of shyness levels, gender, and income on job preference among the adolescents. The experience of shyness can occur at any or all of the following levels: cognitive, affective, physiological and behavioural and may be triggered by a wide variety of situational cues. Since shyness could affect any dimension, the present study aims to identify the influence of shyness on occupational preference of the adolescents. The study of adolescent shyness has implications for understanding some of the more extreme examples of adolescent violence as exhibited by recent high school shootings perpetrated by shy, socially isolated, angry adolescents labeled as “cynically shy” (Carducci, 2000) and the development of strategies for reducing the social isolation experienced by such socially disenfranchised adolescents. Finally, severe shyness that continues into the later years of life can result in chronic social isolation that leads to increasingly severe loneliness and related psychopathology, and even to chronic illness and a shorter life span. Lastly, after studying the shyness aspects and relationship with other variables, an attempt will be made to suggest few remedial measures for shyness.

Keywords: *Shyness, Cognitive, Affective, Tribes And Behavior*

Shyness may be defined experientially as excessive self-focus characterized by negative self-evaluation that creates discomfort and/or inhibition in social situations and interferes with pursuing one's interpersonal or professional goals. The experience of shyness can occur at any or all of the following levels: cognitive, affective, physiological and behavioural and may be triggered by a wide variety of situational cues. Among the most typical situations are interactions with authorities and strangers, one on one opposite sex interactions, and unstructured social settings. Subcategories of shyness reflect the degree (i.e., mild social awkwardness to totally inhibiting social phobia) and frequency of experienced shyness and include chronic shyness

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(self-labeling as shy and the experience of shyness in numerous social situations), situational shyness (the experience of shyness in specific social situations), and shy extroverts (experience anxiety and negative self-evaluation but are publicly outgoing). Although similar in its overt expression, introversion is not a subcategory of shyness. Shy individuals would prefer to be with others but are restrained by the experience of shyness. (Brophy, 1996). Bell *et al* (1994) suggest that certain young adults high in shyness (especially those also high in defensiveness) may be among the subset of the population at increased risk for Parkinson's disease later in life. Jasnoski, Bell, and Peterson (1994) reported that there is a structural connection between childhood shyness and adult panic attacks. Three paths were confirmed, the first path with hay fever, the second with anxiety, and the third with a combination of anxiety and anxiety sensitivity.

Shyness is a big obstacle in the social capabilities of a person. It hinders him or her from realizing the potentials that can only be done in the social context. People who are experiencing shyness is on the increase too, an estimated 10 per cent over the last decade. Shyness and its impact on behaviour have been subjects of interest to many researches. The following section presents a review of various studies done in the area of shyness.

Shy people may be quiet, but there's a lot going on in their heads. When they encounter a frightening or unfamiliar situation--meeting someone new, for example--a brain region responsible for negative emotions goes into overdrive. But new research indicates that shy people may be more sensitive to all sorts of stimuli, not just frightening ones. The findings come courtesy of brain scans of 13 extremely shy adolescents and 19 outgoing ones. Researchers, led by Amanda Guyer, a development psychologist at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, placed each child in a functional magnetic resonance imaging machine and had them play games in which they could win or lose money. The study subjects--who were classified as either shy or outgoing based on psychological testing--were instructed to press a button as quickly as possible after being shown a signal. If they pressed the button in time, they won money, or at least prevented themselves from losing it. Both groups performed similarly, and there was no difference in the activity of their amygdalas--the brain region that governs fear. Shy children, however, showed two to three times more activity in their striatum, which is associated with reward, than outgoing children, the team reports in the 14 June issue of the *Journal of Neuroscience*. "Up until now, people thought that [shyness] was mostly related to avoidance of social situations," says co-author and child psychiatrist Monique Ernst. "Here we showed that shy children have increased activity in the reward system of the brain as well." Why this would be the case is still not clear. "One interpretation is that extremely shy children have an increased sensitivity to many types of stimuli--both frightening and rewarding," says Guyer. There are other possibilities as well, says Mauricio Delgado, a psychologist at Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey. For example, increased activity in the striatum may help shy children cope with the anxiety of stressful situations, although not enough so to help them overcome their shyness. These findings are also significant because they may help researchers understand why shy children develop psychiatric problems at an increased rate later in life, says Brian Knutson, a

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psychologist at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. Because shy children appear to be more sensitive to winning and losing, they may experience emotions more strongly than others, putting them at risk for emotional disorders such as anxiety and depression. On the flip side, shy children may experience positive emotions such as success very strongly, helping them succeed, Knutson says. (By Michael Hochman, Science NOW Daily New, (2006)

Research (Monique Laberge et. al, 2006) shows 25 percent of the time genetic predisposition to shyness does not develop into shyness. Some researchers believe that a shy temperament may require environmental triggers, such as insecurity of attachment in the form of difficult relationships with parents, family conflict or chaos, frequent criticism, a dominating older sibling, or a stressful school environment. Research has also identified a strong cultural link to shyness. In the United States, shyness surveys typically show that shyness is highest among Asian Americans and lowest among Jewish Americans. Using culturally sensitive adaptations of the Stanford Shyness Inventory, researchers in eight countries administered the inventory to groups of 18 to 21 year olds. Results showed that a large proportion of participants in all cultures reported experiencing shyness to a considerable degree—from 31 percent in Israel to 57 percent in Japan and 55 percent in Taiwan. In Mexico, Germany, India, and Canada, shyness levels were close to the U.S figure of 40 percent. In all countries, shyness is perceived as more negative than positive, with 60 percent or more considering shyness to be a problem. There is no gender difference in reported shyness, but males tend to conceal their shyness because it is considered a feminine trait in most countries. For example, in Mexico, males report shyness less often than females do.

How you react to stress influences how easily you resist or succumb to disease, including viruses like HIV, discovered UCLA AIDS Institute scientists. Reported in the Dec.15 edition of Biological Psychiatry, (Elaine Schmidt, 2003) the new findings identify the immune mechanism that makes shy people more susceptible to infection than outgoing people.

The study (Carducci, 2000) was conducted to examine gender differences in the self-selected strategies used by shy individuals to deal with their shyness. The pattern of results indicates that shy females are more likely than shy males to deal with their shyness by selecting strategies that involve turning to others while shy males are more likely than shy females to select strategies that involve taking actions by themselves. Such a pattern of results is consistent with the more general “tend-and-befriend” response to stress in females characterized by seeking and providing social support. Because social norms favor males as the initiator of social contact, shy males may be more inclined to select strategies that are more proactive, public, and done without social support. Such strategies are also more likely to carry a greater risk of rejection and public embarrassment for shy males should their individualistic efforts to initiate social contact fail.

Shyness and academic achievement

The research literature (2007) supports an interactions interpretation of the origins of shyness: strong genetic predispositions in some newborns and strong experiential factors operating with

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some adolescents and adults to create shyness. Being born timid, easily aroused, and not responsive to social engagement overtures leads to less frequent social interactions with parents, siblings, family and friends... promoting a shy response style. Although many children who are shy overcome it in time, many others remain shy all of their lives. However, research also shows that some people have become shy in adulthood who were not so previously, usually due to experiences of rejection, conditions that lower self esteem, and fears of failure in social domains. Social anxiety is an experience of fear, apprehension or worry regarding social situations and being evaluated by others. People vary in how often they experience anxiety in this way or in which kinds of situations. Anxiety about public speaking, performance, or interviews is common. Social anxiety can be related to shyness. The experience is commonly described as having physiological components (e.g. sweating, blushing), cognitive/perceptual components (e.g. belief that one may be judged negatively; looking for signs of disapproval) and behavioral components (e.g. avoiding a situation). It can also be associated with Asperger's Syndrome. Social anxiety causes difficulty with social interaction.

As far the prevalence of shyness on tribal population, the researcher did not get literature back up as expected. Even a thorough search in the Internet, CD-ROM, books and Journals did not yield any results. The present study aims to find out the prevalence of shyness among adolescents in tribal and rural areas as well as to find out the relationship between of occupational preference among adolescents of tribal and rural areas, influence of shyness levels, gender, and income on job preference among the adolescents. The experience of shyness can occur at any or all of the following levels: cognitive, affective, physiological and behavioural and may be triggered by a wide variety of situational cues. Since shyness could affect any dimension, the present study aims to identify the influence of shyness on occupational preference of the adolescents. The study of adolescent shyness has implications for understanding some of the more extreme examples of adolescent violence as exhibited by recent high school shootings perpetrated by shy, socially isolated, angry adolescents labeled as “cynically shy” (Carducci, 2000) and the development of strategies for reducing the social isolation experienced by such socially disenfranchised adolescents. Finally, severe shyness that continues into the later years of life can result in chronic social isolation that leads to increasingly severe loneliness and related psychopathology, and even to chronic illness and a shorter life span. Lastly, after studying the shyness aspects and relationship with other variables, an attempt will be made to suggest few remedial measures for shyness.

Shyness is something that all people experience at one time or another. In most cases it is a normal, temporary behavior. In children, some shyness is normal, especially when they are around 5-6 months of age, and then again at about two years of age. Shyness at these ages is considered a normal part of development. Shyness becomes a problem in a child when it interferes with relationships with other people, with social situations, school, and/or other important aspects of a child's life. Problems with shyness are usually evident by the time a child reaches three years of age.

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The Soliga Tribe lives in the tropical evergreen forests of South India. Soliga means ‘people of the bamboo’, a name based on their belief that their ancestors originated from the bamboo. It also reflects the Soliga’s close association with nature, referring to the dense thickets they inhabit. Soligas believe that human life is intertwined with the eco-system. Their love for nature is reflected in their local tribal laws. Fruits and berries are harvested only from trees which flower in abundance and very ripe or raw fruits are not collected. This leaves enough fruits for birds and other animals that also depend on them. Soligas are the major indigenous tribes of BR Hills situated in Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka state in south India. Since time immemorial, Soligas have led a semi-nomadic life and were engaged in shifting cultivation. Collection of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) like honey, lichens, soap nut, roots of Magali (*Decalapis hamiltonii*), fruits of Amla (*Emblica officinalis*), Chilla (*Strychnous patatorum*) and Alale (*Terminalia chebula*), is another important, but relatively recent occupation (Ramesh, 1989). Nearly 50% of the Soligas (meaning those who originated from Bamboo) income is from sustainable harvesting of minor forest produce. They live in podus or settlements of 10 to 50 thatched huts.

Even the Soliga practice of cultivation is environment friendly. A piece of agricultural land is not cultivated beyond 5 to 7 years. After this period, land is left untouched for 50 to 75 years, so that the forest takes root once again. Their dependence on the forest for survival ensures a harmonious existence with nature. It is a symbiotic relationship where the people are connected to the land in an intricate web of life.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the influence of gender, age, class, birth order and income on shyness-cognitive/affective, physiological, action oriented domains and total shyness scores of tribal and rural adolescents
2. To assess the vocational interests of tribal and rural students
3. To study the influence of secondary variables on vocational interests
4. To suggest proper remedial measures reduce shyness

Hypotheses

Following directional hypotheses have been formulated for the present study.

H1: Adolescents from tribal and rural areas differ significantly in their vocational interests

H2: There will be significant association between shyness levels and vocational interests.

H3: There will be significant association between gender and vocational interests.

H4: There will be significant association between income and vocational interests.

Sample

In the present investigation, 382 children randomly selected for the present investigation. Predominantly one school from tribal belt where the education is meant exclusively for tribal

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children in B R Hills was selected. The tribes living basically are 'soliga's. Another two schools from rural areas were selected to compare the shyness and vocational interest.

Variables selected

Independent variables	Dependent variables
1. Shyness levels (Low, medium and High)	1. Shyness scores (Cognitive/affective domain, physiological and action oriented)
2. Area (Tribal and Rural)	2. Vocational interest (measured in 8 different areas-
3. Gender (Male and female)	
4. Age groups (below 14 years and above 14 years)	
5. Birth order (1, 2 or 3 and above)	
6. Class (8, 9 and 10)	

Tools used: Shyness Assessment Test (D'Souza, 2006).

Procedure

The tests were administered to the subjects in groups of 4-6 subjects per group. Data collection was done in two sessions and each session lasted for about 30-45 minutes. First, the researcher, established rapport with the subjects and they were asked to introduce themselves. The purpose of the study was made clear to them. Then they were administered the Shyness questionnaire. They were given appropriate instructions and the questions were read out to them. They were asked to indicate their responses in the respective sheets given to them. Whenever they had doubt in understanding questions, the test administrator made those questions very clear to them in their local language.

In the second session interest record was administered after a gap of 3-4 days. They were given appropriate instructions and the questions were read out to them. They were asked to indicate their responses in the respective sheets given to them. Whenever they had doubt in understanding questions, the test administrator made those questions very clear to them in their local language.

The data collected were examined for incompleteness, wrong entries and other issues. Such respondent sheets were discarded. The remaining data sheets will be coded, a master chart was prepared, this chart was entered into the computer, using statistical software package, the data was analyzed using various statistical tests.

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Statistical Techniques:

Following statistical methods were employed in the present study using SPSS for Windows (SPSS, 2006). Descriptive Statistics , Cross tabulation (Contingency coefficient test)Independent samples ‘t’ test, ANOVA-Two-way, Chi-square test

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Groups and vocational interests

Table No.1 Frequency and percent values for vocational preference on high interests by adolescents of tribal and rural areas and results of chi-square tests.

Sl. No	Factor	Groups		
		Tribal	Rural	Total
1	Mechanical	1 (0.5%)	12 (6.0%)	13
2	Business	0 (0.0%)	23 (11.5%)	23
3	Scientific	0 (0%)	2 (1.0%)	2
4	Aesthetic	2 (1.4%)	12 (6.0%)	14
5	Social	27 (14.83%)	26 (13.0%)	53
6	Clerical	52 (28.6%)	29 (14.5%)	81
7	Outdoor	100 (54.9%)	96 (48.0%)	196
	Total	182 (100.0%)	200 (100.0%)	382

Chi-square =64.89; P=.000

Chi-square test revealed a significant association between groups and vocational interests, as we find that the obtained chi-square value of 64.89 was found to be significant at .000 level. From the frequencies and percentages it is clear that adolescent tribals least preferred mechanical, business, scientific and aesthetic jobs. Their preference was maximum for outdoor jobs, followed by clerical and social. Further, when compared with tribals, 48.0% of the rural adolescents preferred outdoor, 14.5% of them preferred clerical, 13.0% of them indicated social, 11% of them inclined to business and so on. We see a clear cut differentiation in the job preference by adolescents of rural and tribal areas. The job interests of rural adolescents were much varied than tribal adolescents (Figure 4.4).

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Shyness levels and vocational interests

Table.2 Frequency and percent values for vocational preference on high interests by adolescents of with different levels of shyness and results of chi-square tests.

Sl. No	Factor	Shyness levels			Total
		Low	Medium	High	
1	Mechanical	3	5	5	13
2	Business	15	6	2	23
3	Scientific	0	0	2	2
4	Aesthetic	0	4	10	14
5	Social	32	20	1	53
6	Clerical	10	61	10	81
7	Outdoor	5	189	2	196
	Total	65	285	32	382

Chi-square =272.60; P=.000

When shyness levels were verified against vocational interests, chi-square test revealed a significant association between shyness levels and vocational interests, as we find that the obtained chi-square value of 272.60 was found to be significant at .000 level. From the frequencies and percentages it is clear that adolescents with lower levels of shyness preferred more of social and business jobs, adolescents with medium levels of shyness preferred outdoor, mechanical and clerical jobs. Adolescents with higher levels of shyness preferred more of scientific, aesthetic and mechanical jobs and least of business and social jobs. We see a clear cut differentiation in the job preference by adolescents with different levels of shyness.

Gender and vocational interests

Table.3. Frequency and percent values for vocational preference on high interests by male and female adolescents and results of chi-square tests.

Sl. No	Factor	Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Mechanical	10	3	13
2	Business	18	5	23
3	Scientific	2	0	2
4	Aesthetic	4	10	14
5	Social	41	12	53
6	Clerical	61	20	81
7	Outdoor	80	116	196
	Total	216	166	382

Chi-square =53.29; P=.000

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Chi-square test revealed a significant association between gender and vocational interests, as we find that the obtained chi-square value of 53.29 was found to be significant at .000 level. From the frequencies and percentages it is clear that male adolescents preferred more of mechanical, business, scientific, social, and clerical jobs, where as female adolescents preferred more of outdoor and aesthetic jobs. We see a clear cut differentiation in the job preference by male and female adolescents. The job interests of male adolescents were much varied than female adolescents.

Income and vocational interests

Table.4. Frequency and percent values for vocational preference on high interests by adolescents with different income background and results of chi-square tests.

Sl. No	Factor	Income (in Rs.)		
		Below 5000	Above 5000	Total
1	Mechanical	7	6	13
2	Business	11	12	23
3	Scientific	0	2	2
4	Aesthetic	8	6	14
5	Social	40	13	53
6	Clerical	40	41	81
7	Outdoor	158	38	196
	Total	264	118	382

Chi-square =39.631; P=.000

When income levels were verified against vocational interests, chi-square test revealed a significant association between income levels and vocational interests, as we find that the obtained chi-square value of 39.361 was found to be significant at .000 level. From the frequencies and percentages it is clear that adolescents with lower levels of income preferred more of social and outdoor jobs, adolescents with income levels of above Rs. 5000 preferred scientific and business jobs. We see a clear cut differentiation in the job preference by adolescents with different levels of income (Figure 4.7).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Main findings of the present study are

- ✓ Tribal adolescent least preferred mechanical, business, scientific and aesthetic jobs. Their preference was maximum for outdoor jobs, followed by clerical and social.
- ✓ Adolescents with lower levels of shyness preferred more of social and business jobs, adolescents with medium levels of shyness preferred outdoor, mechanical and clerical jobs. Adolescents with higher levels of shyness preferred more of scientific, aesthetic and mechanical jobs and least of business and social jobs

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- ✓ Male adolescents preferred more of mechanical, business, scientific, social, and clerical jobs, where as female adolescents preferred more of outdoor and aesthetic jobs.
- ✓ Adolescents with lower levels of income preferred more of social and outdoor jobs, adolescents with income levels of above Rs. 5000 preferred scientific and business jobs

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Sample size was limited
- Test was self-appraisal test
- Sample selected from only from adolescent age groups
- Only few variables were subjected to investigation
- No intervention part for treatment of shyness was considered.

Recommendations for Further Research

- Further research should be focused on the other age groups such as children and adults exclusively on tribal population
- Further research also needs to be conducted on different tribes from different states.
- Research should focus on impact of displacement of tribal's to the fringes could also be studied.
- Many studies have been done on impact of displacement from forest to the fringes. No in depth psychological research has been recorded. Future researchers can look into these aspects especially perceptual process and so on.

SUGGESTIONS

- It is highly suggested that tribal children and adolescents should be given job orientation courses so that they can think diversely than traditional jobs.
- It is highly suggested that tribal children and adolescents should be given skill development courses to equip themselves with rural and urban counterparts.
- It is highly recommended that tribal children and adolescents should be given maximum exposure through media and other sources regarding job placements and enough opportunities should be provided to them

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