

Cross Cultural Variations in Attitude of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

An attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (Allport, 1935). A decade later Kretch & Crutchfield, 1948 defined Attitude as "Attitude is an enduring organisation of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive process with respect to some aspect of the individual's world". The Attitude of a person is determined by psychological factors like ideas, values, beliefs, perception etc. Adolescence is the shifting period from childhood to adulthood, marked with physical and mental changes. Though Adolescent is the stage of life, cultural differences can often lead to surprising differences in their way they think, feel and act. The primary aim of the study was to examine the cultural differences among North Indian and South Indian Adolescents based on their level of attitude. A total of 100 adolescents (50 North Indians + 50 South Indians) ages ranging from 13-19 years were taken as sample for the study. Sodhi's Attitude scale (Sodhi, 1984) was used to assess the attitude of adolescents. The results exhibited a significant difference in the attitude of North Indian and South Indian Adolescents towards their parents, teachers, discipline, life and humanity and religion.

Keywords: Adolescents, Attitude, Cross-cultural variations

An attitude is an evaluation of an object, ranging from extremely negative to extremely positive. It could be concrete, abstract or just about anything in your environment, but there is a debate about precise definitions. (Eagly and Chaiken, 1998) for example, define an attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour." Family, Society and Environment plays an important role in formatting the attitude of an individual. According to Doob (1947), learning can account for most of the attitudes we hold. As attitudes are considered as learned tendency to evaluate things in a positive or negative or uncertain way, they reflect in the behaviour of Adolescents. Researchers have found that the attitude-behaviour relation is stronger when the measures of attitude and behaviour are correspondent (e.g., Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Davidson & Jaccard, 1979; Jaccard, King, & Pomazal, 1977).

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Attitudes can also be explicit and implicit. Explicit attitudes are those that we are consciously aware of and that clearly influence our behaviours and beliefs. Implicit attitudes are unconscious, but still, have an effect on our beliefs and behaviours. Attitude helps us define how we see situations, as well as define how we behave toward the situation or object. The present study may be significant because understanding the attitudes of adolescents towards their Parents & Teachers, Discipline, Life & Humanity, Country and Religion may be an eye opener and will be helpful for teachers, parents and sometimes to the adolescents themselves to predict their future behaviour. These attitudes are not set in stone so they can be changed. This study revealing the attitude of Adolescent Girls, Boys in North and South India may be helpful to Counsellors, Educators, and Parents to understand them in a better way. This can in turn help adolescents to gain clarity on their own attitudes leading to motivation of positive attitudes, changes in negative attitudes and clarification for attitudes whichever uncertain.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kabidenova ZD, Rysbekova SS, Rysbekova GE and Duisenbayeva A (2016) discusses the analysis of research of attitude of adolescents towards religion and religious identification in light of the need to support socio-cultural space in the country and in light of the questions on the global situation relating to the Central Asian region. The research results show that religiosity is superficial, with tolerant and neutral-indifferent attitude towards people with distinct religious way of life. This attitude of the younger generation towards religion can lead to poor religious awareness.

Shruti Marwaha (2015), conducted a study to analyse and compare the attitude of adolescents studying in cities with that of the adolescents who were school dropouts and lived in slum areas. The research was conducted in Chandigarh and Mohali. The sample consisted of 100 adolescents between 15-23 years of age. The groups were compared in terms of their attitude towards Teachers and Parents, Discipline, Life and Humanity, Country and their attitude towards Religion. It was reported that Adolescents pursuing their studies in cities had significantly higher positive attitude as compared with the school dropout adolescents living in slum areas.

Bimla dhanda and chandra kala singh(2008) conducted a study on adolescents for assessment of their attitude in five areas namely in attitude towards parents and teachers, discipline, life and humanity, country and religion in rural areas of Hisar district of Haryana state. Sample consisted of 50 adolescents. Results revealed that majority of respondents had favourable attitude towards parents and teachers, discipline, life and humanity and unfavourable attitude towards country and religion. A correlation study showed that attitude of adolescents towards parents and teachers and attitude towards country was positively and significantly correlated with attitude of adolescents towards religion and attitude towards life and humanity was positively and significantly correlated with attitude towards country and religion.

Hypothesis

Adolescents of North India and South India will differ significantly from each other on their level of Attitude.

METHODOLOGY

For the present study a sample of 100 Adolescents (N=100) was selected by stratified random sampling method from Dehradun city, Uthtrakhand and Chennai City, Tamil Nadu.

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The sample drawn was divided into North Indians and South Indians equally. All the subjects age range from 14 to 19 years. The tool used in this study was Sodhi's Attitude scale (Sodhi, 1984) to assess the attitude of adolescents. The questionnaire consists of five parts. The first part consist of 12 questions for Attitude towards Teachers and Parents , second part consist of 10 questions for Attitude towards Discipline, third part consist of 19 questions for Attitude towards Life and Humanity, fourth part consist of 10 questions for Attitude towards Country, and fifth part consist of 20 questions for Attitude towards Religion with a total of 71 questions in the questionnaire. The higher the score the more attitude is seen.

RESULTS

After obtaining raw data Mean, SD and t test are computed which are shown in Table 1 :

Table 1 Mean, Standard deviation, standard error and t-values for Attitude of Adolescents of North India and South India

S.No	Areas	Group	N	MEAN	S.D	SEM	t value	Level of Significance
1	Attitudes towards Teachers & Parents	North	50	2.24	0.90	0.12	1.03	NS
		South	50	1.96	0.89	0.12		
2	Attitude towards Discipline	North	50	1.8	0.46	0.06	10.83	0.01
		South	50	3.16	0.50	0.07		
3	Attitude towards Life & Humanity	North	50	4.48	1.05	0.14	13.1	0.01
		South	50	5.56	0.95	0.13		
4	Attitude towards Country	North	50	6.52	0.57	0.07	1.09	NS
		South	50	6.32	0.51	0.07		
5	Attitude towards Religion	North	50	5.12	1.27	0.17	7.69	0.01
		South	50	3.12	1.13	0.15		

DISCUSSION

Statistical Analysis revealed that Adolescents of North India and South India significantly vary among themselves in their attitudes towards Life & Humanity, Discipline and Religion. The attitude of Adolescents in South India towards their Life & Humanity is positive and significantly higher than Adolescents in North India. This indicates that adolescents in South India have clear view points about their life, their goals and gives importance in helping others, understanding others and realize the people problems with empathy and tries to help them whenever needed. The attitude of Adolescents in South India towards their Discipline is also positive and significantly higher than Adolescents in North India with which we can say that Adolescents of South India have got clear definition of goals, commitment to their words, handles temptations, set boundaries, self-control and handles the situations of their life with their mind over their mood when compared to North Indian Adolescents. This level of discipline in life might be just because of the motivation and support a person gets from their friends and family.

Religious characteristics such as belief in God, finding meaning in life and spirituality which influences an individual's feelings, behaviours and mental health might be the result of the parents priming the young mind and soul with religious beliefs, which is found significantly high in North Indian Adolescents than South Indian Adolescents. North Indian

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Adolescents have got a high positive attitude towards Religion than South Indian Adolescents.

Attitude towards Teachers & Parents and Country are found to be positive and high in North Indian Adolescents than South Indian Adolescents, but they do not vary significantly. So, we can say that there is no real and actual difference between the attitudes of North and South Indian Adolescents towards their Teachers & Parents and Country.

CONCLUSION

From the above study, we can interpret that the cultural variations such as diversity in social practices, cuisine, Art, demography, economic system, social hierarchy do determine an individual's behaviour. While development occurs in a similar fashion for all children, developmental differences are the inevitable result of individual genetic and experiential variations in cultural and social contexts. So as an expertise in the education field and counselling field, we must have the ability to understand the differences in opinions and attitudes children carry in their life.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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