

Effect of Behavioural Therapy Techniques on Anxiety and Academic Performance of Children with Conduct Problem

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ABSTRACT

Conduct problem describes behavioural issues, it occurs when a youngster exhibits rebellious behaviour and may flout accepted norms and values. It is thought that anxiety produces a distracting stimulus that diverts focus away and weakens intellectual capacity, sometimes leads to precede the onset of disruptive behaviours and in turn exacerbate these disruptive behaviour problems. Behavioural therapy is a term that describes a broad range of techniques used to change maladaptive behaviours, it may work well for relieving anxiety which also emphasises academic performance with other problems. The purpose of this study was to see the effect of behavioural therapy on anxiety and academic performance of children with conduct problem. The sample of the study consisted of 30 boys equally divided into experimental (15) and control group (15), age ranging from 11 -14 years, screened with conduct problem through Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ), to measure anxiety adapted hindi version of State-Trait Anxiety for Children (STAIC) was used. The sample participated in behavioural therapy techniques, they are social skill training, parents counselling, collage making, role play, group counselling. Inferential and Parametric test was used as statistical analysis. Data was collected before and after 12 weeks of intervention. As far as specific results are concerned children showed effective impact on anxiety with better behavioural pattern. In case of academic performance also boys showed improvement by the intervention affecting their ability to focus and perform well. Conclusions was drawn that behavioural therapy techniques remediate the underlying issues and to teach children different methods of responding to condition and impetus in appropriate manner. It taught children strategies for controlling and changing personal-social behaviours, positively affect cognitive functioning, enhancing organizational learning skills, and strategies to overcome anxiety and other barriers to success.

Keywords: *Anxiety, Conduct Problem, Behavioural Therapy Techniques, Academic Performance*

The young people in the age group of 10-24 year in India constitutes one of the precious resources of India characterized by growth and development and is a phase of susceptibility often influenced by several intrinsic and extrinsic elements that affect their health and safety. Now a day's young people suffer from health impacting

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behaviours and environments that need urgent attention of senators and public health specialists. Children spent more than 200 days each year in the school which signify that the child attends school for a significant amount of each day and week. Thus, developing students' physical and mental health in addition to their intellectual capacity and knowledge is the school's fundamental duty.

Children in the classroom may demonstrate behaviour problems. The occurrence of behaviour problems is more in case of boys than in case of girls. Girls also experience behavioural problem but girls are more capable of socially adaptable behaviour, and conventional pattern of behaviour are more in girls so their problems do not come to focus. A child may show one or more than one behaviour problem during his period of development. Some behaviour problems may occur at a specific stage of development while some behaviour problems occur at different stages.

Adolescence is a revolutionary period of development and much influenced by life circumstances and socioeconomic conditions of their environment, occasionally exhibit behaviours of various descriptions. They may throw temper tantrums, fight with their siblings or peers, cheat, lie, and be physically cruel to animals or to other people, refuse to obey their parents or destroy their own or others' possessions. Parents of young children often will ignore the signs of a serious diagnosis, such as behavioural problems, thinking that their behaviour is acceptable and that the child has no understanding of doing wrong. This ignorance often times will lead these children in dark directions which include paths of academic failure and criminal activity. They can occasionally include rebellion against parents, instructors, and other authority people. Similar to this, fear around strangers is a childhood issue and due to that it is possible for lack of interest in studies or duty neglect to occur at any developmental level.

Conduct and behavioural problems often lead to poor school performance and dropping out of school. This wastes educational resources and seriously weakens the economic and social potential of children. Conduct problems refers to those behaviour of the child which create difficulties in the learning activities. It occurs when a youngster exhibits rebellious behaviour and may flout accepted norms and values. As a result instructional program and discipline of the classroom get hampered which effect student's academic performance. Sometimes lack of understanding of the reasons overdue the behaviour of the students may make the teacher react in a way which might aggravate the situation. Students with conduct behaviour in the classroom pose challenges for teachers. Extreme retreat or fierce, unresponsive hostility are possible extremes. If these students were not recognized and supported throughout their school years, they would struggle to function in society and their issues might worsen as they got older. Students' basic needs for growth and development include a variety of physical, psychological, and scholastic requirements.

Anxiety is characterised by excessive worry and fear, resulting in somatic and behavioural disturbances (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Anxiety can be difficult to diagnose in children as it can manifest as fears and worries that are typically seen during development. Anxiety refers to the psychological state that occurs when an individual experiences a sense of awaiting or threatening danger. An association of poor future life outcomes have been identified with the suggestion that anxiety in childhood may prevent the development of key skills that are critical to adult self-esteem. Restless children display poor memory and it is believed that anxiety creates distracting stimulation that bounces attention

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from relevant incoming information and therefore impairs memory and academic abilities. In generally, both state anxiety and trait anxiety can affect a person, where state anxiety refers to the emotional state which is aroused by momentary condition and trait anxiety refers to personality characteristics.

Behavioural therapy labels a wide-ranging of techniques used to change maladaptive behaviours. The goal is to strengthen desirable behaviours and exclude unwanted ones. The techniques which are used in behavioural therapies apply the erudition principles to conversion of maladaptive behaviours. Based on the ideas of behaviourism, a school of thinking that emphasizes how much we learn from our surroundings, this methodology first appeared in the early 20th century and dominated the field for a long time. Among the first to mention behaviour modification was Thorndike. Behaviour therapy Techniques teaches children and their families how to strengthen positive behaviours and eliminate or reduce unwanted problem behaviours.

Considering the techniques of therapy in mind it can be said that the concept of anxiety, academic performance with conduct problem among children is quite significant. Now keeping in mind, it would be interesting to find out whether behavioural therapy will have any effect on anxiety and academic performance of children with conduct problem or there will be no effect of the therapy. The previous literature suggests mixed result regarding the therapies. Some studies indicated significant relationship between the entire behaviour of the participants with the arranged activity and the school tedious skill (Nida Zahid, e.tal. 2023). Many studies revealed a significant increase in 3 academic subject areas with qualifying school children experiencing marginally greater improvements during the academic year (Kristi L. Perryman, e.tal. 2020). But no studies had screened children with conduct problem. This discrepancy from the past literature motivated the researcher to clarify the effect of behavioural therapy techniques on anxiety, and academic performance with conduct problem. Thus, considering all these evidences the present study comprises the following objectives.

Objectives:

To see the effect of behavioural therapy techniques on

- State anxiety
- Trait anxiety
- Academic performance
- Conduct problem.

To find out the difference between the two groups (i.e. experimental and control).

Hypotheses:

There will be no effect of behavioural therapy techniques on

- State anxiety
- Trait anxiety
- Academic performance
- Conduct problem.

There will be no difference between the two groups (i.e. experimental and control)

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 30 boys (i.e. 15 experimental group and 15 control group) with age ranging from 11-14 years were selected from a Hindi medium Govt. school of West Bengal, who were selected as having conduct problems.

Exclusion Criteria

Those subjects were excluded from the study who had any sort of serious physical illness.

Selection of Variables

The scholar reviewed the available scientific literature pertaining to the problem, and the following variables are:

Dependent Variables

- State Anxiety
- Trait Anxiety
- Academic Performance
- Conduct Problems

Independent Variables

- Behavioural Therapy Techniques
- Student Report Card (SRC)

Study Design

Experimental design with purposive sampling method was employed for this study.

Tools Used

Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ) developed by Robert Goodman (1997) was used to assess conduct problem. This inventory also measures other behavioural problem. State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) developed by Spielberger (1983) was used to measure state anxiety and trait anxiety of children.

Data Collection

To conduct the study first consent was taken from the school. Only those subjects were taken who have conduct problems as extracted through SDQ. The intervention module was developed by the researcher and by a counsellor, which was planned for 2 days per week for twelve weeks consisting of 25 minutes of session. Rapport was established with each child and small group was made for the training. The intervention was explained and instructed to the experimental group by using various methods and strategies under the guidance of the researcher and under the supervision of the counsellor. Control group was given no treatment. While administering Inventory of SDQ and STAIC standard method of administration was followed and to measure academic performance student report card (SRC) was considered. Data was collected before the intervention and after 12 weeks of intervention and the responses were recorded according to the scoring standard.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analyzed by descriptive as well as inferential statistics. In accordance to the objectives of the study at first, Mean and Standard Deviation for each dependent variable measures namely State anxiety, Trait anxiety, Academic performance, and Conduct problem

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were calculated with paired t-test. Then in order to find out whether experimental group and control group differ, parametric independent t-test was carried out. The obtained results of the study are presented in the following tables.

Table 1: Showing the Means, S.D's & 't' ratios of Anxiety of Experimental Group

Anxiety	N	Mean	SD	df	't'	p-value
State Anxiety	15	36.1	±5.1	14	-2.6	0.02
Pre-Test		31.6	±5.8			
Post- Test	15	40.2	±5.3			
Trait Anxiety		33.7	±5.6		-3.5	0.01

Table- 1 represents the Mean and SD value of state anxiety pre-test was 36.1 and ±5.1, and post-test was 31.6 and ±5.8 respectively, which indicates that behaviour therapy has made significant impact on state anxiety. Whereas the Mean and SD value of trait anxiety pre-test were 40.2 and ±5.3, and post-test were 33.7 and ±5.6 respectively, which also indicate significant effect of behavioural therapy techniques, aimed at altering maladaptive emotional responses by changing work through their feelings and learn healthy ways of coping with them and learn to be more pro-social. As far as the t-value of state anxiety was (-2.6) and trait anxiety was (-3.5) consider, is found significant. So, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2: Means, S.D's & 't' ratios of Anxiety of Experimental group & Control group

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	't'	p-value
State Anxiety	15	31.6	±5.76	28	-0.69	0.49
Experimental	15	33.1	±5.84			
Control	15	33.7	±5.58		-2.08	0.05
Trait Anxiety	15	38.1	±5.84			

Table- 2 represents the Mean (31.6) of state anxiety in experimental group is lower than control group which indicates that state anxiety of children reduced after the intervention. Also, the Mean (33.7) of trait anxiety in experimental group has lower mean which indicates that behavioural therapy had made an impact to modify characteristics by maintaining stable tendency, thinking pattern of children. As far as the t-value of trait anxiety (-2.07) consider, is found significant so, the null hypothesis is rejected and in state anxiety no significant difference found since p-value (0.49) is greater than the significance level. So the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 3: Means, S.D's & 't' ratios of Academic Performance of Experimental Group

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	't'	p-value
Pre-Test	15	0.7	±0.5	14	4.4	<.001
Post- Test		1.7	±1			

Table- 3 represents the Mean and SD of academic performance's pre-test was 0.7 and ±0.5, and post-test was 1.7 and ±1 respectively, which indicates significant improvement As far as the t-value of was (-4.4) consider, is found significant. So, the null hypothesis is rejected.

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This indicated that the module of behavioural therapy has made significant impact in the academic performance of boys.

Table 4: Means, S.D's & 't' ratios of Academic Performance of Experimental group & Control group

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	't'	p-value
Experimental	15	1.73	±1.03	24.14	0.11	0.92
Control	15	1.7	±0.68			

Table- 4 shows that the obtained t-value in Academic Performance (0.11) is lower than the table value at 0.05 levels therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be interpreted that there is no significant difference between the two groups in terms of their academic performance but the experimental group showed some enhanced mean (1.73) though insignificant in comparison to control group.

Table 5: Means, S.D's & 't' ratios of Conduct Problem by Behavioural Therapy

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	't'	P-Value
Pre-Test	15	3.8	±2.7	14	-2.3	0.05
Post- Test		2.1	±1.7			

Table- 5 shows the Mean and SD of conduct problem's pre-test was 3.8 and ±2.7, and post-test was 2.1 and ±1.7, which indicates that behavioural therapy made significant improvement in conduct problem. Moreover, as the obtained t-value i.e.-2.3 is higher than the table value at 0.05 levels therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be interpreted that there is a significant difference which indicates behavioural therapy has assisted children with better behaviour pattern through participation and gives an understanding to behave accordingly and lead a disciplined life.

Table 6: Means, S.D's & 't' ratios of Conduct Problem of Experimental and Control group

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	't'	p-value
Experimental	15	2.1	±1.68	28	-5.6	<.001
Control	15	5.6	±1.75			

Table- 6 shows the Mean (2.1) of experimental group is lower than the control group, in terms conduct problem which indicates that in comparison to control group, experimental group has effective improvement by the intervention. As far as the t-value (-5.6) consider, is found significant. So, the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be interpreted that there is a significant difference between experimental group and control group in terms of conduct problems.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the interpretation of the data, the following conclusions have been drawn.

1. The obtained result findings of Table 1 and 2 thus shows that in comparison to pre-test and control group, both state anxiety and trait anxiety were strongly affected by the therapy techniques. The reasons of the findings may attribute to the fact that behavioural therapy treats the symptoms, uncover the underlying causes of worries and fears with better coping and problem solving skills.

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2. As far as academic performance is concerned the present study findings (Table 3 & 4) suggest that experimental group shows significant improvement after post therapy, and in comparison to control group, the experimental group showed some enhanced mean which recommends that by seeking therapy, students can get the professional help they need with mental health challenges that may move their ability to focus and accomplish well in school.
3. As far as conduct problems is concerned result of the present study (Table 5 & 6) shows that problems of conduct show improvement after post therapy and in comparison, to control group, children in experimental group is far better promoting positive behaviour change. This finding is supported by plenty of research findings in the previous literature such as Halla Ali Abd EL-Hie, (2022).

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Conflict of Interest

The author affirmed no conflict of interests.

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