

A STUDY OF RISK TAKING BEHAVIOUR AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL STREAM

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to find out the difference in risk taking behaviour among adolescents in relation to their type of educational stream. A descriptive survey method was used. In the present study, a sample of two hundred (200) adolescents has been selected on the basis purposive random sampling technique. Risk Taking Behaviour Questionnaire (RTQ) by Virender Sinha and P.N. Arora has been used to measure of risk taking behaviour. Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' test was used to analyse the data. The findings of the study revealed male adolescents under study are having moderate risk taking behaviour and there exists no significant difference in risk taking behaviour among male adolescents in relation to their academic stream.

Key words: Adolescents, risk taking behaviour, arts, commerce, science

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is one of the most challenging development periods in a person's life. Individuals biologically and psychologically experience wide variety of changes in this period. Along with these changes, individuals begin to discover variety of new emotional or behavioural stimulants of adult life. Biological, adolescence process may cause vulnerability to engage in self-destructive or health-compromising behaviours. In the literature, what constitutes risk-taking behaviour is rather blurred. In other words, there is no consensus on the definition of this concept.

Risk taking has been conceptualized as behavior that involves some potential for harm or negative consequence to the individual but that may also result in a positive outcome or reward. Research on adolescent risk taking behavior has traditionally emphasized the role of appetitive processes; that is, risky behavior resulting from a desire to pursue or enhance positive rewards. Models often have focused on some aspect of reward seeking, specifically, how risk taking is influenced by the novelty, excitement and/or arousal associated with a given behavior. As such, it is thought that people are differentially prone to take risks because of some stable underlying individual difference in risk-seeking propensity. Moreover, a variety of adult and child appropriate self-

report and behavioral measures have been used to target this appetitive aspect of risk taking. Overlooking the risk-taking behaviors, one can observe that it includes some different groups of behaviors such as traffic-related (e.g. taking speed, driving without license, driving/riding without seatbelt, driving when drunk), sex-related (e.g. having sex, sex without condom, sex with someone unknown), substance use-related (e.g. taking crack/cocaine, heroin, sniffing gas or glue), and dangerous sports-related (e.g. diving, sky-diving, kayaking, parachuting, bungee-jumping) risk-taking behaviors. Except for these groups of behaviors, there are some other kinds of risk-taking behaviors as well, such as fighting, carrying gun or knife, aggression (Bayar, 1999), walking alone at night, truancy, cheating on an exam, incomplete homework etc. Most of these behaviors increase in terms of frequency and intensity as the individuals become older in the adolescence period. Moreover, individuals engaging in one risk behavior have an inclination to involve in other risky behaviors (Igra & Irwin, 1996).

Driving fast, involving in traffic accidents and having unprotective sex with different partners can be the examples of the other kinds of risk-taking behaviours that commonly exist during adolescence. It was also reported that there was significant positive relationship between cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption that is, one type of risky behaviour can be a trigger of any other type of risk –taking behaviour. Moreover, it was reported that accidents with vehicles like motorcycle and bicycle that adolescents and young adults involved were very common and have been increasing in recent years suggested that the most risky age group in traffic accidents was 18-24. Moreover, it was reported that accidents with vehicles like motorcycle and bicycle that adolescents and young adults involved were very common and have been increasing in recent years (Tombaklar, 2002; Bingham & Shope, 2004) According to statistics of World Health Organization, over 1/3 of fatal accidents have occurred in the world with these kind of vehicles in 1996 (Tombaklar, 2002). This report also suggested that 30%- 50% of bicycle riders died in the traffic accidents were under the age of 20. Similarly, motorcycle drivers and riders mostly involved in fatal accidents were between the ages of 15 and 25.

To conclude, adolescence is a critical period of an individual. This critical period includes a variety of risk-taking behaviors. Furthermore, a potentially risky behavior for an early adolescent might not be considered as developmentally harmful for a late adolescent. In other words, this period has also different developmental characteristics. Risk-taking behaviors can be normative and socially acceptable to some extent, depend upon the type, frequency, and degree of risky behavior. Moreover, empirical evidence points out that young people are more prone to involve in risky-

behaviors that have fatal dangers and long-term effects, and Turkish adolescents are not the exception. Furthermore, results of previous studies on adolescent risk-taking have suggested that the role of personality and demographic characteristics of adolescents in different cultures should also be considered in understanding the risk-taking behaviors.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Craggs and James (2001) found that individual high and low risk takers had significantly higher score on flexibility and originality, while the low risk takers had significantly higher elaboration scores. No significant differences were observed the two groups on fluency. **Ozer's (2005)** review of findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health underscores that "adolescents who report feeling more connected to school show lower levels of emotional distress, risk behavior, and aggression." (Perceived school connection was operationalized in terms of happiness, belonging, safety, closeness, and fair treatment by teachers.) **Boyer (2006)** found that in general, it appears that parenting practises, parental warmth and openness of relationship, monitoring and knowledge of behaviours specifically affect adolescent engagement in risky behaviour. **Nelson (2007)** made a study on adolescence social acceptance and found that in adolescence social acceptance by peers may be processed in ways similar to other sorts of rewards, including non-social rewards. **Steinberg (2008)** found that individuals of the same age vary in their impulse control, planfulness and susceptibility to peer influence, and that variation in these characteristics are related to variations in risky and antisocial behaviour. **Chen et al. (2011)** conducted a study on the risk taking behaviour of males and females and found that a significantly greater proportion of males (42.6%) than females (29.7%) were ranked as high risk takers.

Jamwal (2012) reveal that there is significant difference among male and female, high and moderate behavior of male, high and moderate behaviour of female, high and moderate behaviour of rural, high and moderate behaviour of urban adolescents in relation to risk taking behaviour and difference among self esteem of rural and urban adolescents. There is no significant difference among male and female adolescents in relation to self esteem and rural and urban adolescents in relation to risk taking behaviour. **Jamal (2012)** find out the self esteem and risk taking behaviour of adolescents. The results reveal that there is significant difference among male and female, high and moderate behavior of male, high and moderate behaviour of female, high and moderate behaviour of rural, high and moderate behaviour of urban adolescents in relation to risk taking behaviour and difference among self esteem of rural and urban adolescents. There is no significant difference among male and female adolescents in relation to self esteem and rural and urban

adolescents in relation to risk taking behaviour. **Joshi (2013)** reveal that there is positive relationship between emotional intelligence and risk taking behaviour of adolescent boys were as girls contradict that result. Result also shows that students having high emotional intelligence are high risk takers where as average and low emotionally intelligent students are showing no risk taking behaviour in learning environment. **Jain and Pasrija (2014)** revealed no significant difference in risk-taking behaviour among male adolescents in relation to their academic stream, caste, family income and locality. This study helps the teacher to know the risk taking behaviour of their pupil and to provide all the facilities for the overall development of the pupil accordingly. **Khan (2015)** revealed that risk taking ability of the male students is higher than the risk taking ability of the male students belonging to urban area.

Jamir (2016) found that the value of Skewness for Risk Taking, Acceptance, Cooperation, Identification, Differentiation, Positive Need Satisfaction, was negatively skewed. It is also evident that the value of Skewness for Dominance, Rejection, Isolation, Submission, and Negative Need Experience were positively skewed. **Kaur (2017)** revealed that there is significant mean difference in risk taking behaviour in relation to stream. There is no significant mean difference in risk taking behaviour in relation to gender and location. The results of study revealed that there is no significant interaction in stream, gender and location in risk taking behaviour. On the basis of findings, it is suggested that there is need to involve students in creative tasks in order to inculcate creative thinking which enhance their risk taking behavior among them. **Kaur (2017)** revealed no significant difference in the risk taking behaviour and emotional intelligence of male and female secondary school students. The investigators also observed that there was significant correlation between risk taking behaviour and emotional intelligence. Perry and **Karpova (2017)** investigated an inverted U-shape relationship was proposed between (a) past creative experience and risk-taking, and (b) risk-taking and self-assessed creativity. Risk-taking was related to self-assessed creativity before and after the training, but not expert-assessed creativity. Past creative experience was not related to creativity, self and expert-assessed, before and after the training.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

Adolescent years are a time of potential period for risk-taking than compared with the other periods of life (Arnett, 1992; 1995). Moreover, risk-taking behaviors, particularly of which are characterized by maladaptive behaviors, might be the reason of long lasting, negative outcomes such as injuries, developing dependencies on cigarette, alcohol or other kinds of substances. In addition to these self-destructive behaviors, risk taking behaviors also constitute a potential risk for

others such as driving when intoxicated that might result in fatal accidents. To understand adolescent risk-taking behavior, one needs to examine personal and environmental basis of that behavior. Moreover, risk-taking behaviors, particularly of which are characterized by maladaptive behaviors, might be the reason of long lasting, negative outcomes such as injuries, developing dependencies on cigarette, alcohol or other kinds of substances. In addition to these self-destructive behaviors, risk-taking behaviors also constitute a potential risk for others such as driving when intoxicated that might result in fatal accidents. To understand adolescent risk-taking behavior, one needs to examine personal and environmental basis of that behavior.

The need of the present study is to examine the role of several risk taking factors. More specifically, how well academic stream, caste, family income and locality predict the risk involvement frequencies of adolescents was examined in this study. Rare studies have been conducted which studied the risk taking behaviour among adolescents in depth and there are few studies, which comparatively studied the risk taking behaviour among adolescents in relating to their locality, caste, family income, and their academic stream. Keeping this fact in mind, it is worthwhile to take the present problem for investigation in order to study the risk taking behaviour among male adolescents in depth.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study risk taking behaviour among adolescents.
2. To compare risk taking behaviour among adolescents in relation to their academic stream (Arts, Commerce and Science).

HYPOTHESES

1. There exists no significant difference in risk taking behaviour among adolescents in relation to their academic stream (Arts, Commerce and Science).

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The present study purports to measure the effect of risk taking behaviour of senior secondary school students in relation to their type of educational stream. The investigator has employed descriptive research design.

SAMPLE

In the present study, a sample of two hundred (200) adolescents has been selected on the basis purposive random sampling technique.

TOOL USED

- Risk Taking Behaviour Questionnaire (RTQ) by Virender Sinha and P.N. Arora has been used

to measure of risk taking behaviour among adolescents. This inventory has 40 items. This inventory is based on a five point scale. The reliability of the scale is .785. The validity of the scale is .681.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation and ‘t’ test has been used to analyze the data.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The first objective of the study was to study risk taking behaviour male among adolescents. Mean and Standard Deviation of risk taking behaviour among male adolescents were calculated and given below.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Risk Taking Behaviour among Male Adolescents

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Risk taking behaviour	200	152.69	22.61	Moderate Risk Taking Behaviour

Table 1 shows that mean scores of risk taking behaviour among male adolescents is 152.69 and S.D. scores is 22.61 which means that male adolescents under study are having moderate risk taking behaviour.

The second objective of the study was to study risk taking behaviour among male adolescents in relation to their Academic Stream. For this mean and Standard Deviation of risk taking behaviour among male adolescents in relation to their Academic Stream were calculated and has been presented in the table given below. ‘t’ value is also applied to achieve the objective which is comparison of risk taking behaviour among male adolescents in relation to their Academic Stream.

Table 2

Mean, S.D. and ‘t’ value for Risk Taking Behaviour Scores of Male Adolescents in Relation to their Academic Stream

Academic Stream	No. of Students	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value
Science	80	153.9	20.82	0.74 (NS)
Arts	70	151.31	21.80	
Commerce	50	152.8	27.11	0.32 (NS)

Arts	70	151.31	21.80	0.24 (NS)
Commerce	50	152.8	27.11	
Science	80	153.9	20.82	

NS = Not Significant

The Table 2 shows that 't' value of mean scores of male adolescents in relation to Academic Stream is 0.74, 0.32 & 0.24 which is not significant. Hence null hypothesis No.1 "There exists no significant difference between risk taking behaviour among male adolescents in relation to their Academic Stream" is accepted. We can conclude that Academic Stream has no effect on the risk taking behaviour among male adolescents as it is also clear through mean examination from table 2. This means that we cannot determine risk taking behaviour on the basis of academic stream (Science, Arts, Commerce).

FINDINGS

1. It was found that male adolescents under study are having moderate risk taking behaviour.
2. There exists no significant difference in risk taking behaviour among male adolescents in relation to their academic stream.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Generally, it is a proven fact that the Risk Taking Behaviour of the learner enabled him to take active part in the teaching learning process. If the students are aware of their risk taking behaviour, they can willingly involved themselves in the learning process. Thus, knowledge of risk taking behaviour of students can help the teacher as well as the learner immensely to improve the teaching and learning, thereby resulting in effective results since risk taking behaviour of the individual mainly covers physical conditions, memory, involving in risk sports etc. Therefore students and teachers can be highly benefited with the knowledge of risk taking behaviour. The study help the teachers to know the risk taking behaviour of their students and to provide all the facilities for the overall development of the students accordingly.

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