

AUGMENTATION OF EMOTIONAL MATURITY AND ADJUSTMENT AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS USING BEHAVIOUR THERAPY

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ABSTRACT

From Madurai Kamaraj University Evening College, Periyakulam, Theni, Tamil Nadu, 81 students (41 males and 40 females) were screened using the Case Study Schedule (Gayatri Devi and Nirmala, 2010), Curiosity and Exploration Inventory (Kashdan, 2007), Emotional Maturity Scale (Hemalatha, 1989) and College Adjustment Test (Pennebaker, 1990). The age range of the subjects was from 17-19 years. The entire subjects were given individual sessions of Behaviour Therapy (Lazarus, 1958) for one hour per session for 8 days. After 8 sessions of Behaviour Therapy, all the subjects were reassessed using Case Study Reassessment Schedule, Curiosity and Exploration Inventory, Emotional Maturity Scale and College Adjustment Test. The results revealed that initially, the subjects had 'Low' levels of Curiosity and Exploration, Emotional Maturity and Adjustment. After Behaviour Therapy, the subjects had increased levels of Curiosity and Exploration, Emotional Maturity and Adjustment respectively. The mean of Curiosity and Exploration, Emotional Maturity and Adjustment before and after Behaviour Therapy were statistically significant at 0.01 levels. Before Behaviour Therapy, symptoms like Negative affect and Homesickness were reported by the subjects were reduced significantly After Behaviour Therapy.

INTRODUCTION

"My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure." - Abraham Lincoln

An adolescent entering a college is an event for him with a new lookout. He is so excited about it probably like shedding away the uniform which he wore for twelve long years. He tries to feel the freedom and the way the society treats him as an adult even though he is not yet. A college student is a freshman is a first-year student in college, university or high school. The less-common gender-neutral synonym "first-year student" exists; the variation "fresh person" is rare.

In many traditions there is a remainder of the ancient tradition of fagging. The student may also be subjected to a period of hazing or ragging as a pledge or rookie, especially if joining a fraternity/sorority or certain other clubs, mainly athletic teams. For example, many colleges have initiation methods for freshmen, freshman races, Freshman Orientation, Freshman Freshening and the Freshman Spread.

A mature, non-traditional, or adult student in tertiary education is normally classified as an (undergraduate) student who is at least 21-23 years old at the start of their course and usually having been out of the education system for at least two years. Mature students can also include students who have been out of the education system for decades, or students with no secondary education. Mature students also make up graduate and postgraduate populations by demographic of age. Further it can be seen that there are many problems

that these college students face during the college days. The problems faced by the College Students are homesickness, depression, regarding study, money, friends/roommates and strained relationships.

Curiosity is defined as a need, thirst or desire for knowledge. The concept of curiosity is central to motivation. The term can be used as both a description of a specific behaviour as well as a hypothetical construct to explain the same behaviour.

Curiosity is stimulated when something in the physical environment attracts the attention or when there is an optimal level of discrepancy between present knowledge or skills and what these could be if the learner engaged in some activity. Novelty and interest are good synonyms for the motivational use of curiosity. There are two types of curiosity that can stimulate intrinsic motivation are sensory curiosity and cognitive curiosity

Emotional Maturity implies controlling the emotions rather than letting the emotions get the better of an individual. An individual's emotional maturity depicts the capacity to manage and to check the emotions, to evaluate others' emotional state and to persuade their judgment and actions. A person's emotional maturity is very much influenced by his/ her relationship history. Emotional intelligence makes an important part of life, together with intellectual intelligence and relationship intelligence. Such intelligence can help one to assess emotional maturity and emotional freedom. Emotional Stability is the state of an individual that enables him or her to have appropriate feelings about common experiences and act in a rational manner.

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Teenage years can be difficult. Teens may feel overwhelmed by their emotional and physical changes. Many teens face pressures from friends, teachers, parents and relatives. They may want to comply, they may want to impress and they may want to rebel simultaneously. They may be confused. Demanding that teens act like mature adults is premature. They need a safe space to explore. Teenage years are a time of transition. Many teens struggle with their dependence while wanting independence. They may experiment with clothing, behaviours, ideas and values as they try to define their identity and life goals. Systemic coaching can accelerate the formation of identity and life goals.

Psychotherapeutic approaches such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, and Relaxation Training Methods can give a perfect result in the enhancement of Emotional Stability (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muktananda>).

Pursuing a college education requires adjustment on the part of all students, though the type and degree of adjustment experienced by each student will vary depending on background, experience and prior schooling. Adjustment to college will also vary depending on the size, mission (e.g., research intensive versus teaching intensive), affiliation (e.g., religiously affiliated institutions) and control (e.g., public versus private) of the institution in question.

Adjustment can be interpreted as both, process and the outcome of that process in the form of some attainment or achievement. When a poor child studies under the street light because there is no lighting arrangement at home he is said to be in a process of adjustment. What he attains in terms of success, in his examination or the fulfillment of his ambition or pride in his achievement is nothing but the results of his adjustment to his self and his environment. Thus, adjustment as an achievement means how the effectiveness with which an individual can function in changed circumstances and is as such, related to his adequacy and regarded in achievement that is accomplished badly or well (I.azanis, 1976). Adjustment does not cater only to one's own demands but also to the demands of society.

Students hailing from low socioeconomic status face many psychological problems, such as lack of self-motivation, exploration, self defeating thoughts and desires lead to poor academic achievement resulting in low self-esteem, lack of interest and concentration, emotional disturbances and adjustment problems. It increased absenteeism and drop out from college. Some even go to the extreme end of attempting suicide. Adolescent students from dysfunctional family backgrounds tend to have adjustment problems and emotional instability, since there will be a lack of

encouragement and guidance by the significant others. Students from such families are prone to behavioural problems too, which may again affect the peers also in the study place.

Earlier researches have proved the efficacy of Behaviour Therapy in the enhancement of adjustment, self motivation, emotional stability and maturity in various samples. So the study will be conducted to help the selected adolescents to manage their problems and enhance their emotional maturity and adjustment through Behaviour Therapy.

Kashdan, Roberts and John (2007) conducted a study on Curiosity and pathways to well-being and meaning in life: Traits, States and everyday behaviours. The study examined whether trait and daily curiosity led to greater, sustainable well-being. Predictions were tested using trait measures and 21 daily diary reports from 97 college students. They found out that on days when they are more curious, people high in trait curiosity reported more frequent growth-oriented behaviours, and greater presence of meaning, search for meaning, and life satisfaction. The results provided support for curiosity as an ingredient in the development of well-being and meaning in life. The pattern of findings casts doubt on some distinctions drawn between eudemonia and hedonic well-being traditions.

METHOD

Objectives

- ♦ To assess the level of curiosity and exploration in the subjects
- ♦ To assess the level of emotional maturity in the subjects
- ♦ To assess the level of adjustment in the subjects
- ♦ To study the effect of Behaviour Therapy in the enhancement of curiosity and exploration, emotional maturity and adjustment in college students

Hypotheses

Hypothesis is stated as alternative hypothesis so that they can be accepted based on the results.

- ♦ The level of Curiosity and Exploration in the subjects will not be high
- ♦ The level of Emotional Maturity in the subjects will not be high
- ♦ The level of Adjustment in the subjects will not be high
- ♦ Behaviour Therapy will not help in the enhancement of curiosity and exploration, emotional maturity and adjustment of the subjects

Area

Madurai Kamaraj University Evening College, Periyakulam, Theni, Tamil Nadu, was selected to conduct the action research. The reasons for selecting this area

were: Easy accessibility, Willingness of the students and Permission and cooperation provided by the Institutions

Sample

Eighty one students of Madurai Kamaraj University Evening College, Periyakulam, Theni, were selected by Purposive Sampling Method for the action research (Kothari, 2006). They were screened in the levels of Curiosity and Exploration, Emotional Maturity and Adjustment. The age range of the subjects was 17 to 19 years.

Tools

- Case Study Schedule (Gayatri Devi and Nirmala, 2010) (Annexure I)
- Curiosity and Exploration Inventory (Kashdan, Rose & Fincham, 2004) (Annexure II)
- Emotional Maturity Scale (Hemalatha, 1989) (Annexure III)
- College Adjustment Test (Pennebaker, Colder and Sharp, 1990) (Annexure IV)
- Case Study Reassessment Schedule (Gayatri Devi and Nirmala, 2010) (Annexure V)

Case Study Schedule was used to collect the required information of the subjects including their personal background and negative emotions.

Curiosity Exploration Inventory was used to assess the level of curiosity and exploration in the subjects. The inventory consisted of 7 questions and the scores ranges from 0 to 7.

Emotional Maturity Scale was used to assess the level of emotional maturity. The inventory consisted of 45 items with 5 possible responses to each item. The respondents were asked to tick any one of the 5 options, which applied to them. There was no time limit but the subjects were asked to respond as quickly as possible.

College Adjustment Test was used to assess the level of adjustment of the subjects. The inventory consisted of 19 items. Each question had scores ranging from 0 to 7.

Case Study Reassessment Schedule is similar to the Case Study Schedule except personal details.

Procedure

After the initial assessment, all the subjects were given the psychological intervention in a group namely, Behaviour Therapy. After the 8 sessions of Behaviour Therapy, all the subjects were reassessed using Case Study Reassessment Schedule, Curiosity and Exploration Inventory, Emotional Maturity Scale and College Adjustment Test.

Behaviour Therapy

Mental Component

The mental component focuses on the difference between the feeling of the tension and

relaxation. Because the eyes are closed, one is forced to concentrate on the sensation of tension and relaxation. Because of the feelings of warmth and heaviness are felt in the relaxed muscle after it is tensed, a mental relaxation is felt as a result. Basically, a progressive muscle relaxation exercise involves systematically constricting and relaxing various muscle groups from the feet upward or head downward. An individual focus on tensing and relaxing muscle groups in the feet, legs, buttocks, stomach, back, hands, arms, chest, shoulders, neck and face. To be most effective, one should be sitting or lying down in a comfortable position. Eyes may be opened or closed, but most people find closing their eyes helps maintain focus during the exercise. Loosen any restrictive clothing, make sure that the surroundings are quiet and follow the basic steps

In the beginning, do the deep breathing. Inhale slowly and deeply through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Repeat this several times. Begin tensing and relaxing muscle groups. Bend the feet upward from the ankle towards face, flexing as much as one can. Hold this position for about 5 to 10 seconds. Quickly release the tension and remain still for about 20 to 30 seconds. Gradually work the way upward by tensing and relaxing each set of muscle groups. Hold each tensed position for about 5 to 10 seconds. Allow 20 to 30 seconds of relaxation before moving on to the next muscle group. Focus on how to feel while tensing the muscles and relaxing. After the completion all of the muscle groups, continue deep breathing and focus on how to feel in the relaxed state. Notice the difference between how to feel now and how he/she felt at the start of the exercise.

A-B-C Theory

Through A-B-C theory, by understanding the role of their mediating, evaluative and philosophically based illogical, unrealistic and self defeating meanings, interpretations and assumptions upsets the students often can learn to identify them, begins to dispute, refute, challenge and question them, distinguish them from healthy constructs and subscribe to more constructive and self helping constructs.

ABC Exercise

Activating situation (Drunks walking past outside, making some noise)

Irrational Belief I have about A (They SHOULDN'T make any noise)

Consequences (of having those beliefs about A I feel angry, etc)

Dispute the Irrational Belief (WHY shouldn't they make any noise)

Effective new thinking (Drunken people do make noise, it's what they're good at, and it's like a natural talent for them. *I will CHOOSE not to upset myself about this*)

If one can do this on many situations that bother his and reclaim, the peace of mind just look for the DEMAND and turn it into a PREFERENCE.

Another example

A. Activating situation (I tried to do something and failed)

B. irrational Belief I have about A (I must always be successful)

C. Consequences of believing B (I feel bad, depressed, etc.)

D. Dispute the Irrational Belief in B (*where is it written in stone that I must I always be successful?*)

E. Effective new thinking to replace B (I would prefer always to be successful but *let's be realistic* that isn't very likely, I am human and *humans are fallible*, therefore do not succeed in everything they attempt. If success is important, then I will work harder recognizing that failure may occur again).

Assertion Training

Assertiveness is a particular mode of communication. Assertiveness is often linked to self esteem. Assertion training helps people how to be more assertive in interacting people including meeting people, conversational skills, developing intimacy, dealing with criticism and manipulation and resolving disagreement and conflict. Assertion training focuses both upon developing more positive and confident thoughts upon acting with high levels of interpersonal skills for becoming more outgoing, influential and able to form close relationships. Assertive communication consists of sharing wants and needs honestly in a safe manner. This presumes respect for the boundaries of oneself and others, the boundaries include the physical self, possessions and relationships. It also presumes an interest in the fulfillment of needs and wants through cooperation.

“Assertive communication of personal opinions, needs and boundaries has been conceptualized as the behavioural middle ground, lying between ineffective passive and aggressive responses”. Such communication “emphasizes expressing feelings forthrightly, but in a way that will not spiral into aggression”. If others’ actions threaten one’s boundaries, one communicates to prevent escalation. In contrast, “aggressive communication” judges, threatens, lies, breaks confidences, stonewalls and violates others’ boundaries. At the opposite end of the dialectic is “passive communication”. Victims may passively permit others to violate their boundaries. At a later time, they may come back and attack with a sense of impunity or righteous indignation. Assertive communication attempts to transcend these extremes by

appealing to the shared interest of all parties; it focuses on the issue, not the person. Aggressive and/or passive communication, on the other hand, may mark a relationship end and reduce self respect.

Duration of Positive Therapy

Behaviour Therapy was given for all the 81 students divided into three groups and each group consisted of 27 students. The students from Madurai Kamaraj University Evening College were selected for the study and given therapy for 8 sessions twice a week for 4 weeks. The duration of each session was 40-50 minutes.

Reassessment

After Behaviour Therapy, all the subjects were reassessed using Case Study Reassessment Schedule, Curiosity and Exploration Inventory, Emotional Maturity Scale and College Adjustment Test.

Experimental Design

A single test group without control group was used in the present study. The dependent variables were measured both Before and After Behaviour Therapy.

	Time period I	Treatment	Time period II
	Level of phenomenon Before Treatment	Behaviour Therapy	Level of phenomenon After Treatment
Test areas	Curiosity and Exploration(A) Emotional Stability(P) Adjustment(X)		Curiosity and Exploration (B) Emotional Stability(Q) Adjustment(Y)

Treatment Effect = B - A, Q - P and Y - X

The results of the study are analyzed, tabulated and discussed.

Table I: Mean Curiosity and Exploration of the Subjects Before and After Behaviour Therapy

N=81

Treatment	Mean	SD
Before Behaviour Therapy	32.81	5.95
After Behaviour Therapy	66.67	6.96

Table I indicates that mean Curiosity and Exploration Before Behaviour Therapy was 32.81 and After Behaviour Therapy it increased to 66.67. The enhancement of Curiosity and Exploration could be attributed to Behaviour Therapy. Relaxation Techniques helped the subjects to reduce the tension. Therefore the Null Hypothesis ‘Behaviour Therapy will not help in the enhancement of curiosity and exploration, emotional maturity and adjustment of the subjects’ is rejected.

Table II: Approximate 'F' Test for Curiosity and Exploration in the Subjects

Curiosity and Exploration	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F
Between groups	46410.889	1	46410.889	1106.631**
Within Groups	6710.222	160	41.939	
Total	53121.11	161		

** = Significant at 0.01 level

Table II shows the F test for Curiosity and Exploration among the College Students. Thus the F value for the data is 1106.63 and it is highly significant at 0.01 level.

Table III: Mean Emotional Maturity of the Subjects Before and After Behaviour Therapy

Treatment	Mean	SD
Before Behaviour Therapy	98.28	10.76
After Behaviour Therapy	138.11	9.23

Table III indicates that mean Emotional Maturity Before Behaviour Therapy was 98.28 and After Behaviour Therapy it increased to 138.11. The enhancement of Emotional Maturity could be attributed to Behaviour Therapy. The ABC theory followed by the subjects helped them to realize themselves and think rationally, thus enhancing Emotional Maturity. Therefore the Null Hypothesis 'Behaviour Therapy will not help to enhance Emotional Maturity of the subjects' is rejected.

Table IV: Approximate 'F' Test for Emotional Maturity in the Subjects

Emotional Maturity	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F
Between Groups	64241.21	1	64241.21	639.277 **
Within Groups	16078.47	160	100.490	
Total	80319.68	161		

** = Significant at 0.01 level

Table IV shows the F test for Emotional Maturity among the College Students. Thus the F value for the data is 639.277 and it is highly significant at 0.01 level.

Table V: Mean College Adjustment of the Sample Before and After Behaviour Therapy

Treatment	Mean	SD
Before Behaviour Therapy	79.04	11.46
After Behaviour Therapy	139.32	11.05

Table V indicates that mean College Adjustment Before Behaviour Therapy was 79.04 and After Behaviour Therapy, the mean increased to 139.32. The enhancement of College Adjustment could be attributed to Behaviour Therapy. Relaxation Techniques and Assertiveness Training helped to enhance Overall College Adjustment of the Subjects. Therefore the Null Hypothesis 'Behaviour Therapy will not help to enhance the Adjustment of the subjects' is rejected.

Table VI: Approximate 'F' Test for College Adjustment in the Subjects

College Adjustment	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F
Between Groups	147183.265	1	147183.265	1160.949 **
Within Groups	20284.543	160	126.778	
Total	167467.809	161		

** = Significant at 0.01 level

Table VI shows the F value for Adjustment level among the College Students. Thus the F value for the data is 1160.949 and it is highly significant at 0.01 levels.

CONCLUSION

Initially, the subjects had 'Low' (100%) curiosity and exploration. The mean Curiosity and Exploration of the subjects Before Behaviour Therapy was 32.81 and After Behaviour Therapy the mean Curiosity and Exploration increased to 66.67.

Before Behaviour Therapy the subjects had 'Low' (100%) emotional maturity. The mean Emotional Maturity of the subjects Before Behaviour Therapy 98.28 and After Behaviour Therapy the mean Emotional Maturity of the subjects increased to 138.11.

Before Behaviour Therapy the subjects had 'Low' (100%) adjustment. The mean College Adjustment of the subjects Before Behaviour Therapy 79.04 and After Behaviour Therapy, the mean Adjustment of the subjects increased to 139.32.

Behaviour Therapy has proved its effectiveness in the Enhancement of Curiosity and Exploration, Emotional Maturity and College Adjustment among College Students, in addition to reducing their Negative Affect and increasing Positive Affect.

Recommendation

Counsellors must be appointed in all Care Centers to give Behaviour Therapy to help the College students to enhance their Curiosity and Exploration, Emotional Maturity and Adjustment. Longitudinal Researches can be conducted to prove the efficacy of Behaviour Therapy on varied subjects such as School and College Students.

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