

Rational Thinking of School Going Children and its Relation with Mental Health

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Abstract: *If we are able to understand the tendency of irrational thinking of children at an early age, compared to adults, we can easily deal with the emotional disturbances of children because as the age increases, the irrational perception may become philosophy of life. Comparatively, to prevent and to deal with emotional disturbances it is easy to identify and deal with the deep rooted irrational perceptions of children. Mental health of children is just as important as their physical health. Good mental health allows children and young people to develop the resilience to cope with life and grow into well rounded and healthy adults. With this perspective, the present study tries to find out the relationship between Rational thinking and Mental health (Confidence, Sociability, Self-sufficiency and Neurotic tendency). It is hypothesize that Rational thinking will be positively correlated with Mental health. Researchers have used the tools 1. Survey of Rational thinking by W. Knaus and 2. Vyaktitva Shodhika (a personality inventory) by Dr. U. Khire (JPIP,Pune). Sample size will be 400 (N= 400, 200 boys/200girls). It will be collected from various schools of Nashik city. Pearson product moment correlation and 't' test will be applied. The present study may provide a good support to inculcate emotional-management programs for higher secondary school going children.*

Keywords: Rational thinking, mental health, School going children

1. Introduction

Rational thinking means to think in a realistic manner and have a logical sense. According to Dr. Albert Ellis the mental health of children could be found in the applications of rational-emotive behavior therapy (REBT) in schools in the form of teaching children how to deal with difficult circumstances and people and to manage their own emotions through the use of rational beliefs and thinking. A World Health Organization (WHO) survey of children and mental-illness suggests that by the year 2020, childhood disorders will rise internationally by 50 percent to become one of the five major causes of morbidity, mortality, and disability among children (Murray and Lopez, 1996). Though school settings provide psychologists or counselors to deal effectively with the psychological or emotional disturbances of school going children, irrational thinking is one of the major root cause of emotional disturbances among school going children.

The present study tries to throw some light on the relationship between rational thinking and mental health of school going children.

Mental health – the way we think or feel about ourselves and what is going on around us, and how we cope with the stresses of life – affects our sense of wellbeing as well as our physical health. In this sense everyone has mental health. Good mental health is vital for learning and life.

Neurotic Tendency: The effects of neurotic tendencies which are anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive and phobia: these included also in order to determine on how it implicates the learning behavior of the students.

2. Statement of the Problem

To study the relation between rational thinking and mental health of school going children.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

Emotional disturbance among school going children is very common. Many mental health professional are giving services to school going children, apart from that irrational think of school going children is one of the measure cause of emotional disturbances. Hence the researcher tries to study the relationship between rational thinking and Mental health of higher secondary school going children.

2.2 Significance of the Study

The numbers of school going children suffering from mental health problem are increasing day by day. Apart from the therapies have been given to school going children, there are other psychological aspects to take into consideration. Other than peer pressure, environment setting or even heredity aspect, the researcher always wondered about some characteristics of school going children like thinking pattern, personality, root cause of emotional disturbance etc. hence the researcher tries to throw some light on the relationship between Rational thinking and Mental health.

2.3 Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study the relationship between rational thinking and mental health of higher secondary school going children.
- 2) To study the relationship between rational thinking and Neuroticism of higher secondary school going children.

3. Reviews of Literature

Albert Ellis (R.E.B.T.) has always stressed the importance of providing young people with a perspective of psycho-educational curriculum that teaches children of all ages emotional literacy skills in a variety of unique ways. Bernard in 2004 found that Rational Emotive Education methods help promote student critical thinking skills to reduce the negative effects of such self-talk. They may also help support student resilience.

Introduction of Design

To study the relationship between rational thinking and mental health of Higher Secondary School going children, a *Between Group Design* was used.

Hypothesis

1. Rational thinking and mental health of higher secondary school going children would be positively correlated.
2. Rational thinking and Neurotic tendency of higher secondary school going children would be negatively correlated.

Sample

The data of 116 9th std. school going children were taken from Vidya Prabodhini Prashala, (a Marathi medium school). There were 58 Boys and 58 Girls.

Procedure

The Vyaktitva Shodhika and the Survey of Rational Thinking Survey, these two tests were given to 9th std. students. Tests were administered on group level.

4. Results and Interpretation

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the variables: Neurotic tendency, mental health and rational thinking

	Mean	Std. dev.	N
Neurotic Tendency	11.38	4.16	116
Mental Health	26.67	5.14	116
Rational Thinking	15.53	3.06	116

Table 2: The correlation of rational thinking and mental health of higher secondary school going children

	Mental Health
Rational Thinking	.0301**
N	116

Table 3: The correlation of rational thinking and Neurotic tendency of higher secondary school going children

	Neurotic Tendency
Rational Thinking	-.290**
N	116

5. Discussion

According to table: 2, there is a positive correlation between rational thinking and mental health of higher secondary school going children. Therefore, hypothesis no: 1 is proved. The possible reason could be that according to R. E. B. T., irrational thinking is one of the measure root cause of emotional disturbances, and this emotional disturbances hamper the individual's mental health. If you think in an objective (rational) manner, accept yourself, others and the situation as it is, then there are more chances to lead a better and satisfactory life; provided that you are very well aware about your limitations. So a student with having a tendency to think in rational manner will not express unnecessary *demands* (about marks, friends, exams, etc.) but he will try to achieve it, and even if he failed he will not blame himself, rather either he will try better or accept it by seeing the failure "objectively".

According to table no: 3, there is negative correlation between rational thinking and Neurotic tendency level of higher secondary school going children. Therefore the hypothesis no: 4 is proved. As per above discussion, irrational thinking leads to emotional distress. Depression, anger, hostility, frequent and unnecessary mood changes, irritation all are symptoms of Neurotic tendency and having unnecessary, unrealistic dogmatic demands (irrational thinking) leads to individual to suffer from these negative emotions.

6. Conclusions

- 1) There is positive correlation between rational thinking and mental health of Higher secondary school going children.
- 2) There is a negative correlation between rational thinking and neurotic tendency of higher secondary school going children.

7. Limitations and Suggestions

- 1) The sample taken for this study was 116, and it was collected from only one school. A large sample size from various schools would be recommended.
- 2) As there is lack of evidence of effectiveness of Psycho-education programs, especially in India, like Rational Emotive Education with reference to other variables like behavioral problems, teacher's ratings, parental education etc. would be recommended.

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