

PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATED ADULTS OF DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS REGARDING SOCIAL PROBLEMS

S. K. Bawa
Aneet Kumar

The objective of the present study was to know the perceptions of social problems of educated adults of Punjab in relation to their age. It was hypothesized that age of the respondents changes the perceptions of social problems among educated adults. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the perceptions of educated adults of different age groups regarding social problems of Punjab. 21% educated adults of lower age group, 24% of middle age group and 25% of higher age group have perceived less social problems. Similarly 28% educated adults lower age group, 24% of middle age group and 24% of higher age group have perceived more social problems. Social problems relating to drugs and alcoholism, crime and criminals and health related problems are strongly perceived problems by educated adults of different age groups of Punjab.

INTRODUCTION

Social problems are described as perplexing questions about human societies proposed for solution. The distinctiveness of such questions as separate object of sociological study rests upon their topicality, currency and pragmatic derivation. Social problems are part of the opinion in society, which centers on expressed needs for public policies and anticipated requirements for social control. It is being observed that at present our society has a lot of problems. A child dies because of lack of medical care in a city hospital, communal tensions arise due to conflict between two communities on one or the other issue, robbery and murder occur with frightening frequency, a middle-class youth dies of a drug overdose, death due to starvation is quite common in some parts of the world and that physical suffering because of inadequate diet is even more common. Beside these, corruption, child abuse, violence against women, terrorism, poverty, unemployment, crime and many more are the issues, which result in toll of individual misery and misfortune and the din of group conflict some time seems end less.

OBJECTIVE

To reveal the perceptions of social problems of educated adults of Punjab in relation to their age.

HYPOTHESIS

Age of the educated adults changes their perceptions regarding social problems of Punjab.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on educated adults of Punjab belonging to three age group i.e. 25-35 years, 36-45 years and 46 years and above. A scale to measure the social problems as perceived by educated adults was prepared and standardized by the investigators. To make the data representative to the different regions of Punjab, stratified random sampling technique was applied. The data were collected from each stratum on random basis. To test the significance of the variables under study, various statistical techniques i.e. Mean, SD, Q_1 and Q_3 , Percentage and ANOVA were applied.

RESULTS

The objective of the study was to find out the difference in the perceptions of social problems of educated adults in relation to their age. The sample was divided into three groups on the basis of their age i.e. educated adults having age from 25-35 years were considered as lower age group (LAG), educated adults having age from 36-45 years were considered as middle age group (MAG) whereas educated adults having age from 46 years or above were considered as higher age group (HAG).

Level of Social Problems as Perceived by Educated Adults of Different Age Groups

The social problems scores of educated adults of Punjab belonging to different age groups were compared on social problems scale; it has been found that mean values of social problems score of the lower age group (LAG), middle age group (MAG) and higher age group (HAG) were 342, 340 and 338 respectively. The mean values indicated that educated adults of different age groups perceived more or less same level of social problems. The scores of social problems scale of the sample of different age groups were calculated and grouped into three groups according to Q_1 and Q_3 values i.e. less perceived social problems group (LSP) those who scores less than 324, average perceived social problems group (ASP) having scores between 324-356 and more perceived social problems group (MSP) with scores higher than 356. The results explored that 21% educated adults of lower age group perceived less social problems, whereas 28% sample of the lower age group perceived more social problems. Similarly 24% educated adults of middle age group perceived less social problems and 24% sample of the middle age group perceived more social problems. Again, 25% educated adults of higher age group perceived less social problems while 24% sample of the higher age group perceived more social problems.

Social Problems as Perceived by Educated Adults of different Age Groups

The percentage scores of the social problems scale of the educated adults of Punjab belonging to different age groups were calculated with respect to the different dimensions of social problems i.e. socio-economic, child abuse & child labour, socio-political, educational problems, crimes and criminals, drugs and alcoholism, health related problems, family problems, adulteration and violence against women. The results indicated that 82.23% educated adults of lower age group of Punjab perceived crimes and criminals and also same percentage of respondents perceived that alcohol and drugs were rising alarmingly. Similarly, 81.01% educated adults of Punjab perceived health related problems, while 80.23% advocated socio-economic problems as social problems. Again, 79.33% educated adults of Punjab perceived adulteration and 77.69% perceived educational problems as social problems and 76.04% educated adults of Punjab perceived child abuse & child labour related problems as the main social problems. However, 75.12% educated adults of Punjab perceived family problems and 63.42% perceived that violence against women were on rise. The results indicated that 81.66% educated adults of middle age group of Punjab perceived crimes and criminals and 81.35% perceived that alcohol and drugs were rising alarmingly. Similarly, 80.50% educated adults of Punjab perceived health related problems, while 78.91% advocated socio-economic problems as social problems. Again, 77.91% educated adults of Punjab perceived adulteration and 77.17% perceived that socio-political problems were on the edge. Further, 76.17% educated adults of Punjab perceived child abuse & child labour related problems as social problems and 76.09% perceived that educational problems are the main social problems. However, 75.45% educated adults of Punjab perceived family problems and 64.01% perceived that violence against women were on rise. The results indicated that 81.59% educated adults of higher age group of Punjab perceived alcohol and drugs and 81.13% perceived that crimes and criminals were rising alarmingly. Similarly, 79.90% educated adults of Punjab perceived health related problems, while 78.76% advocated socio-economic problems as social problems. Again, 78.06% educated adults of Punjab perceived adulteration and 76.82% perceived that socio-political problems were on the edge. Further, 75.94% educated adults of Punjab perceived child abuse & child labour related problems are the main problems and 75.37% perceived that educational problems as social problems. While, 75.15% educated adults of Punjab perceived family problems and 62.69% perceived that violence against women were on rise.

Variance in Social Problems as Perceived by Educated Adults of different Age Groups of Punjab

The results explored that values of sum of squares and mean squares between groups have been found to be 3157.38 and 1578.69 and the values of sum of squares and mean squares within groups have been found to be 710632.1 and 593.18 respectively. The F-value being 2.66 has been found to be insignificant at 0.05 level of significance. It reveals that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of educated adults of different age groups regarding social problems. The hypothesis of the study states that the age

of the respondents changes the perceptions of educated adults regarding social problems. The findings of the study have not been found in favour of this hypothesis. According to results of the present study, no significant difference exists in the perceptions of educated adults regarding social problems of Punjab. Thus the hypothesis stands rejected. Usually it has been observed that the people with higher age perceived different problems than people with lower age group, but media has a strong influence and it has reduced even the age gap in perceiving the social problems.

CONCLUSION

There is no significant difference in the perceptions of educated adults of different age groups regarding social problems of Punjab. Drugs and alcoholism, crime and criminals and health related problems are strongly perceived social problems by educated adults of different age groups of Punjab. The curriculum should be so equipped that young generation can be sensitized about ill effects of drugs, alcohol and other narcotic substances. Government and other agencies responsible for maintaining law and order should ensure safety of common man and do the needful to curb the graph of crime. Steps should be taken by the government to provide best health care services to the citizens at affordable cost. Awareness of every sphere should be within the reach of each and every person. Children should be made aware about their rights and strategies to escape themselves from being victimized. Education system should be such that it can meet the challenges of fast developing world. People should be made aware about their responsibilities towards their family so that congenial environment within the family should be created. Strict action should be taken against those responsible for adulteration and at the same time people should be educated about their consumer right.

*

AIAER RESEARCH TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Recently many changes have taken place in the research process for finding answer to the questions so raised in the field of education. Also numbers of committees at various levels expressed concern for the researchers not following prescribed research process. There is need to train the researchers in this direction. In pursuance of this objective the Association is planning to organise orientation programme for the neo-researchers to give them practical training in identifying research issues and developing research proposals as well as collecting data and analyzing the same. The plan will be as follows:

First Day: Scientific Process of research, Quantitative and Qualitative Process of research

Second day: Methodologies of research, Research Design, Survey, Historical and Philosophical Methods of Research

Third day: Experimental Designs: Simple, Quasi and True Experimental designs, Validity of Experimental Designs

Fourth Day: Different Methods of Qualitative research- Phenomenological research, Naturalistic Inquiry, Ethno methodology

Fifth day: Analysis of quantitative data: measures of central Tendency and dispersion, Correlation, Non-parametric analysis, Inferential Statistics

Sixth day: Analysis of Case Study, Content analysis, Policy analysis, Document analysis

It is proposed to have small exercises to develop competence among the new researchers (we do not intend to provide written theoretical material for this purpose). Interested colleagues ready to help the community of researchers may kindly send their willingness by e-mail to generalsecretary@aiaer.net with a copy to aiaer@rediffmail.com mentioning the topic on which they would like to develop exercises. The Association on its part will provide some token honorarium for the work done in this direction out of its very limited funds.

