

Academic achievement and risk taking behaviour

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out to assess the risk taking behavior of high and low academic achievers. For measuring the risk taking tendency of the students 'Risk taking questionnaire' constructed and standardized by Arora and Sinha (1982) was administered on 200 students. The sample comprised of 200 students out of which 100 students were high academic achiever and 100 students were low academic achiever groups. For analysis of data 't' test was used. Result showed that there is no significant difference between the students of both the groups (high and low academic achiever) in terms of their scores on risk taking behavior.

Key Words : Risk taking behaviour, Academic achievement

INTRODUCTION

Modern age is the age of youth. Youth face a wide chain of challenges in their life and they want to remain an active member of the society. To face challenges and remain an active member of the society, they have to acquire the characteristic of the daring/risk taking person. Life is very complex and full of struggle. It has been rightly said that life is a continuous process of struggle for existence and survival. Life all round us seems to be moving very fast. There is a cutthroat competition in all field of life. The heavy and healthy competition bounds and forces to opt more risk in life to survive. It is the age of competition in which, human being is busy to keep him in a leading position especially in 21th century. It has been observed that risk takers are more successful and leading in position. Risk taking behaviour refers that every action has an outcome. The outcome could be one or several. For instance, when we toss a coin, there are two possible outcomes- it lands either head or tail. Similarly, if we throw a dice, we can get six outcomes. Now, when an action is followed by several outcomes, we decide on which of the outcome is desired one. In time of uncertainty, we decide whether to act or not. Hence, in one sense, risk can be define as "a variation in the possible outcome". In another sense, risk is defined as "the degree of uncertainty associated with a possible action". Risk and act of risk- taking is an essential part of personality. The act of doing something that involves danger or risk in order to achieve something admirable by an individual. Youth too much take risk in order to achieve optimum growth and development. Young people in their phase of growing up are characterized by curiosity and their penchant to experimentation including engaging in activities which involve an element of risk. This period bridge childhood to adulthood and prepares the individual to step into the adult world, in which one faces considerable number of risks. Risk taking is a natural part of human behavior and it has a tendency to increase during the adolescent

and adult years (Steinberg, 2004). Risk-taking behaviors have been the subject of much speculation, from Sigmund Freud's belief that dare-devil stunts arise out of humans' innate "death drive," to some modern psychologists' view that dangerous activities can make us feel more alive. In general, we consider the behavior of risk taking as encompassing activities that only a handful of courageous, or "crazy," people would like to attempt, including skydiving, rock climbing, cliff jumping, bungee jumping or other such stunts or dramatic exploits. In reality, though, risk-taking behaviors also include more mundane acts, like having unprotected sex, gambling, robbing banks, and taking drugs. The reasons for these behaviors are complex, activities of people are important in some respect, and can mean different things to different people. Matthew (2014) defined that the Risk-taking refers to the tendency to engage in behaviors that have the potential to cause harm or dangers, yet at the same time provides the opportunity for some kind of outcome that can be perceived as positive. Risk taking behavior is defined according to Trimpop (1994) as "any consciously or non-consciously controlled behavior with a perceived uncertainty about its outcome, and/or about its possible benefits, or costs for the physical, economic or psycho-social well-being of oneself or other". Various factors affect the risk taking behaviour in youth including individual factor, family factor, peer factor, school factor, and community factor. Among them academic achievement in a school plays the most important role in the risk taking behaviour of the students at the school/college life. A person's achievement may determine whether or not a person will engage in risk taking and type as well as degree of risk a person will take. Academic achievement is defined as knowledge acquired and skill developed in school subjects, generally indicated by marks obtained in test in an annual examination. Sharma *et al.* (2011) defined academic achievement as the outcome of the training imparted to students by the teacher in school situation. Academic achievement is measured in a variety of way. The most commonly cited indicator is the grade point average (percentage of students who have been held back). Academic achievement in the present study is being considered as what the students have achieved academically in their last examinations. Kiran (2003) found that academic achievement predicted the risk taking behavior negatively. Rajesh and Kumar (2016) study shows that the risk taking tendency of male students negatively and female students were positively correlated to their academic achievement. Shukla and Monga (2016) investigate that the risk taking behavior of adolescents was significantly correlated with their academic achievement. Honken and Ralston (2013) has demonstrated that the frequency of risky behavior has an inverse relationship to grade point average in first year college students.

To find out the risk taking behaviour among high academic achievers and low academic achievers, this study was planned.

Objective:

To study the risk taking behavior between high academic achievers and low academic achievers of college students.

Hypothesis :

There will be no significant difference between high academic achievers and low academic achievers in respect to their level of risk taking behaviour.

METHODOLOGY

Sample :

The sample of the present study consist of 200 students out of which 100 students were high

academic achiever and 100 students were low academic achiever. Sample were selected from different colleges in Meerut City, the age range of the sample 18 to 25.

Variable:

Independent variable :

Academic Achievement

Dependent variable :

Risk Taking Behaviour

Tool used:

Risk Taking Questionnaire developed and standardized by Dr. P.N. Arora and Dr. V. Sinha (1982) was used for measuring the risk taking behavior/ tendency of high and low academic achievers. It is five point rating questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of 40 items related to the eight areas of the risk taking behavior *i.e.* Hill, Space, Sea, Commercial trades, Police and Intelligence service, Fire, Professional trades and Military services. Five items from each area. It takes about 30 minutes on an average. It is a five point rating scale. In Risk taking questionnaire, the five learning categories *i.e.* very much, much, moderate, less and very less carry the 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 scores, respectively. The sum of the scores in all the eight areas gives the total extent of risk- tendency in the subject. High score is indicative of high risk taking behavior in the subject and *vice-versa*.

Procedure :

To measure risk taking behaviour the Risk Taking Questionnaire was used. Prior to the administration of the risk taking questionnaire in different colleges, the researcher sought the permission and cooperation of the heads of the institutions and teachers. First of all, the purpose of test was clarified to the teachers and students and rapport was established with the students and necessary direction were given comprehensively to them. After explaining the instructions, the questionnaire was distributed to the subjects. Questionnaire was collected after it is completed by subjects. Whole data were collected from all subjects following the same procedure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical analysis :

After obtaining the raw scores on considered variable, scoring was done as per scoring key of the inventory. The main aim of the present research was to study and compare the risk taking behaviour among high academic achievers and low academic achievers. We analyzed the obtained data by appropriate statistical techniques. To examine the difference between high academic achiever and low academic achiever in respect to their level of risk taking behaviour "t" test was used. Findings were presented in the following Table 1.

Table 1 : Comparison between the high academic achiever and low academic achiever in terms of their scores on risk taking behaviour

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	't' value	Sig.
High academic achiever	100	146.03	20.27	198	0.076	Not significant
Low academic achiever	100	145.71	21.44			

The finding as presented in Table 1 revealed that the students of high academic achievement group have scored slightly higher (Mean=146.03) on risk taking questionnaire as compared to the students of low academic achievement group (Mean=145.71). The comparison between two means ($t=.076$) is however, not significant even at .05 level of significance, which shows that there is no significant difference between these two groups. It means the youth of high academic achiever as well as low academic achiever are more or less equally risk taker. Statistical analysis indicate that academic achievement does not contribute significantly to the level of risk taking behaviour among college students. The above finding are also supported by researches done by Kiran (2003), Rajesh and Praveen (2016) and Honken and Ralston (2013). Therefore, the hypothesis formulated in the present context "There will be no significant difference between high academic achiever and low academic achiever in respect to their level of risk taking behaviour" gains support from the present finding.

Conclusion :

On the basis of above discussion we can conclude that high academic achiever and low academic achiever do not differ significantly in terms of their score on risk taking behaviour. The results of this investigation would have applied application in the field of behavioral sciences. On the basis of the findings of present study we can suggest some strategies to improve the risk taking tendencies among college students to achieve high standards in the field of academic life.

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