A STUDY OF MODERNITY BEHAVIOUR OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF PUNJAB IN RELATION TO ALTRUISM AND ACTIVISM

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ABSTRACT

The present study has been taken to study modernity behaviour in relation to altruism and activism among university students of Punjab and to study the modernity behaviour, altruism and activism on the basis of gender. The study has also been taken to study the impact of high and low level of altruism and activism on the modernity behaviour of university students. Attitudinal Modernity Scale, The Self-Report Altruism Scale and Sharma Student Activism Scale are used as measures in the study. Descriptive method is used as a method of research. The results of the study show that the modernity behavior among university students does not seem to relate to altruism. However, activism differential in favour of high activist university students does exist. The gender differences are not significant.

Keywords: Altruism, Activism, Modernity Behaviour, University Students.

Modernity is a positive part of social change, provided it is full of human values. It is a transformation of the traditional way of life to relatively newer, in fact non-western ways of life. Modernity can denote a certain type of attitude. Gore (1970) endeavoured to identify some broad indicators of modernity such as secularism, social activist orientation, optimism, motivation, and civic sense when it comes to operationalization to explain modernity as a process of change of traditional society into a modern society based mainly on science, technology and education.

The relationship of education with modernity has always attracted attention of social scientists, including education in post-independent India. Mainly, two contrasting themes have emerged as dominating the social science literature on the role of education in modernity. One has an emphasis on positive function of education, i.e. education promotes modernity. The other has an emphasis on its unwholesome consequences asserting that education has a conformist approach. Apparently the former theme signifies functionalist stance while the latter theme represents the radical perspective. Within the functionalist camp again,

there are two different approaches: economic and sociological. Drawing upon the role of education in skill formation the economic approach views education as an input for skill development and hence increased productivity and prosperity. Stressing the role of education in value transmission, the sociological approach views it as an agency of value socialization for modernity (Sharma, 1979).

The word "altruism" (derived from Latin alter; "other", was originally coined in the 19th century by Auguste Comte. Altruism is selfless concern for the welfare of others. Pure altruism is giving without regard to reward or the benefits that recognition of the giving may bring (Berkowitz and Louise, 1963). Altruism is a form of pro-social behaviour in which a person will voluntarily help another at some cost to themselves (Cardwell, Clarck and Meldrum, 2002). Altruism refers to behaviour that helps people with no apparent gain or with potential cost of one's self (West, Griffin and Gardner, 2007).

Student activism has long been an important component of social change and leadership in higher education. Activism refers to student's efforts to create change on or off campus related to

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a broad range of social, political and economic issues often using techniques outside institutional channels such as protests, demonstrations and rallies (Altbach, 1989).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the modernity behaviour, activism and altruism among university students.
- To study the gender differences in modernity behaviour, activism, and altruism among university students.
- To study the modernity behaviour among university students in relation to altruism.
- To study the modernity behaviour among university students in relation to activism.

METHOD

In the present study, the investigator followed the descriptive method to study the modernity behaviour in relation to gender, altruism and activism among university students.

SAMPLE

A representative sample of 180 university students studying at Punjabi University, Patiala campus was selected through stratified random sampling technique giving due weightage to different faculties and courses of study. Out of 180 University students 90 University students were male and 90 university students were female.

MEASURES

In the present study the investigators used the following tools

- Attitudinal Modernity Scale (Sharma, 1979)
- The Self-Report Altruism Scale (Rushton, Chrisjohn and Fukken,1981)
- Sharma Student Activism Scale (SSAS) (Sharma ,1988)

PROCEDURE

Descriptive statistics were used to explain modernity behavior, altruism and activism of university students. The means, SD along with t-test were used to study and compare the modernity behavior of university students in terms of gender, altruism and activism.The studentswere identified into low and high groups on motivation, altruism and activism on the basis of P_{25} and P_{75} cut points.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION-Analysis of obtained data was done in accordance with objectives framed, which are discussed below:-

TABLE-1: Comparison of Modernity Behaviour of Male and Female University Students (N=90)

S.No.	Dimensions/ Orientations	Male		Female		t- value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Secular	17.98	3.72	17.58	3.87	0.72
2	Scientific	18.63	3.11	16.72	3.26	4.24**
3	Universalistic	16.36	2.91	16.08	3.52	0.64
4	Independence	16.86	3.50	15.99	4.72	1.45
5	Achievement	14.78	2.35	14.44	2.34	1.00
6	Civic	15.50	2.25	15.46	2.44	0.12
	Total	98.05	12.14	96.55	11.75	0.84

**p<0.01

TABLE-2: Comparison of Male and Female University Students on Altruism

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value
Male	90	51.95	10.44	1.94
Female	90	48.94	10.48	

TABLE-3: Comparison of Male and Female University Students on Activism

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value
Male	90	51.41	12.82	0.14
Female	90	51.16	10.55	

TABLE-4: Comparison of Modernity Behaviour of University Students in Terms of Low and High Levels of Altruism

S. No.	Dimension	High Altruistic Group (N=33)		Low Altruistic Group (N=33)		t- value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Secular	17.84	4.14	18.18	4.07	0.33
2	Scientific	18.62	2.88	17.78	3.86	1.01
3	Universalistic	16.63	2.84	14.97	3.14	2.33*
4	Independence	17.27	4.29	16.27	4.20	0.92
5	Achievement	14.18	2.05	14.21	2.04	0.06
6	Civic	15.39	2.90	15.51	2.21	0.19
	Total	99.85	11.14	97.51	11.33	0.84

*p< 0.05

TABLE-5 Comparison of Modernity Behaviour of University Students in Terms of Low and High Levels of Activism

S. No.	Dimension	High Activist Group (N=40)		Low Activist Group (N=40)		t- value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Secular	18.45	3.54	17.60	4.46	0.95
2	Scientific	18.45	3.09	17.87	3.08	0.86
3	Universalistic	16.87	3.22	15.27	2.36	2.62**
4	Independence	17.22	4.01	16.55	2.27	0.93
5	Achievement	14.72	11.98	14.60	2.55	0.24
6	Civic	16.05	2.37	15.47	4.11	0.78
	Total	101.76	11.58	97.36	9.92	1.99*

*p<0.05; **p<0.01

It is evident from table 1 that there is no significant gender difference in secular, universalistic, independence, achievement and civic orientations on modernity behaviour among university students. However, the t-value on scientific orientation is 4.24, which is significant at 0.01 level. From the above result, we can conclude that there is a significant difference with respect to gender in scientific orientation of university students, in favour of male students.The mean score on the modernity behavior of male university students is 98.05 with SD of 12.14 whereas the mean modernity behaviour score of female students is 96.55 with SD of 11.75. The t-value, testing the significance of mean difference in modernity behaviour is 0.84 which is not significant. The obtained results are in conformity with the previous findings of (Kaur, 2009), which reported no significant gender difference of university students. Hence, hypothesis -1 'There will be no significant gender difference in modernity behaviour among university students' is accepted.

The table 2 shows that the mean score on the altruism of male university students is 59.00 with SD of 6.75 whereas the mean score of female students is 68.96 with SD of 7.21. The t-value is 1.94 which is not significant even at 0.05 levels. The obtained results are in conformity with the previous findings of (Agochiya, 1992). Hence the hypothesis 'There will be no significant gender difference in altruism among university students' is accepted.

The table 3 shows that the mean activism score of male university students is 59.00 with SD of 6.75 whereas the mean score of female students is 68.96 with SD of 7.21. The t-value, testing the significance of mean difference in activism is 0.14,

which is not significant. Hence the hypothesis '*There will be no significant gender difference in activism, among university students*' is accepted.

It is evident from table 4 that the significant mean difference in secular, scientific, independence, achievement and civic orientations between high and low altruism groups of university students is not significant. Whereas the t–value 2.33 is found significant at 0.05 level on universalistic orientation between high and low altruism groups of university students. The mean modernity behaviour score of a high altruism, group of university students is 99.85 with SD is 11.14. The mean modernity behaviour score of the low altruism, group of university students is 97.51 with SD is 11.33. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference in modernity behaviour between high and low altruism groups of university students is 0.84 which is not significant.

In the light of these results It may be concluded that low and high altruism groups of university students do not differ significantly in five orientations of modernity behaviour namely, secular, scientific, independence, achievement, and civic. However, high altruism university students show higher levels of universalistic orientation than their lower altruistic counterparts. Hence, the 4 hypothesis '*There will be no significant difference in modernity behaviour of university students having low and high levels of altruism*' is accepted except universalistic orientation.

Table 5 shows that the significant mean difference in secular, scientific, independence, achievement and civic orientations between high and low activism groups of university students is not significant. Whereas the t–value testing the significance of mean difference in universalistic orientation between high and low activism groups of university students is 2.62, which is significant at 0.01 level.

The mean modernity behaviour score of the high activism group of university students is 101.76 with SD is 11.58. The mean modernity behaviour score of the low activism group of university students is 97.36 with SD is 9.92. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference in modernity behaviour between high and low motivated groups is 1.99, which is significant at 0.05 level. On the basis of these results the hypothesis -5 '*There will be no*

significant difference in modernity behaviour of university students having low and high levels of activism' is rejected as high activist except a group of university students has exhibited on the appreciably higher level of universalistic orientation and total modernity behaviour.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Few suggestions regarding modernity behaviour of university students in relation to altruism and activism may be laid down for educational implications:

- Teachers can promote cultural and scientific aspects of educational environment to enhance the modernistic level of students.
- Keeping in mind the level of modernity, teachers can direct the students to the proper channel for modernity behaviour to be reflected in social life.
- This study is important from the counselling point of view. The counselor will have to develop an insight into the relationship of modernity with activism.
- Higher education should be more employment oriented and stress on applied courses to contribute more significantly to productivity and development, making society a modern one in the era of science and technology.
- There is need to strengthen the movement for developing social behaviour among people, especially youth.

At the end it may be suggested that along with enhancing modernity behaviour, university students should be encouraged to be more activist and altruistic so that they can contribute to society in a more meaningful manner both in economic and non-economic aspects.

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