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A comparative study of personality traits and anger amongst street children & normal developing children

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Abstract

A child is like a dormant seed, who preserves a lot of opportunities within them for future. But conditions like poverty & negligence in our country has eventually destroyed a lot of their future dreams. Past few years have shown a high increase in the number of street children. The main aim of the present research is to observe the effect of anger, personality & impulsivity on street children & normal developing children using these three scales, BIS-2A, STAXI2, C/A,J.E.P.Q. This research involves two groups i.e. street children and normal developing children, 30 sample size in each of the groups (N=60) aged 7-12 years. Data were analysed by mean, standard deviation, t-test statistics. Result shows that these two group of children depict Psychotism, Extroversion, Neuroticism, Lie scale, State anger, Trait anger, Expression of anger & Physical impulsivity in various ways. Moreover, the conclusion we can draw at the end of research is that there is a difference between street children & normally developing children on the basis of their Anger, Personality & Impulsivity.

Keywords: Street children, normal developing children, anger, personality, impulsivity

Introduction

A child is like a blooming flower, a pioneer of the future. The definition of child from the point of view of citizenship or habitual residence in a country differs from other definitions used under the Immigration and National Act (INA) defines child in two separate definitions. The term street children has many definitions in different settings. The United Nations defined the term 'street children to include "any boy or girl for whom the street in the widest sense of the word has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults. UNICEF has defined three types of street children-street living, street working and children of street living families. Lusk (1992) [2] developed four categories of children who are found on the streets. The first category includes the poor working children who return to their families at night. They are likely to attend school and not be involved in criminal activities. The second category includes those who are independent street workers. Their family ties begin to break down, their school attendance decreases and their criminal behaviour increases. Third the children of street families on the streets. Their conditions are related to poverty. The fourth category encompasses the children who have broken off contact with their families and resides on the streets all the time. These children are called "real" street children. Clark *et al.*, (2017) [2] states that middle childhood is where the acquisition of competency-based concepts is crucial for children's future development. Their study involved 2510 twin children aged 10-12years, whose personality heritability was correlated with parent, teacher and children's individual ratings of personality during this period. The results showed that childhood personality has coherent structure, which is heritable and not relevant to developmentally significant observable characteristics such as extrinsic use and educational engagement. Slobodskaya & Kozlova (2016) [11] examined the relationship between developmental correlates, early temperament and later personality traits in 74 children using the infant behaviour questionnaire-revised and who were followed up 7 years later, showing significant correlations between early temperament and later personality traits. Yoo *et al.*, (2016) [13] studied depression, social anxiety and aggression in 42 elementary school children by pre-test and post-test and compared the experimental group with a non-equivalent group after an 8-week meditation program and salivary cortisol levels were significantly reduced. This

means that meditation programs can be effective in improving children’s mental health. Deckers *et al.*, (2015) [5] found that socioeconomic status is an important condition for the multifaceted expression of a child’s personality which is mainly seen by examining personality’s time preference, ability to take risks, children’s socio economic status that does not affect personality. Crombach & Elbert (2014) [4] examined reactive aggression and appetitive aggression in children’s current violent behaviour through informal interviews with 112 children and youth in residential centres for street, vulnerable children. From here, it is seen, the cumulative exposure of the traumatic event and its family and community preparation of violence was associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms. Reactive aggression was positively related to PTSD and appetitive aggression was negatively related to PTSD. Ostrov *et al.*, (2013) [9] conducted a short term study of preschool children (M=42.44 month old, SD=8.02) and examined whether exposure to educational media affects social development (eg: aggression, pro-social behaviour). Whereas, in addition to educational media exposure, child rearing effects of parenting are present in reports of aggression. Wilson *et al.*, (2013) [12] used a bottom up approach to describe California children’s personality (Child Q set) in 373 preschool children, measuring two trait dimensions: adaptive sociability (Emotional stability, agreeableness, intelligence) and anxious components (Emotional/behavioural introversion). Research shows that the use of education is an indicator of the formation of

children’s personality, similarly it can be said that it is compatible but not identical with the body. Dutta (2018) [6] indicate sexual abuse, drug abuse and various forms of violence prevalent amongst street children. Their mental health was found to suffer in general due to anxiety and depression, after collecting data from 150 street children in Kolkata, explaining that girls were more anxious than boys. The reason for this is that girls are more sexually abused which causes anxiety in them.

Objective

The current study aims to find out there are any significant difference on personality, impulsivity and anger between street children and normal developing children.

Tool and scale

Information schedule, Junior Eyesenck’s Personality Questionnaire, State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory-2 child and adolescent, Barratt Impulsiveness scale-II A for Children.

Sampling Design: In the present study, Purposive sampling has been used. Inclusion criteria: The age range selected for the early and late childhood is between 7-12 years of age and data was collected from both boys and girls. Exclusion criteria: Any previous mental or physical illness and except for physical and mental disabilities.

Results



Fig 1: Graphical representation showing the mean scores of anger

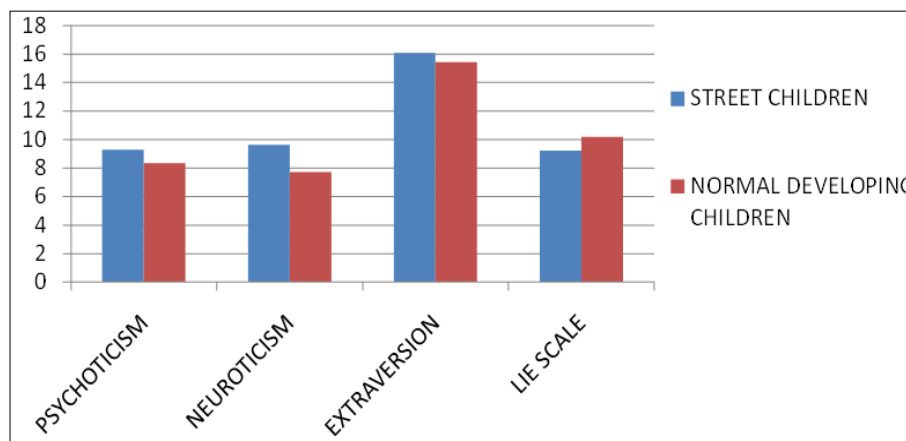


Fig 2: Graphical representation showing the mean scores of personality

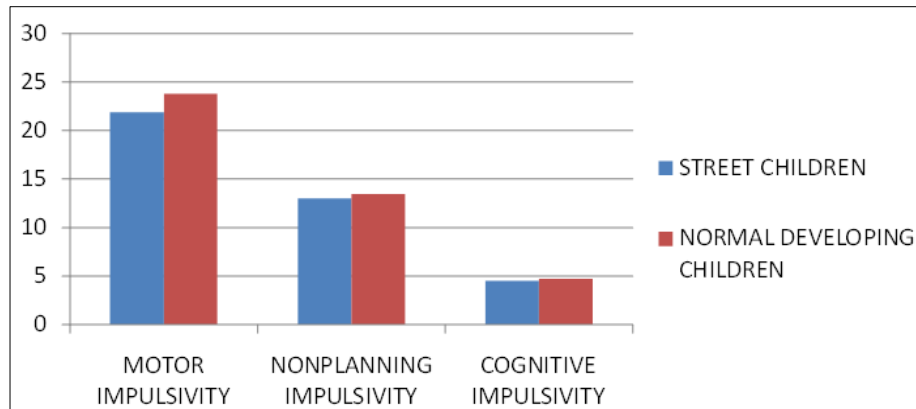


Fig 3: Graphical representation showing the mean scores of impulsivity

Discussion and conclusion

As the number of street children has been increasing day by day over the past few years, the purpose of the present study is to see if any significant differences can be observed between two categories of street children and normally developing children. The study collected data on anger, personality and emotionality among 30 street children and 30 typically developing children between the age 7-12. Eysenck and Eysenck (1975) [7] stated that “children who score high on psychoticism are generally withdrawn, troublemakers and among themselves lack humanness toward their child friends, their pets and early violent behaviour toward them.” Children usually become this way through a high level of indulgence which results in the devaluing of feelings of guilt, sensitivity to others, cooperation etc. Significant differences in psychoticism were observed between the personality of normal developing children and street children. Analyzing the data in the study, in light of Eysenck’s theory, it was found that the p-scores of the street children were higher than those of the normally developing children but levels of violent behaviour and impulsivity are higher in normally developing children than in street children. Kohlberg states in his theory of moral development the moral behaviour of children in the Conventional stage (10-13 years) is determined by the expectations of their group. At this age, children follow social rules to get support from others. In the study, the average age is found to be 10.63 for street children and 10.33 for normally developing children. In this case, significant difference was observed in terms of lie scale between the two groups of children. In contrast to normally developing children, street children have higher social grades, i.e. typically developing children tend to *get along* with others or be the good girl/boy to everyone. Although no significant differences were observed in neuroticism and extraversion between the wayward and normally developing children, there was a mean difference between them. Neuroticism scores were higher in children with autism compared to typically developing children. A study by Dutta (2018) [6] showed that street children are more distressed due to sexual abuse and drug abuse. That is, it can be said that there is a similarity with the results of the present examination. Street children have higher standards of extraversion than normal children. A significant difference was observed in State Anger and Trait Anger, Anger expression, anger regulation, and suppressed anger were not significantly different between the two categories in the street children and normally developing children. But on average, normally developing children showed more

anger expression than street children. Cognitive Neoassociation Theory Proponents Berkowitz (2012) [1], says that certain unpleasant stimuli like depression, excitement, use of loud noises, uncomfortable temperature, intolerable odours, create aversion in human mind that from different thoughts, previous memories, different neural influences, psychological needs that create fight or demand of flight mentality. A fighting spirit creates anger. And the attitude of running away creates fear. Aggressive thinking, emotional arousal or use abnormalities coexist in memory (Collins and Loftus, 1975) [3]. Studies have shown that normally developing children have higher levels of aggression, as well as higher levels of physical activity. Therefore, the above theory is supported for the study. Although no significant difference was observed between street children and normally developing children in terms of emotionality, on the basis of their mean values it can be said that the level of physiological emotionality is higher in normal developing children as compared to street children. On the other hand, because normally developing children are growing up at home not deprived like street children, they often act without thinking. In the present study personality, anger and impulsivity were measured in 30 street children and 30 normal developing children. Significant differences were observed in Psychoticism, lie scale, state anger and trait anger between street children and normally developing children. Extraversion, neuroticism, anger expression, suppressed anger, anger control, motor, cognitive, non-planning impulsivity differed on the basis of mean values between street children and normally developing children.

Contributors

Both the authors have conceptualized the paper. The first author did the initial literature search, collected data, analyzed it and framed the manuscript. Both the authors have read and approved the final version of the report.

Conflicts of interest

No conflict of interest.

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