Causes of The Passive Attitude In Children At Early Grade Level

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Abstract: The passive attitude of a child is a common problem as far as communication is concerned which has long been considered a central concept of social psychology. The current study investigates the causes and fears of children in early grade students. The objectives of the study were (a) to identify the reasons for the passive attitude of children at the primary level; (b) to determine the elements involved in creating a passive attitude in the students at the primary level; (c) to assess the causes of the passive attitude of students at primary level. The nature of this research was descriptive while the survey method was used to gather information. All the learners, parents, and teachers of government primary schools of district Bahawalpur were the population of the study. A sample of 592 participants (teachers 125, students 366 and parents 101) was selected through using convenient sampling techniques. The questionnaire was used as a research tool for teachers, parents, and students. The findings of the study demonstrate that punishment, scolding, steering, speaking loudly, beating, Burdon of homework and strictness were considered the major causes of passive attitude among students. Most of the teachers were of the view that students feel fear when the teacher scolds them and student's hesitation levels increase. This research study fulfilled both objectives of the study. The results of the study disclosed that the majority of the students; teachers and parents opined that strictness of the teachers, punishment, de-motivating attitude of teachers, Burdon of homework, curriculum, the teaching method of teacher, lack of attractive environment, home environment, crowded classrooms and lack of teachers friendly relationship with students. All these become the reasons for shyness and poor confidence in the children. In the future, this study will be helpful for teachers and parents, on how to deal with children and seek their behaviours, As well as, this study will helpful for researchers to investigate each reason and develop the curriculum. Similarly, a policymaker can use this study to develop the rules and regulations for their institutions.

Keywords: Passive attitude, Hesitation, Early Grade Students, Aggressive Behavior

1. Introduction

In Pakistan, it is observed that the classroom environment has been neglected, and the individual interests of the students have not been considered. The problems faced by the students in the classroom are not being addressed by the teachers. The term attitude refers to "a favorable or unfavorable evaluative reaction towards something or someone exhibited in one's beliefs, feelings, or intended behavior." It is a social orientation, an underlying inclination to respond to something either favorably or unfavorably (Cashin, 1996).

Passive people normally keep their problems to themselves, but with a little kindness and a soft attitude, we can get them to open up and tell us what the problem actually is. If we want to solve a problem, we must first know what the problem is. Passive behavior is an entirely different phenomenon. Aggression is something we deal with frequently in routine life. We are not always on the receiving end. We all have the capability of losing control of our emotions from time to time. To cope with passive-aggressive behavior, we need to create an environment where it cannot burst out. One of the best ways to do this is to be proactive and create an environment where people feel they can open up and tell you anything. Through this approach, we can build a trustworthy and respectful relationship where passive-aggressive behavior can be avoided or ceased (Wachtel, 1998).

Unacceptable or passive-aggressive behavior must be addressed. If we are experiencing hostility, we should sit with them in an isolated environment and address the issue. Using the following feedback model, we should focus on three main things:

- What is the other person's issue, i.e., the cause of their hostility?
- Why is this issue important to them?
- How would they like to move forward?

The most important thing to tackle passive-aggressive behavior is to ensure an environment where we are always open to communication and honest discussion. We must demonstrate that we are trustworthy and respectful of others. It has been observed that some students are unwilling learners, which becomes apparent in their loss of interest. This is witnessed in low performance, absenteeism, slow assignment

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submission, non-cooperative behavior, and a negative approach (Sajjad, 2010).

Another important factor that causes negative attitudes towards schooling is stress. Stress, according to Feldman (2004), is any situation that evokes negative thoughts and feelings in a person. However, the same situation is not evocative or stressful for all people, and not all people experience the same negative thoughts and feelings when stressed. Fatemipour (2013) points out that the person-environmental model of the concept "stress" helps to understand stress among students. Children are often ill-equipped to cope with stress during transitions from childhood to pre-adolescence and from pre-adolescence to adolescence. According to Pukelis and Savickienė (2003), during this period, adolescents need to be handled sympathetically and with understanding. For pre-adolescents and teens, an identity crisis, the perils of peer interaction, acceptance and rejection situations, persons, and ideas are a constant source of stress and depression. "Where do I stand?" and "How do I compare to others?" are key concerns for this age group (Lawrence A. Braskamp, 2000). Parents' attitudes toward education influence their involvement in education matters. Parental involvement in education is the participation of parents in regular meaningful communication that involves student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their children's learning at home and at school (Larry A. Braskamp & Ory, 1994).

According to Chang (2001), literature has identified several causes of students' seemingly untoward attitudes towards school work. These include the school and its curriculum, stress and developmental issues, economic factors, and the impact of HIV and AIDS. Several curriculum issues have also been blamed, simply because students find the assigned work too difficult or too easy.

Another important factor that causes negative attitudes towards schooling is stress. Stress, according to Cohen (1981), is any situation that evokes negative thoughts and feelings in a person. However, the same situation is not evocative or stressful for all people, and not all people experience the same negative thoughts and feelings when stressed. Connolly (2007) points out that the person-environmental model of the concept "stress" helps to understand stress among students. Early Childhood Education (ECE) is the most important period for the development of mental and social skills. This is the period when a child acquires languages and early literacy. During this early period, children are active learners and interpret things in their own way. ECE should be considered the first step of basic education and should be an integral part of the national education system. If ECE is provided with high quality, it can lay a strong foundation for lifelong learning and motivate children for all sorts of development, including physical, social, cognitive, and linguistic development (Cuseo, 2007). To avoid passive attitudes in primary school students, it is always recommended that teachers adopt teaching methods that address the sensitivity of students' thoughts and provide a free and independent atmosphere to express their feelings. In countries like Pakistan, such situations are very common now, and there is an utmost need to transform the situation by adopting modern methods and understanding children's psychology at this level to control the issue at its beginning (Shakir & Lodhi, 2016).

2. Objectives Of The Research Study

The objectives of the study were:

- To identify the reasons for the passive attitude of children at the early grade level.
- To determine the elements involved in creating a passive attitude in students at the early grade level.
- To assess the causes of the passive attitude of students at the early grade level.

3. Research Methodology

The focus of the study was to identify the causes of the passive attitude of students at the early grade level. Therefore, all the primary schools in four tehsils: Bahawalpur, Yazman, Ahmedpur East, and Khairpur were included in the study population. The study population consisted of all the students in early grades of both public and private sectors, including boys and girls situated in urban and rural areas of the district of Bahawalpur.

The study employed a survey methodology based on probability sampling methods (multistage cluster sampling), which, according to Connolly (2007), serves as the foundation of all statistical tests. The sample was drawn from all five tehsils of Bahawalpur, which were divided into five clusters (Bahawalpur, Ahmedpur, Yazman, Khairpur Tamiwali, and Hasilpur). From each cluster, 366 students, 125 teachers, and 101 parents were selected as the sample for the study. Each cluster was included to ensure the sample was large and representative of the population, as suggested by Best and Kahn (2003) for survey research. The tehsils were further divided into urban and rural divisions, allowing the study to compare the five tehsils of Bahawalpur.

After determining the target population size in the selected five tehsils, the sample was calculated using a statistical formula at a 95% confidence level (margin of error 5%). The population of primary school students in the entire district is 20,200 (http://www.schools.punjab.gov.pk/ retrieved in 2017). To conduct the study, a sample of 366 students from 4th and 5th grades, 125 teachers, and 101 parents were selected for direct observation. The sample size was rationalized as Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2008) and Jyothi (2007) suggest selecting based on the population size.

4. Data Collection and Instrumentation

The survey method was used for this study. Basic information was collected through a questionnaire from the selected respondents, which included teachers, parents, and students. All teachers were interviewed to find out the reasons for the passive attitude in the students. All the respondents were asked questions within the boundaries of research ethics. After developing the tool, the researcher validated it.

5. Results of the Study

After ensuring the validity and reliability of the instrument, the researcher administered the research tool to the selected sample. The researcher personally visited the departments and distributed the questionnaires according to the sampling technique. After collecting the relevant information from the respondents, data sheets were developed in SPSS and analyzed in terms of percentages on various indicators of academic freedom. Demographic information was presented in the form of pie charts with corresponding percentages. The collected data were analyzed using different statistical formulas, including simple means, percentages, T-tests, and standard deviations.

Table 1: Teachers opinion about the passive attitude

Item	Scale	S.A	A	DA	SDA	M	S.D	Sig.
Punishment, scold, fear, Burdon of homework, lack of attractive environment	F	50	51	17	7	3.15	0.79	0.02
	%	39.8	41.12	13.72	5.36			

Source: By the author

Table 1 describes the teachers' opinions about the passive attitude of children. Teachers were asked about the reasons for passive attitudes, such as punishment and scolding. Most of the teachers (39.8% + 41.1% = 80.9%) opined that due to the strictness of the teachers, punishment, de-motivating attitude of teachers, burden of homework, curriculum, teaching methods, lack of an attractive environment, home environment, crowded classrooms, and lack of a friendly relationship with students, children feel fear and hesitation. Meanwhile, 13.7% + 5.2% = 19.1% were of the view that students feel hesitation due to other reasons. In conclusion, it can be said that the majority of the students feel hesitation due to the teachers' attitude. A positive and appreciative attitude from the teacher can develop positive thinking among students. Furthermore, it develops critical thinking and confidence. Most of the teachers appreciate their students during classroom activities, which makes them confident. If teachers show care and love during classroom teaching to early grade students, children feel comfortable and their confidence levels are enhanced.

Table 2: Students opinion about the passive attitude

Item	Scale	S.A	A	DA	SDA	M	S.D	Sig.
Punishment, scold, steer, speak loudly, beating, strictness	F	179	86	50	51	3.07	1.00	0.01
	%	48.85	23.38	13.77	14.03			

Source: by the author

Table 2 describes students' opinions about the passive attitude of children. Students were asked about the reasons for passive attitudes, such as punishment, scolding, stern looks, speaking loudly, beating, and strictness. Most of the students (48.8% + 23.3% = 72.2%) opined that punishment is a major cause. Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that students feel fear when teachers scold them, and their hesitation levels increase when teachers punish them. The study clarified that most of the teachers, students, and parents believe that children become frightened when teachers speak loudly. It is concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when the teacher uses a stick for punishment in class. Further data concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when the teacher stares at them. Additionally, the study found that most teachers believe students feel fear when the teacher asks questions from the students. Children feel fear and hesitation, while 13.7% + 14.1% = 27.8% were of the view that students feel hesitation due to other reasons. In conclusion, it can be said that the majority of the students feel hesitation due to the teachers' attitude. A positive and appreciative attitude from the teacher can develop positive thinking among students. Furthermore, it develops critical thinking and confidence.

Table 3: Parents opinion about the passive attitude

Item	Scale	S.A	A	DA	SDA	M	S.D	Sig.
Separation of parents, strictness of parents, fear of school.	F	29	33	27	12	3.14	0.72	0.062
	%	28.71	32.67	26.72	11.88			

Source: by the author

Table 3 describes parents' opinions about the passive attitude of children. Parents were asked about the reasons for passive attitudes, such as separation of parents, quarrels, poverty, ignorance, the strictness of parents, fear of school, and abuse by parents. Most of the parents (28.71% + 32.67% = 61.38%) opined that punishment,

poverty, fear of school, and quarrels contribute to their children's passive attitudes. Children feel fear and hesitation, while 26.72% + 11.88% = 38.6% were of the view that students feel hesitation due to other reasons. In conclusion, it can be said that the majority of students feel hesitation due to the parents' attitude. A positive and appreciative attitude from parents can develop positive thinking among children. Furthermore, it develops critical thinking and confidence. Parents believe that students feel fear when parents have conflicts. Based on the results, students feel fear when their parents quarrel. Parents believe that students feel fear when they are punished. Parents also believe that students do not share all their school activities with their parents due to feelings of hesitation. It is concluded that students feel fear when parents scold them all the time. Confidence in students increases if parents do not scold them and treat their children well.

6. Discussion

Teachers were asked about the reasons for the passive attitude of students, such as punishment and scolding. Most of the teachers opined that the strictness of teachers, punishment, de-motivating attitudes of teachers, burden of homework, curriculum, teaching methods, lack of an attractive environment, home environment, crowded classrooms, and lack of a friendly relationship between teachers and students contribute to a passive attitude. In conclusion, it can be said that the majority of the students feel hesitation due to the teachers' attitudes. A positive and appreciative attitude from teachers can develop positive thinking among students. Further, it develops critical thinking and confidence. Most of the teachers appreciate their students during classroom activities, which makes them confident. If teachers show care and love during classroom teaching to early grade students, children feel comfortable and their confidence levels will be enhanced.

Parents were asked about the reasons for the passive attitude of students, such as punishment, scolding, stern looks, speaking loudly, beating, and strictness. Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that teachers believe students feel fear when they are scolded, and their hesitation level increases when they are punished. The study clarified that most teachers, students, and parents believe that children become frightened when teachers speak loudly. It is concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when they are punished with a stick in class. It is concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when the teacher stares at them. Further data concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when the teacher asks questions. Children feel fear and hesitation due to various reasons. In conclusion, it can be said that the majority of the students feel hesitation due to the teachers' attitudes. A positive and appreciative attitude from teachers can develop positive thinking among students. Further, it develops critical thinking and confidence.

Parents were asked about the reasons for the passive attitude of students, such as the separation of parents, quarrels, poverty, ignorance, the strictness of parents, fear of school, and abuse by parents. Most of the parents opined that punishment, poverty, fear of school, and quarrels contribute to their children's passive attitudes. Children feel fear and hesitation due to various reasons. In conclusion, it can be said that the majority of the students feel hesitation due to the parents' attitudes. A positive and appreciative attitude from parents can develop positive thinking among children. Further, it develops critical thinking and confidence. Parents believe that students feel fear when parents have conflicts. Based on the results, students feel fear when their parents quarrel. Parents believe that students feel fear when they are punished. Parents also believe that students do not share all their school activities with their parents due to feelings of hesitation. It is concluded that students feel fear when parents scold them all the time. Confidence in students increases if parents do not scold them and treat their children well.

7. Conclusion

Based on the results and analysis of the study, the following conclusions are aligned with the objectives of the study: The first objective of the study was to identify the reasons for the passive attitude of children at the early grade level. The results disclosed that the majority of students, teachers, and parents opined that the strictness of teachers, punishment, de-motivating attitudes of teachers, burden of homework, curriculum, teaching methods, lack of an attractive environment, home environment, crowded classrooms, and lack of a friendly relationship between teachers and students contribute to a passive attitude. The second objective of the study was to assess the causes of the passive attitude of students at the primary level. Based on the results, it is concluded that teachers believe students feel fear when they are scolded, and their hesitation level increases when they are punished. The study clarified that most teachers, students, and parents believe that children become frightened when teachers speak loudly. Empirically, it is concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when they are punished with a stick in class. It is concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when the teacher stares at them. Further data concluded that most teachers believe students feel fear when the teacher asks questions. Data further concluded that most teachers, parents, and students opined that students feel fear of losing their loved ones. This study indicated that most students feel hesitation and do not pay attention in class when their parents quarrel with each other. Students' social status matters a lot. This study concluded that children from poor backgrounds remain shy and feel more hesitation than children from high social and economic statuses.

8. Recommendations

The last objective of the study was to suggest strategies to overcome the passive attitude of the students. Based on the review of related literature and the results of the study, the following measures are suggested to remove the hesitation and passive attitude of the students:

- The results indicated that most teachers remained strict while teaching in class, causing students to feel hesitation and fear. It is suggested that if teachers show care and love during classroom teaching to early grade students, children will feel comfortable and their confidence levels will be enhanced.

- Another important issue and factor that increase the passive attitude and cause fear among early grade children is the school environment. Most teachers, parents, and students agreed that the school environment contributes to the passive attitude among students. Therefore, it is suggested that the school environment should be made attractive for students. Issues such as heavy bags, punishment, de-motivating attitudes of teachers, and crowded classrooms need to be addressed so that children feel more comfortable in school.

- Confidence is essential for children at the early grade level. Teachers should include a variety of role-plays and activities that create opportunities for students to speak more in real-life situations.

- Ask the children how they feel about speaking. Is it important to them? What are their difficulties? This will let them know that you are aware that you are asking them to do something that is not necessarily easy. Maybe the class can share some ideas on how to deal with this. Mention to them that actors study their lines before they perform in a film or a play and emphasize that they have to do a scene many times until they get it right. This should reinforce the need to practice before speaking in class. This conversation will usually relax them and give them the confidence to try.

- Ask students to look at a picture for about a minute without telling them why. Look at your watch to reinforce the time limit. Then, hide the picture so they can't see it and ask them to tell you about the picture. What can they see? What is happening? Who are the people in the picture? Ask them to write the information on the board. Then, ask them to open their books and look at the picture again for another minute. They should confirm the information on the board, make any changes, and add anything new. With the corrected sentences on the board, you can follow the procedure described above. This activity is a bit more challenging as the sentences may not follow the pattern that grammar and vocabulary exercises usually do.

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