



To study the alienation among rural and urban higher secondary school students of Kashmir valley

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Abstract

The present paper was aimed to assess the alienation among rural and urban higher secondary school students of Kashmir valley. The sample taken for the present study was 600 Higher Secondary School Students in which 300 were Rural and 300 were Urban Higher Secondary Schools of Kashmir Valley. The sample was taken randomly from various higher secondary schools of two Districts viz, Srinagar and Bandipora. The sample was taken randomly from various higher secondary schools of two districts of Kashmir valley namely Srinagar and Bandipora. In order to assess the alienation of the higher secondary school students, the investigator chooses Student Alienation Scale developed by R.R. Sharma. The study found that significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students was found on overall score of alienation. Urban higher secondary school students have high degree of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students.

Keywords: alienation, rural and urban, secondary students, Kashmir

Introduction

The Latin word *alienatio* has a legal sense (the transfer or sale of a good or right), a psychological sense (dementia, insanity), a sociological sense (dissolution of the link between the individual and others), and a religious sense (dissolution of the link between the individual and the god). In German, the word *Entfremdung* (literally, to become estranged from or a stranger to) covers a range of meanings, but to large degree these are parallel to those of the Latin *alienatio* (Harre & Lamb, 1983).

Although the concept of alienation has a central place in the history of sociological thought it is only recently that attempts have been made to define it in empirically- operationable and to relate it to specific social systems or sub - systems rather than to such global referents as 'the' culture' or 'society as a whole' (Cohen, 1974).

Following Seeman's (1959) important theoretical paper which identified five uses of the concept of alienation i.e. powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and social estrangement. Researchers have developed a variety of alienation measures based upon some or all of those five dimensions. A growing number of studies have selected educational setting as the social referents for measuring alienation.

Conger (Cited in Mohan *et. al.* 1999) explains the concept of alienation as a profound rejection of the values of an adult society that some young people perceives as increasingly impersonal, often cruel and lacking in concern for the individual.

According to Kanungo (Cited in Mohan *el al.* 1999), the term alienation is used to describe people who feel they have few or no opportunity to have any power or control over their lives. They feel lack the freedom to make changes or seek personal achievement.

A concept that is so central in sociological work and so clearly

laden with value implications, demands special clarity.

Seeman (1959) conceptualized 'alienation' by distinguishing its five relatively non- overlapping meanings. He identified five uses of the concept of alienation and researchers have developed a variety of alienation measures based upon some or all of these five dimensions of alienation. Seeman classified the elements or dimensions of alienation into the following five categories:

(i) Powerlessness: The perception that one cannot control what is happening to him. Powerlessness represents an individuals' inability to influence one's choices. Powerless adolescents tend to rationalize any effort make to achieve a goal as a waste of time. The expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behaviour cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes or reinforcements he seeks.

(ii) Meaninglessness: The perception that one is unclear as to what an individual ought to believe. It is the second major use of the alienation concept. It is the sense of understanding the events in which he is engaged. We may speak of high alienation in the meaninglessness. The individual cannot take decisions about anything easily or the individual cannot choose appropriately among alternative interpretations (cannot act intelligently or with insight) because the increase in functional rationality.

(iii) Normlessness: The third variant of the alienation theme is derived from Durkheim's description of "anomie" and refers to a condition of normlessness. It is a kind of rulelessness. Normlessness is associated with a person whose value system is inconsistent with school norms (i.e. getting good grades, attending class, no behavioral problems, etc.). Normlessness adolescents perceive themselves, and believe

others perceive them as being different in a negative way. It is a kind of misbehaviour or misinvolvement of an individual.

(iv) Isolation: The fourth type of alienation refers to isolation. It refers to the detachment of the intellectual from popular cultural standards- one who has become estranged from his society and culture. In the present context, this brand of alienation may be usually defined in terms of reward value: the alienated in the isolation sense are those who like the intellectual, assign low reward value to goals and beliefs that are typically high valued in the given society.

(v) Self-Estrangement: The final variant distinguishable in the literature is the alienation in the sense of self-estrangement. To speak of alienation from the self is after all simply a metaphor, in a way that 'alienation from popular culture. One way to state such a meaning is to see alienation as the degree of dependence of the given behaviour upon anticipated future rewards, in these terms the alienated person only thinks about himself and whatever does, does for himself and not for others.

'Alienation' has been used by philosophers, psychologists, and sociologists to refer to an extra ordinary variety of psycho-social disorders, including loss of self, anxiety state, anomie, despair, depersonalization, rootlessness, apathy, social disorganization, loneliness, atomization, powerlessness. Meaninglessness, isolation, pessimism and the loss of beliefs or values.

Theorists of alienation have generally distinguished between social condition and the response of individuals to these conditions. Alienation usually refers to the later, while the term 'anomie' has been used to describe a social state in which conditions of normlessness or the breakdown of social rules are identifiable. Sociologists have distinguished between anomie and alienation. Anomie is purely a social phenomenon- a condition of society at a particular stage of social change, whereas alienation is pure a subjective phenomenon concentrated within the individual frame work.

The phenomenon of alienation is slow and systematic at the affective level. It may have some specific psychological reinforces which might be present in certain type of personalities. But at the social level, when certain situations come into direct confrontation with the confirmed norms of behaviour, it flourishes. Psychologists observe that alienation grows as soon as the feeling of "significant others in comparison to one's own feelings of insignificance emerge." Thus, there may be cultural, economic, educational, structural, ethno racial and power oriented inequalities which make an individual feel inferior and worthless. Another cause of alienation has been found to be social segregation. The psychologists working in the field of organizational psychology have come to the conclusion that the phenomenon of alienation is accelerated along with the increased complexities and rules of a particular organization. They have also observed that alienation sets in when traditional goals of distribution of facilities and services are replaced. Alienation among youths may differ in important ways, some of alienation are relatively widespread in a particular culture others tend to be limited to smaller sub-groups (Sharma 1988).

Types of Alienation: Oppenheimer (cited in Sharma 1988) has suggested five kinds of alienation following the usage of alienation as given by Seeman (1959) as being the individuals' response to a specific social condition.

Alienation from decision-making: This is separation from power or control of the decision making process. This alienation is antecedent to self-estrangement, for separation from the decision making process over what one produces is theoretically the most important factor leading to alienation from self. It is this particular kind of alienation that is of critical concern to sociologists today, especially in organizational life, e.g., bureaucracies such as large university etc. Alienation from decision-making can be conceptually pictured as leading to two separate but interrelated areas of further alienation-personal alienation and social alienation.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives of the present study as under:

1. To study the alienation among rural and urban higher secondary school students.
2. To compare rural and urban students of higher secondary school students on alienation.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated for the present study:

1. There is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on alienation.

Sample

The sample for the present study consisted of 600 Higher Secondary School Students in which 300 were Rural and 300 were Urban Higher Secondary Schools of Kashmir Valley. The sample was taken randomly from various higher secondary schools of two Districts viz, Srinagar and Bandipora. The sample was taken randomly from various higher secondary schools of two districts of Kashmir valley namely Srinagar and Bandipora.

Selection and Description of Tools

The tools for the present study were selected in a manner to achieve an optimum level of confidence by the investigator for the objectives of the study. The investigator after screening a number of available tests finally selected the following tool to collect the data:

1. Student Alienation Scale developed by R.R. Sharma.

Description of Tool

Student Alienation Scale: In order to assess the Alienation of Students, the Student Alienation Scale developed by R.R. Sharma was administered. The scale consists of five dimensions:-

1. **Powerlessness:** The perception that one cannot control what is happening to him.
2. **Meaninglessness:** The perception that one is unclear as to what one ought to believe.
3. **Normlessness:** A high expectancy that socially unapproved behavior is required to achieve given goal.

4. Isolation: This assignment of low reward value to goals or beliefs that are usually highly valued in a society, and

5. Self-Estrangement: The failure to find self-Rewarding activities.

Analysis and Interpretation

Section A: Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Overall levels of Alienation among Higher Secondary School Students

Levels	N	%
Extremely High	9	1.5
High	35	5.8
Above Average	157	26.2
Average	221	36.8
Below Average	123	20.5
Extremely Low	55	9.2
Total	600	100.0

The above table shows the overall level of alienation among higher secondary school students. The results of the table shows that 1.5% have extremely high level of alienation, 5.8% have high level of alienation, 26.2% have above average level

of alienation, 36.8% have average level of alienation, 20.5% have below average level of alienation and 9.2% higher secondary school students have extremely low level of alienation.

Table 2: Showing the levels of Alienation among Rural and Urban Higher Secondary School Students

Levels	Rural Hr. Secondary Students		Urban Hr. Secondary Students	
	N	%	N	%
Extremely High	2	0.67	7	2.33
High	12	4.00	23	7.67
Above Average	69	23.00	88	29.33
Average	120	40.00	101	33.67
Below Average	64	21.33	59	19.67
Extremely Low	33	11.00	22	7.33
Total	300	100.00	300	100.00

The above table shows the levels of alienation among rural and urban higher secondary school students. The table indicates that 0.67% rural hr. secondary students and 2.33% urban hr. secondary students have extremely high level of alienation, 4.0% rural hr. secondary students and 7.67% urban hr. secondary students have high level of alienation, 23.0% rural hr. secondary students and 29.33% urban hr. secondary students have above average level of alienation, 40.0% rural hr. secondary students and 33.67% urban hr. secondary students have average level of alienation, 21.33% rural hr. secondary students and 19.67% urban hr. secondary students have below average level of alienation, 11.0% rural hr. secondary students and 7.33% urban hr. secondary students have extremely low level of alienation among higher secondary students.

secondary school students on powerlessness dimension of alienation and the level of significance at 0.01. The mean indicates that rural students (4.56) and urban students (4.96) shows that urban higher secondary school students have high powerlessness of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students, which implies that urban higher secondary students have perception that cannot control what is happening to him.

Table 3: Showing the mean comparison between rural and urban Hr. Secondary School Students on Powerlessness dimension of Alienation

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
RHSSS	300	4.56	1.36	3.53	Sig. at 0.01 level
UHSSS	300	4.96	1.41		

RHSSS = Rural Higher Secondary School Students
UHSSS = Urban Higher Secondary School Students

The above table shows the mean comparison between rural and urban higher secondary school students on Powerlessness dimension of Alienation. The results of the table indicate that there is significant difference between rural and urban higher

Table 4: Showing the mean comparison between rural and urban Hr. Secondary School Students on Meaninglessness dimension of Alienation

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
RHSSS	300	3.79	1.02	2.17	Sig. at 0.05 level
UHSSS	300	4.01	1.42		

RHSSS = Rural Higher Secondary School Students
UHSSS = Urban Higher Secondary School Students

The perusal of the above table shows the mean comparison between rural and urban higher secondary school students on meaningless dimension of alienation. The table indicates that there is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on meaningless dimension of alienation and the tabulation value (2.17) exceeds the tabulation value which is significant at 0.05 level. However, mean (3.79) rural students and (4.01) urban students shows that urban higher secondary school students have high meaningfulness of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students. Urban higher secondary school

student’s perception that one is unclear as to what one ought to believe.

Table 5: Showing the mean comparison between rural and urban Hr. Secondary School Students on Normlessness dimension of Alienation

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
RHSSS	300	11.32	3.42	0.78	Insignificant
UHSSS	300	11.54	3.65		

RHSSS = Rural Higher Secondary School Students

UHSSS = Urban Higher Secondary School Students

The perusal of the above table shows the mean comparison between rural and urban higher secondary school students on normlessness dimension of alienation. The table indicates that there is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on normlessness dimension of alienation. However, both the group’s rural and urban higher secondary school students have somewhat similar on normlessness of alienation, both rural and urban students have high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviour is required to achieve given goals.

Table 6: Showing the mean comparison between rural and urban Hr. Secondary School Students on Isolation dimension of Alienation

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
RHSSS	300	3.23	1.10	3.84	Sig. at 0.01 level
UHSSS	300	3.59	1.19		

RHSSS = Rural Higher Secondary School Students

UHSSS = Urban Higher Secondary School Students

The above table shows the mean comparison between rural and urban higher secondary school students on isolation dimension of alienation. The table indicates that there is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on isolation dimension of alienation and the tabulation value (3.84) exceeds the tabulation value which is significant at 0.01 level. However, mean (3.23) rural students and (3.59) urban students shows that urban higher secondary school students have high level of isolation on alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students. Urban higher secondary school student’s assignment of low reward value to goals or beliefs those are usually highly valued in a society.

Table 7: Showing the mean comparison between Rural and Urban Hr. Secondary School Students on Self-Estrangement dimension of Alienation

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
RHSSS	300	7.36	2.33	2.73	Sig. at 0.01 level
UHSSS	300	7.89	2.41		

RHSSS = Rural Higher Secondary School Students

UHSSS = Urban Higher Secondary School Students

The above table shows the mean comparison between rural and urban higher secondary school students on self-estrangement dimension of alienation. The table indicates that there is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on self-estrangement dimension of alienation and the tabulation value (2.73) exceeds the

tabulation value which is significant at 0.01 level. However, mean (7.36) rural students and (7.89) urban students shows that urban higher secondary school students have high self-estrangement of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students. Urban higher secondary school student’s failure to find self-rewarding activities.

Table 8: Showing the mean comparison between Rural and Urban Hr. Secondary School Students on composite score of Alienation

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
RHSSS	300	30.26	9.23	2.19	Sig. at 0.05 level
UHSSS	300	31.99	10.08		

RHSSS = Rural Higher Secondary School Students

UHSSS = Urban Higher Secondary School Students

The perusal of the above table shows the mean comparison between rural and urban higher secondary school students on composite score of alienation. The table indicates that there is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on overall score of alienation and the tabulation value (2.19) exceeds the tabulation value which is significant at 0.05 level. However, mean (30.26) rural students and (31.99) urban students shows that urban higher secondary school students have level of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students. Urban higher secondary school student’s is a mental state of feeling separated or estrangement form an individual group or society, secondary school years as they adjust to approaching adult status. Thus, urban higher secondary students feel themselves alienated in a predetermined and framed education approach and their connection to school transforms into an artificial bond. In the light of the above evidences, the hypothesis No.1 which reads as, “There is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on alienation” stands accepted.

Conclusion

1. The study found that 1.5% higher secondary students have extremely high level of alienation, 5.8% higher secondary students have high level of alienation, 26.2% higher secondary students have above average level of alienation, 36.8% higher secondary students have average level of alienation, 20.5% higher secondary students have below average level of alienation and 9.2% higher secondary school students have extremely low level of alienation.
2. It was found that 0.67% rural higher secondary students and 2.33% urban higher secondary students have extremely high level of alienation, 4.0% rural higher secondary students and 7.67% urban higher secondary students have high level of alienation, 23.0% rural higher secondary students and 29.33% urban higher secondary students have above average level of alienation, 40.0% rural higher secondary students and 33.67% urban higher secondary students have average level of alienation, 21.33% rural higher secondary students and 19.67% urban higher secondary students have below average level of alienation, 11.0% rural higher secondary students and 7.33% urban higher secondary students have extremely low level of alienation among higher secondary students.

3. It was found that there is significance difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on powerlessness dimension of alienation.
4. It was found that urban higher secondary school students have perception that cannot control what is happening to him.
5. Significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students was found on meaninglessness dimension of alienation.
6. The Study found that urban higher secondary school student's perception that one is unclear as to what one ought to believe.
7. No significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students was found on normlessness dimension of alienation.
8. It was found that both groups of rural and urban higher secondary school students have somewhat similar normlessness dimension of alienation, both rural and urban students have high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviour is required to achieve given goals.
9. It was found that there is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on isolation dimension of alienation.
10. The study found that urban higher secondary school students have high isolation dimension of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students.
11. It was found that there is a significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students on self-estrangement dimension of alienation.
12. Urban higher secondary school students have high self-estrangement of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students, urban higher secondary school student's failure to find self-rewarding activities as compared to their counterparts.
13. Significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary school students was found on overall score of alienation.
14. Urban higher secondary school students have high degree of alienation as compared to rural higher secondary school students.

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