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Teachers' Perceived Difficult Behaviours of Adolescent Learners In Respect Of Their Personality Orientation

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Abstract

The paper is about the subject of difficult behaviours observed in every classroom especially when students are adolescents. Actually study consisted of two phase first devoted to extract factors of the concept 'difficult behaviours' using ipsative measures in the realm of Q-methodology. Due to paucity of space this first phase has not been discussed in detail, it deserves. But it has been the subject of a paper already published by the investigator. In the second phase normative data of two hundred participants was used to find relatedness between factors of difficult behaviours and four personality orientations- Self-directed, Social and Activity-directed. The data analysis from perspective of studying relatedness by using correlations and studying variances by means of analysis of variances revealed that perceptions of secondary school teachers regarding difficult behaviors exhibited by adolescent learners are independent of their personality orientation. The results are signified by the remarks that difficult behaviors are not creation of teachers, it's a universal reality and are independent of who teaches them.

Keywords: Difficult Behaviors, Challenging Behaviors, Personality, Personality Orientation, Secondary School Teachers

Introduction

There may be so many beautiful things said and heard in praise of teaching, learning and classroom. But, the reality of classroom life may be very different. All teachers are confronted with students who engage in behaviors that are disruptive to the educational process. Students may be late for class, leave early, talk inappropriately, or sleep during class. Recently faculty have reported more threatening behaviors, including stalking, intimidation, physical or verbal attacks, and "hijacking" classrooms (Schneider, 1998) [8]. If ignored or handled poorly a single act of incivility can have a long terms effect on life of a student, a teacher, classroom atmosphere and finally culture of a school. Further, small events of misbehavior by students can grow in to an irreversible habit an attitude and a value which can go to a dangerous level resulting in child becoming a delinquent or a law offender. Positive or negative, behavior is infectious which can make or mar the learning environment of the class. Every child misbehaves at times especially in adolescence age. When it happens in a classroom it is distressing for a teacher who always likes to be a perfect teacher of his/her students. There are many reasons for a child's misbehavior, and many ways for teachers to help the child improve. Adolescence by its transitional nature (full of changes) can be a difficult time for significant numbers of young students. "Problems" with adolescents are not so much located within the individual adolescent but within the social structures in which they are embedded. Thus the issue at hand is significant not only for the sake of child, teacher or school, but has scope to cover whole gamut of social structures. Nevertheless it has important social implications like negative development, antisocial elements, huge economic losses and great loss of human resource. Teachers have an important role to play in managing difficult behaviors of the adolescents and in modeling problem-solving behavior.

What Is the Behavior?

Behavior is that which can be directly sensed, such as seen or heard. Often people's "descriptions" of behavior include inferences ("He was aggressive," "She is lazy"). Instead, describe the behavior itself. Say, "He kicked the chair" rather than "He was aggressive" or "She turned in only one of five assignments" rather than "She was lazy." The problem with inference is that it includes the prescription before the facts are known and allows for misinterpretation. In one case we know of, instructors regarded a grossly overweight student as behaviorally disruptive in class. His actual in-class behavior was within normal ranges, but the instructors made false generalizations from his physical appearance. The inverse problem is also common.

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A very attractive student may be given more leeway than is appropriate, encouraging misbehavior in other students. (<http://www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@stsv/@swd/documents/doc/uow068340.pdf>).

What Is A Difficult Behaviour?

In the literature related to adolescent learners we find term difficult behaviours synonymous to challenging behaviors, disruptive behaviors, aggressive behaviors, deviant behaviours and the like. All the terms are overlapping but except term 'difficult behaviour' are unidirectional and have potentially to go beyond classroom. For instance disruptive behaviour, aggressive behaviour are negative in nature and have notion of 'acting out' domain. In case of deviant behaviour it includes unacceptable behaviours coming from disabilities both physical and mental. Challenging behaviour is most close to difficult behaviour, but this also has extreme like threatening behaviours, anti-social behavior, sexually abusive behaviour, physical attack, open defiance to rules and procedures. Author believes difficult behaviors is the most suitable term for classroom scenario. Based on available literature close to the concept, investigator developed definition of difficult behaviors as follows.

"A difficult behavior is any form of activity expressed by a child in classroom which falls outside the realm of classroom protocols and is not a consequence of abnormal mental or physical state of the child. Further a difficult behavior should be categorized so after ascertaining its nature (need to be exceptional), frequency (should be high), intensity (need to be high), consistency (should be repeated) and pattern (identifiable with title) to decide the existence and nonexistence of a particular behavior".

Personality and Personality Orientation

There is huge amount of literature exists on personality-concept, definitions, relation with other psychological variables and the like. Without going in to different definitions of personality we should recognize that an individual have a unique identity mixed of different personality perspectives as Hollander (1967) [11] puts it "Personality is sum of the characteristics that make a person Unique". An expression of personality appears in the form of personality orientation. We may visualize it as working entity or front end of the personality. The term personality orientation is originated in Soviet Psychology. Rubinstein (1940) [16] included aims, needs, ideals, and interests as essential components of personality orientation. Platonov (1961) [15] distinguishes different "forms of orientation according to their level on the hierarchy. There are attractions, desires, inclinations, ideals, world view, and convictions. Orientation is likewise said to include the "higher components of the personality which determine its moral character and which simultaneously act as the most stable motives."

A review of literature on human motivation indicates that there are motives which become basis for structuring personality orientation. These groups can be divided into three extremely important groups:

- Motives having to do with concern for one's own success, prestige, pleasure, power, etc. these are self-directed motives.
- Motives having to do with concern for other people toward love for them, i.e, group affiliation, altruism, etc. these are social motives.

- Motives arising from the intrinsic desire to understand reality and physical events, expressed in the need for knowledge, productivity, creativity, and activity. Let us call these activity directed or productive motives. We can speak of activity- directed motives when an individual either does something or learns about something not for the sake of self- affirmation, nor for the sake of other people, but because it fascinates him for its own sake, and gives him a sense of satisfaction. This occurs when the activity occupies him becomes a goal in itself.

Thus Neimark (1976) [13] explained the stable dominance of motives (voluntary or involuntary) results in the appearance with in the motivational system of a property which we may call personality orientation. Personality orientation is at once both the result of the development of and the evidence of the existence of stable hierarchical motivational structures. An individual's personality orientation is demonstrated by the general trend of his behavior. However, not all trends of behavior are determined by personality orientation. However, whatever the mechanism is by which all three groups of motives indicated above function direct or indirect awareness we supposed that indeed just these motives are at the very essence of the individual's attitude toward his work. For exactly this reason we examined these three groups of motives as those which shape personality orientation. In accord with these dominant motive types, we divided personality orientation into three aspects, which we agreed to call self-directed, social and activity-directed.

- Self-directed orientation is manifested in the dominance of self-directed Motives (e.g. the motive to be superior over others, the desire to command over others, to have personal success etc.).
- Social orientation is expressed in the dominant striving to act in the interests of others to sympathize with their needs and experience, to take greater interest in the welfare of the group than in oneself, etc.
- Activity-directed orientation is expressed in the disinterested, unambitious striving for activity, for new abilities and knowledge for the processes of understanding, creativity, action etc.

This framework of personality orientation has been used to develop tool for assessment of personality orientation and further analysis for answering the designed hypotheses.

Objectives

The study was conducted to address the following objectives

- To extract factor of difficult behaviors using Q-type factor analysis.
- To prepare research instruments- normative scale of Difficult Behaviours and Personality Orientation measure.
- To analyze the relatedness between two measures.

Research tools

Difficult Behaviors Measure

Difficult behaviours measure has been developed by using Q-methodology involving ipsative measures and Q-type factor analysis. It involves making of groups of persons as per their similarity if perceptions regarding the concept 'difficult behaviours'. These groups of person were then converted in groups of items resulting in nine factors which were dubbed (named) according to the set of items included in the factors. The factors so obtained are described in the table 1.

Table 1: Factors of Difficult Behaviours Obtained After Q-Type Factor Analysis

Sr. No.	Factor Number	Name of the Factor	Number of items
1.	I	Disobedience	5
2.	II	Insensitivity	5
3.	III	Dominance	5
4.	IV	General Deviance	5
5.	V	Irrationality	5
6.	VI	Challenge	5
7.	VII	Psycho-academic Deviance	5
8.	VIII	Mannerism	5
9.	IX	Mischievousness	5

The obtained factors are converted in to a normative scale assessing magnitude of response for a difficult behaviour.

Establishing Reliability of the Measure

As factors are consists of only five items, it was thought to calculate split half reliability only for total scale. The half-length reliability has been found to be $r_h = .3217$, whereas full length reliability has been found to be $R = .4869$. The values are satisfying in respect of table values (Table values $r_{0.05} = .098$, $r_{0.01} = .128$; $df = 398$). Thus the instrument is reliable enough to be used as data collection tool.

Establishing Validity of the Measure

As the factors have been obtained by factor analysis and the scale is consequence of putting these factor items together. Thus we assume factorial validity a sufficient measure to consider the measure as a valid instrument for collection of normative data in respect of difficult behaviors.

Developing Personality Orientation Measure Steps for development and standardization of the measure

- Theoretical Constructs for the concept ‘personality orientation’ Based on Neimark (1976) [13] conceptualization of personality orientation, we used three dimensions- Self-directed, Social and Activity-directed as theoretical constructs of personality orientation.
- Framing of items
- Selection of items
- Organization of items
- Distribution of items
- Structure of the measure
- Try out of the measure
- Establishing reliability of the measure
- Establishing validity of the measure

Scoring

Scoring was straight forward score was same as that of response by the participant. As described above the response goes from 1 to 7 for ‘never’ to ‘always’, so is the score. Investigator just needed to sum up the responses for four orientations as well as total measure. Greater the score for an orientation (out of Self-directed, Social and Activity-directed) greater will be the tendency to adopt an orientation.

Internal Consistency

Internal consistency has been established by calculating part and whole correlation for three orientations independently as well as whole scale and r values ranged from .23 to .58 which were gratifying to be accepted as internally consistent measure.

Establishing Reliability of the Measure

Reliability of the scale was calculated by using split-half method. Being fifteen items in each of the orientation, it was not possible to split the sub measures in to two equal halves. Thus the calculations were performed by using Host formula as given below:

$$R = r [\text{SQRT} \{r^2 + 4pq (1 - r^2)\} - r] / 2pq (1 - r^2)$$

R = Reliability of the sum of two parts; r = Correlation between two parts.

p = Proportion of the total test devoted to one part; q = 1 - p

(For p= q = 1/2, Host formula reduces to Spearman-Brown Formula)

since orientations are independent kind of scales, investigator calculated the reliabilities for all the three orientations separately.

The values are presented in the table 2 given below.

Table2: Reliabilities of Personality Orientations

Orientation	Half-length Reliability ('r')	Full length Reliability ('R')
Self-directed	.4791	.6739
Social	.4848	.6713
Activity-directed	.5257	.6899
Whole scale	.7360	.8579

- (Table values $r_{0.05} = .098$, $r_{0.01} = .128$; $df = 398$)

The observed reliabilities are gratifying in view of the subjective nature of the variable i.e. Personality orientation. Also it is noticeable that in all the three cases the values of ‘r’ or ‘R’ remains almost same, thus indicating their coherence with the whole scale.

Establishing Validity of the Measure

Being unidirectional statements we could not apply contrast groups method as done in case of an attitude scale. Mouley (1970) [14] stated “At the most elementary level, it is necessary for all the questionnaires to have content validity. In questionnaire each question must be related to the topic under investigation. There must be an adequate coverage of the overall topic; the questionnaire must be clear and unambiguous”. “A more adequate approach to validation consists of checking agreement between responses obtained by the questionnaire against criterion”.

For adequate coverage of topic and content validity, the subject ‘Personality orientation’ is covered under three orientations (sub-measures) –Self-directed, Social and Activity directed.

Each orientation contains fifteen items, which adequately cover the domains of the concept. The clarity and ambiguity of questions were dealt by (a) taking experts’ opinion (b) try-out the testing of agreement against criterion is not easy when we are using a measure (as is the case in present study) due to non-availability of objective criterion.

The problem was solved by two measures. Ten participants from the sample were randomly selected and interviewed. Their verbal responses matched to their written responses up to 88% which ensured that participants got the same meaning as was designed by the investigator, hence validity of the scale.

The average ranking of three orientations by the subjects was correlated with their responses obtained in the scale. High correlation (0.71) was found in the two patterns of responses which ensured the sufficient validity of the measure.

Sample

For first phase of study investigator used only sixty secondary school teachers snow-ball sample for Q-study to reveal nine factors of the concept ‘difficult behaviours’. In the second phase a stratified disproportionate random sample of two hundred secondary school teachers was used to standardize research instruments and quantitative analysis.

Data Analysis

Ascertaining Normality of the Data

Since, investigator intended to apply parametric test for quantitative data analysis, which requires normality of the samples in respect of both the research variables- Difficult

behaviours and Personality orientation. For this task investigator used the most powerful test available names as Kolmogorov-Smirnov Goodness-of-Fit Test.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Goodness-of-Fit Test (K-S Test)

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is used to decide if a sample comes from a population with a specific distribution. It is form of one sample K-S test which compares the available data set with theoretical distribution (Gaussian distribution).

Application of K-S Test on Variables taken for the Study

Table 3 present calculations followed by procedure of testing the null hypothesis for presuming normality of the data set.

Table 3: Summary of K-S Test Calculations on Factor1 (Disobedience) Of Difficult Behaviours

C. I	f	C. F	C. P _o	X _u	Z = (X _u -M)/σ	C. P _e	I C.P _o -C.p _e I
9-10	4	4	0.0200	10.5000	-2.0591	0.0197	0.0003
11-12	15	19	0.0950	12.5000	-1.3177	0.0934	0.0016
13-14	42	61	0.3050	14.5000	-0.5764	0.2810	0.0240
15-16	55	116	0.5800	16.5000	0.1649	0.5675	0.0125
17-18	44	160	0.8000	18.5000	0.9063	0.8186	0.0186
19-20	27	187	0.9350	20.5000	1.6476	0.9505	0.0155
21-22	12	199	0.9950	22.5000	2.3889	0.9916	0.0034
23-24	1	200	1.0000	24.5000	3.1303	0.9991	0.0009

C.I = Class Interval, f = Frequency, C.F = Cumulative Frequency, C. P_o = Observed Cumulative Fraction, X_u = Upper Limit of Class Interval, M = Sample Means, σ = Standard Deviation of the Sample, Z = Standard Score, C. P_e = Expected Cumulative Fraction.

M = 16.0550

σ = 2.6978

For sample to be normal

I C.P_o-C.p_e I_{MAX}. Needs to be ≤ 1.36/√N ≤ 1.36/√200 ≤ 0.0962 at 0.05 level of significance

I C.P_o-C.p_e I_{MAX}. Needs to be ≤ 1.63/√N ≤ 1.63/√200 ≤ 0.1153 at 0.01 level of significance

The obtained value of I C.P_o-C.p_e I_{MAX}. Proves that sample under investigation is normal beyond doubt.

I C.P_o-C.p_e I_{MAX} = 0.0240

Calculations for all other factors of the difficult behaviors and variables Personality Orientations are presented in tables 4.

Table 4: Summary of K-S Test Calculations on Factors of Difficult Behaviours

Factor	Name of the Factor	Mean	σ	I C.P _o -C.p _e I _{MAX}
Factor I	Disobedience	16.0550	2.6978	0.0240
Factor II	Insensitivity	18.4650	3.3653	0.0207
Factor III	Dominance	18.3550	3.3549	0.0340
Factor IV	General Deviance	17.1950	2.8100	0.0328
Factor V	Irrationality	16.0000	2.9434	0.0076
Factor VI	Challenge	19.2650	3.1678	0.0422
Factor VII	Psycho academic Deviance	22.4400	3.3784	0.0261
Factor VIII	Mannerism	16.3650	3.0460	0.0340
Factor IX	Mischievousness	18.3500	2.8563	0.0178
All Factors combined		162.4900	12.5890	0.0591

Similar calculations have been performed for personality orientations, for which values are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Summary of K-S Test Calculations on Personality Orientation Measures

Orientation	Name Of The Orientation	Mean	Σ	I C.P _o -C.P _e I _{MAX}
A	Self-Directed	66.6350	11.5607	0.0271
B	Social	76.3250	10.4453	0.0305
C	Activity-Oriented	70.9050	11.0942	0.0445
Whole Scale		213.8650	27.0924	0.0255

Hypotheses Testing
Testing of Hypothesis H₁

There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviors and Personality Orientations for secondary school teachers This general hypothesis could be further branched in to constituent factors of difficult behaviours and personality orientations.

H1.1 There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviours (in respect of factor I (Disobedience), factor II (Insensitivity), IV (General Deviance), V (Irrationality), VI (Challenge), VII (Psycho-academic Deviance), VIII (Mannerism), IX (Mischievousness) and all factors combined with ‘Social’ Personality Orientation for secondary school teachers.

H1.2 There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviours (in respect of factor I (Disobedience), factor II (Insensitivity), factor III (Dominance), IV (General Deviance), V (Irrationality), VI (Challenge), VII (Psycho-academic Deviance), VIII (Mannerism), IX (Mischievousness) and all factors combined with ‘Self-directed’ Personality Orientation for secondary school teachers.

H1.3 There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviours (in respect of factor I (Disobedience), factor II (Insensitivity), factor III (Dominance), IV (General Deviance), V (Irrationality), VI (Challenge), VII (Psycho-academic Deviance), VIII (Mannerism), IX (Mischievousness) and all factors combined with ‘Activity-directed’ Personality Orientation for secondary school teachers.

In order to study the relatedness of the factors of difficult behaviours (obtained by factor analysis) and Personality orientations product moment correlations were obtained using normative data of 200 secondary school teachers on these variables. Table 6 presents the correlation values obtained by using Pearson product moment correlation.

Table 6: Correlations among Nine Difficult Behaviours Factors and Three Personality Orientation Measures

P O M	Difficult Behaviours										
		F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₄	F ₅	F ₆	F ₇	F ₈	F ₉	Total
A		-0.0298	-0.0504	-0.1170*	0.0273	0.0004	0.0932	0.0152	-0.0049	0.0025	-0.0231
B		-0.0012	-0.0584	-0.0660	-0.0035	-0.0745	0.0188	0.0424	-0.0058	-0.0030	-0.0438
C		0.0610	-0.0144	0.0329	0.0735	0.0808	0.0297	0.0868	-0.0405	-0.0625	0.0596
Total		0.0118	-0.0499	-0.0619	0.0403	0.0045	0.0592	0.0584	-0.0209	-0.0257	-0.0023

F₁= Disobedience, F₂= Insensitivity, F₃= Dominance, F₄= General Deviance, F₅= Irrationality, F₆= Challenge, F₇= Psycho-academic Deviance, F₈= Mannerism, F₉= Mischievousness
 A= Self-directed, B= Social, C= Activity-oriented

Only one out of forty 'r' values could reach the level of significance (in case of factor III i.e. Dominance with self-directed orientation). Other observed values are well below the table values ($r_{0.05}=0.098$, $r_{0.01}=0.128$; $df= 398$) thus indicate that difficult behaviours are independent of personality orientation as far as secondary school teachers are concerned. To reconfirm this result investigator studied the difference between mean scores of all the factor of difficult behaviours across three personality orientations. In other words it was thought to find if there is any influence of Personality Orientations on mean scores across all the factors of difficult behaviours. This has been achieved by using one-way ANOVA applied on difficult behaviours factors normative data divided across different personality orientations. All the two hundred participants were categorized in to their dominant personality orientation based on maximum score they display for a constituent personality orientation, thus making three personality orientation groups. Normative scores were substituted for participant I D in these groups to generated data for one-way ANOVA treatment. Tables 7 to 16 present summary of calculations for one way-ANOVA for all the nine difficult behaviours factors and also for summed scores across all the factors in respect of Personality Orientations.

Table 7: Summary of One Way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 1 (Disobedience) Across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	9.8305	2	4.9152	0.6712	Not significant
With in	1442.5495	197	7.3226		
Total	1452.3800	199			

(Table values $F_{0.05}$; $df = 2/197 = 3.04$, $F_{0.01}$; $df = 2/197 = 4.71$ Garrett, H. E, 1981, Table F, P. 466)

Table 8: Summary of One Way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 2 (Insensitivity) Across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	21.6207	2	10.8104	0.5172	Not significant
With in	4117.8993	197	20.9030		
Total	4139.5200	199			

Table 9: Summary of One Way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 3 (Dominance) Across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	60.9439	2	30.4720	2.7551	Not significant
With in	2178.8511	197	11.0602		
Total	2239.7950	199			

Table 10: Summary of One Way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 4 (General Deviance) Across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	2.2997	2	1.1498	0.1444	Not significant
With in	1569.0953	197	7.9650		
Total	1571.3950	199			

Table 11: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 5 (Irrationality) across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	28.5514	2	14.2757	1.6669	Not significant
With in	1687.1286	197	8.5641		
Total	1715.6800	199			

Table 12: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 6 (Challenge) across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	2.2996	2	1.1498	0.1154	Not significant
With in	1963.1204	197	9.9651		
Total	1965.4200	199			

Table 13: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 7 (Psycho-academic Deviance) across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	42.2339	2	21.1169	1.8663	Not significant
With in	2229.0461	197	11.3150		
Total	2271.2800	199			

Table 14: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 8 (Mannerism) across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	3.4195	2	1.7097	0.1828	Not significant
With in	1842.9355	197	9.3550		
Total	1846.3550	199			

Table 15: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 9 (Mischievousness) across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	7.8911	2	3.9456	0.4811	Not significant
With in	1615.6089	197	8.2011		
Total	1623.5000	199			

Table 5.15 Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours All Factors across Personality Orientations

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	538.5607	2	269.2803	1.7113	Not significant
With in	30999.4193	197	157.3575		
Total	31537.9800	199			

None of the F value has been found to be significant which corroborates result obtained in correlation analysis. Also it negates the one correlation found to be significant in case of factor III i.e. Dominance with self-directed orientation.

Findings

- Difficult behaviours a reality in every classroom.
- There are at least nine factors are running under the concept 'difficult behaviours'.
- The nine factors of difficult behaviours are-Disobedience, Insensitivity, Dominance, General Deviance, Irrationality, Challenge, Psycho-academic Deviance, Mannerism, Mischievousness.
- Factors of difficult behaviours are not related to 'Self-directed' personality orientation of secondary school teachers.
- Factors of difficult behaviours are not related to 'Social' personality orientation of secondary school teachers..
- Factors of difficult behaviours are not related to 'Activity-directed' personality orientation of secondary school teachers.
- Finally perceptions of secondary school teachers regarding 'Difficult Behaviours' are independent of their 'Personality Orientation'.

Educational Significance

The results show that personality orientation has no effect on the perceptions of secondary school teachers regarding difficult behaviours of the adolescent learners. It means difficult behaviours are not creation of the teachers, not reported by differently by different teachers as per their personality make up. Thus these difficult behaviours are universal in nature and should be dealt irrespective of who is teaching.

Threads for Further Research

With the limited resources investigator could not cover all the aspects of the subject of study which could be furthered in the following directions.

- Study could be replicated with learners at other levels (primary, elementary, college etc.).
- Other variables like beliefs, attitudes, emotional intelligence, and other attribute variables in relation to difficult behaviours could make a good case to study.
- Difficult behaviours are a big issue in respect of disable children, there could be study in respect of different disabilities.

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