



Risk- Taking Tendency and New Generation

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Ever since his existence man had to face dangers and threats associated with his daily life in order to survive. Every day they had to come across many threats and dangers but still they take risk to come out of this.

Generally a "Risk-Taker" is an individual who takes an act in his hands involving danger to his life, social prestige or economic set-up. As it is said that "If one wants to walk on the water one has to be willing to get his feet wet first, then one discovers it is worth the risk". Yousuf (1974), it is the part of the border aspect of decision making where one has to take risk for the problem solving. It is evident now that a risk-taker is more successful and leading position holder in the society. It has become quite essential or inevitable for a man to take risk willingly or unwillingly to cope with the problems and to complete and win the race of the materialistic world.

The term "Risk" has become now a very common and prominent term, the measurement of risk- taking tendency among adolescents would be more interesting and useful too as it is evident that the young generation is the future of the country, in future they will lead the nation. The instinct of risk- taking is natural for the youth, but if youth energy could be guided to positive form of risk – taking and violence such as mountaineering, swimming, competitive games, NSS, NCC and armed forces, fighting of natural calamities like floods, famine, earthquakes, epidemics of disease, environmental control, social evils like dowry and child marriages, learning to various arts such as painting, writing, public speaking, and their emotions sublimated to creative arts, gainful employment and socially useful activities, they could be made a resource. Unfortunately most of our youth population or young population remains unutilized; we should think and take action in this regard.

No risk no gain is appearing a true proverb in this modern and technical age. Life is like a gamble and without taking any risk we cannot win this game successfully. Risk- Taking provides us 50/50 chances of winning this game or leading a successful life. We have to take decisions and risk in order to lead a good life but most decisions are risky in the sense that we cannot be sure of the outcome. A tossed coin for example, normally has a 50/50 chances of coming up heads or tails. We are not sure which it will be and must take knowledge about the probability of the outcome into account when making a decision about whether the coin will come up heads or

tails. In tossing a coin we know what the head & tail probabilities of the coin are; but making decisions and taking risk in “real life”, we do not know the precise likelihoods of various outcomes. We can only make our own estimates of the probabilities.

In the modern competitive life, the risk- taking has become a silent feature of the personality. Today, every unit of the society is bound to opt the risk more or less for his/ her survival to some extent and to gain popularity and superiority over the other members of the society. Risk- Taking is different in various aspects of life; physical risk is easier to be undertaken in comparison with economic and prestigious risks. Theoretically risk- taking is not same in all aspects of life, some takes are easier and one has no hesitation to undertake such risk for the fulfillment of need or desire, on the other hand some takes are difficult to achieve and one has to face a lot of risk to achieve the goal. Risks may be of different natures such as economic, political, religious or social.

Similarly, the risk- taking tendency differs from region to region, caste to caste sometimes from sex to sex and age to age. These aspects of risk- taking tendency bear a direct influence on the personality make- up of the individual, especially in the age of adolescents, the period from the beginning of sexual maturity (puberty) to the completion of physical growth. Hall, (1904) in his book “Adolescence” view it as a period of “Storm and Stress” when the key developmental task for the adolescent is answering the question “who am I?” and “what am I going to do with my life”? This shows the desire of achieving identity; this motivation leads adolescents to take risk willingly or unwillingly in order to get their position or identity in the society.

The non risk- takers are orthodox and stereotyped by nature and believe in the continuation of traditions and customs as they are going on, in other words they do not dare to deviate from the usuality, whereas the risk- taking tendency of the person may not be limited into the boundaries of custom, tradition and socio- economic status. All the comforts that we enjoy in today’s world are fruits of untiring efforts and risk taking tendency of some extra- ordinarily brilliant individuals dedicated to the cause of humanity. John Logie Baird, the inventor of television battled throughout his life with poverty but he was the man of courage and a true risk taker who invented television one of the most wonderful creations of the century. Wright brothers, the inventors of airplane, toiled hard, met with many failures and even risked their lives to transform their dream of creating a flying machine into reality. Without taking any type of risk it could not be possible for inventors to invent new things; humanity will never forget their contribution.

The word “Adolescence” has been taken from Latin word “Adolescere” means to grow or to grow to maturity. Some who have studied adolescence view it as a period of “Storm and stress”. This was the view of G. Stanley Hall, an American psychologist (1904) whose book, “Adolescence”, helped make this age period a focus of scientific study.

Morgan, King, Weisz and Schopler (2002) “Adolescent means the period of life from puberty to the completion of physical growth.” Jersild et.al. (1975) defined adolescence “As the period through which a growing person makes transition from childhood to maturity”. Adolescence is also an age of identity crisis, when they like to assert independence and fluctuate between

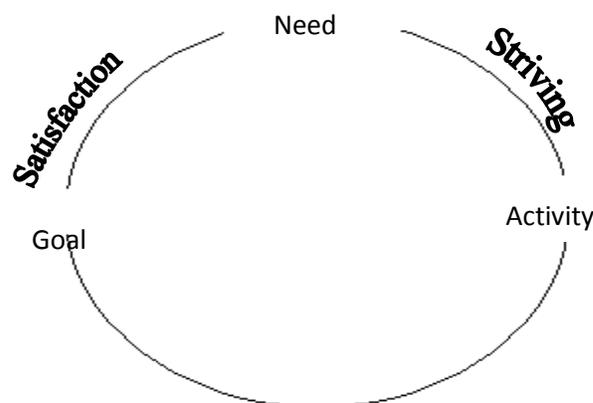
dependence on parents and attempt to assert independence. This motivational desire to be an independent leads them to grow in their confidence and aspire for new heights.

Role of Needs and Drives in Risk Taking Tendency

The term needs refers to general and specific conditions of lack or deficiency within the organism. In seeking to explain motivation by a concept of needs, psychologists and educators suggest that it is more meaningful and useful to identify the specific deficiencies and their causes than to focus upon the drive state which arouse these deficiencies. The existence of a need provides an impetus for goal- seeking behavior directed toward reducing the lack or deficiency.

No two persons in their physical and emotional growth would be the same. The following points should be kept in mind : youth's interest in themselves; their concern with and sensitivity about their growth, state of maturity and appearance; the boys habit of living strenuously, their need to adjust to a new and intense sexual drive, their need to readjust their feeling towards parents, their worries about studies, conflicts in their homes, being popular; their confusion about religion, about death and about the unexpected ill behavior of adults; their need for success and prestige; their need to acquire independence, their great capacity for change, their vacillation in seeking and retreating from new-responsibilities of intending adulthood and attempt to develop social value system. According to Elliott (1993) "Need is a condition marked by the feeling of lack or want of something or of requiring the performance of some action". According to Davidoff (1976), "Need refers to a bodily or felt social psychological deficiency". Chauhan, Dhar and Singh (1986) "Needs are the rock bottom of the process of socialization and socio-genic need satisfaction relates to the need satisfaction provided to the individual by a society in general". "A need is an organic state of deficiency or excess" – Hull

Motivational and Risk taking behavior takes birth through physical and social needs, but this destiny ends up in fulfillment of the goal. There are also intermediate stages between the need and the goal thus forming a cycle called as motive cycle.



Circle of needs

There are three important stages in the cycle -

(1) Need (2) Drive (3) Incentive.

Classification of Needs- Maslow's - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow proposed a hierarchical set of five needs: (1) physiological, (2) safety, (3) love and belongingness, (4) self-esteem (5) self-actualization. According to Maslow the lower physiological and safety needs (which he calls deficiency or D, needs) must be satisfied before one can satisfy the higher needs for self- actualization and knowledge. **Thus, two types of motivations are identified by Maslow: (1) deficiency (or D) motivation** which centers on the gratification of lower needs, and **(2) growth motivation (represented by B for being)** which focuses upon the satisfaction of higher needs.

Main Factors of Risk Taking Behaviour

Our behavior is based on need, environment and physical structure. We engage ourselves in work after being motivated by need. Behavior according environment is natural. In cultured and uncultured society or in warm or cold environment we generally behave according to existing situations. There is a lot of difference between a child's behavior in school and at home. Physical structure is connected with behavior in such a way that even in an adverse situation we have to behave according to physical structure. For instance, a man is unable to breath in water, while a fish is incapable of breathing outside water. Evidently, these three factors which influence our behavior are necessary:

(i) Personality and Need

The influence of personality on needs is quite clear. The standard of needs of an individual is according to his personality. So if we know the needs of a person, we can visualise his personality, too, upto some extent. The needs of a wealthy man differ from those of a poor one. Similarly the needs of a student differ from those of an illiterate person. The needs of a businessman and those of a farmer are never the same, so is the case with an honest man and a robber. Thus often we may form an idea of the needs of a person by knowing his personality.

(ii) Physical structure and needs

Physical structure plays an important role in relation to human needs. The needs multiply if anybody-organ is missing. A blind man should have a guide and guardian. A person with eyes does not need such a help. The needs or the service of a doctor and medicine are there for a patient, but the healthy person does not care for all these. The human baby at the time of birth is helpless and weak but calves start running and jumping soon after their birth. Nature has provided all creatures some specific powers according to their nature and environment. Psychologists have given them the name of drives. In human beings these drives start developing since birth and gradually they adjust themselves.

(iii) Need and cultural environment

Culture influences our needs in the same way as environment and situations do. Prevailing social traditions determine our needs and we fulfill our needs according to social traditions. Children are made familiar with social traditions in order to prevent them from taking part in anti- social activity.

Drives

Drives compel us to do something. Some of our needs are natural needs and without their fulfillment we cannot get rest. Such needs are called innate drives such needs are hunger and thirst appear with our birth. Besides, some other drives are related with physical environment, situations and education etc. these are called acquired drives.

Innate Drives

No need of learning Innate drives as these are present since birth. We have not to learn them. However, changes appear in these drives due to environment and education, etc. Due to apprehension of some obstacles in the path of satisfying our main need, we get involved in efforts to escape that situation and in the process we forget about the main need. For example, a bird, engaged in satisfying its hunger, forgets to go along with other birds in search of a hiding place:

(i) Hunger and Thirst Drive

With the decline of energy in the body its organs also become weaker. We get energy from food. In the absence of food our muscles become thinner. This condition motivates a person to satisfy his hunger and thirst he becomes active.

(ii) Sex Drive

Sex drive is present in human beings as in all other living beings. This becomes very strong during Adolescence and provokes to take Risk. During adulthood this drive reaches maturity and starts declining in old age. Individual difference is also found in this drive.

Acquired Drives

The drives behind personal aspirations are called “Personal drives” while the common drives are known as “Social drives”:

(i) Self-assertion – This drive is very much related to self- respect. An individual starts acquiring this drive along with the development of his understanding power. This drive is common in all.

(ii) Gregariousness - By nature man is a social animal. Naturally he feels happy in society. Just as a person starts earning money when he understands the drive of self-assertion, similarly since childhood he expects love and sympathy from his parents and other elders. He wants to get respect and affection from them.

(iii) Acquisitiveness - This tendency is found in an individual since infancy. This drive is generally lacking in many animals. An individual after satisfying his needs retains some things

carefully. He may collect various things needed by him for some later purposes. This tendency is found in the collection of dolls, toys etc. by children.

Personal Drives

(i) **Attitudes and Interests** – It is generally seen that all living beings behave according to their needs and in so doing they pay less attention to other things in the environment. This feature is more applicable to human beings.

(ii) **Favorable and Unfavorable Attitudes** - There are two types of attitudes- favorable and unfavorable. Attitudes in a person are formed when he forms an opinion about a thing which he confronts such formed opinion is called attitude. If we like a thing, our attitude towards it is favorable and if it does not appeal to us the attitude regarding it is unfavorable.

(iii) **Interests** - An interest is generally dynamic in nature. It is a personal acquired tendency. Sometimes it undergoes changes according to the situation, environment and needs, but it also happens that it becomes attached to nature and needs of a person and continues with him for the whole life. If a person acquires an interest, he is generally alive to it.

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