



MACHIAVELLIANISM AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

By:

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ABSTRACT

The study examined machiavellianism among secondary school students. The 294 students were selected on the basis of convenient and volunteer sampling from 05 selected schools of Punjab. The t-test was used to study significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to gender and location among secondary school students. The results revealed that there is significant gender difference were found in Machiavellianism. The mean score of female secondary school students are higher than mean score of male secondary school students. The significant difference in locale were found in Machiavellianism. The mean score of rural secondary school students are higher than mean score of urban secondary school students. There is no significant variance found in machiavellianism in relation to their annual income of their family among secondary school students. On the basis of findings, it is suggested that the teachers of the school should inculcate the moral qualities such as honesty, truthfulness and compassion among the secondary students. The secondary school teacher should not use harsh criticism for any misconduct (cheating, tell lie, manipulation) of secondary school students and help them to realize their mistake and take promise not to repeat it in near future. There is need to replace the machiavellian attitude with emotional stability so teachers should treat students with love and care so as to strengthen emotional stability in students. The secondary school teachers must focus on importance of hard work, self-learning and life-long learning as compared to believing in luck/fate only.

Keywords: Machiavellianism and Secondary school students.

INTRODUCTION

Over the course of their lives, their visions and perspectives vary in terms of their values, beliefs and morals among individuals who go through different age groups. As one can see in high school, students spend much time on issues like how they appear, act and socialize with others. In today's competitive society students integrate different skills, in order to accept challenges. They even encourage their friends to think, to act in socially undesirable ways and trying to manipulate the behaviour of other person that go against their own beliefs in order to get success. Byrne & Whiten (1988) explained manipulative approaches of social conduct (machiavellianism) have been studied by evolutionary psychologists as they attempted to explain the origins of primate intelligence, theorizing that this more advanced intellect is rooted in the complexity of the problems posed by social life. Machiavellianism is used to indicate the tendency to mislead other individuals to gain one's own interest, and also it is associated with violating the rights of other individuals. Wilson et al. (1996) explained the term machiavellianism was coined by Nicolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), a political thinker and advisor of the ruling Medici family in Florence, Italy. He compiled his ideas in the book entitled as "The Prince and The Discourses" which was linked with use of guile, deceit, opportunism in interpersonal

relation, and one who have the same opinion and thinking is termed as Machiavellian. He further explained how one should acquire, maintain power over others successfully during times of uncertainty and change. In his book, pragmatic and rational approach to keeping power that is based entirely on expediency and is devoid of the traditional virtues of trust, honor, and decency was explained. Jones & Paulhus (2009) described the concept of machiavellianism was first studied by Christie & Geis (1970). They noticed Machiavelli's political strategies had parallel in people's everyday social behavior and viewed machiavellianism as personality trait characterized by a behavior. The label was chosen to capture a duplicitous interpersonal style assumed to emerge from a broader network of cynical beliefs and pragmatic morality.

Ali et al. (2009) machiavellianism involves interpersonal strategies supporting the use of deception, manipulation and exploitation. Gable & Dangelo (1994) described the machiavellian, are the persons who views and manipulates another people for their own selfish ends. Machiavellians are willing to forfeit ethics to fulfill their own needs. Jones & Paulhus (2009) described the term machiavellian intelligence entails the skillful manipulation of others confer an important evolutionary advantage. If machiavellianism is adaptive, then it seems that all members of particular species should exhibit that inclination. Instead, there is a substantial variation. In other words, not everyone in an ecology can be cooperative, the reason may be that low machiavellians have the advantage of building strong social relationships and cooperative alliances, and the high machiavellians would cheating each other and less would be gained. Roodpooshti et al. (2012) explored machiavellianism is a term that psychologists use to symbolize the tendency to cheat and mislead others in order to achieve own interests, and it is linked with violating the rights of others.

REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE

Chonko (1982) explored gender differences in machiavellianism. The sample of the study consisted of 122 purchasing managers (24 female managers, 98 male managers). The results depicted that machiavellian orientation of female managers were higher than male managers.

Sherry et al. (2006) investigated machiavellianism, trait perfectionism, and perfectionistic self-presentation in a sample of 483 university students (134 men and 349 women). The results revealed that with respect to direct relationship, no gender differences were observed and the basic association between machiavellianism and perfectionism generalized across gender.

Liu (2008) explored the relationship between machiavellianism and knowledge sharing willingness. The sample of the study consisted of 325 university students (135 males and 190 females). The results found that there was a significant negative correlation between machiavellianism and knowledge sharing willingness. Also, machiavellianism was non-significantly negatively correlated with demographic variables (gender, age, marital and education).

Kaur (2017) examined the relationship between machiavellianism and aggression. The sample of 174 higher secondary school students was taken from various government and private schools of Ludhiana district. The result highlighted that there was no significant mean difference in gender but significant mean difference was seen in family structure and stream of students in relation to machiavellianism. Also, positive and significant correlation was found between machiavellianism and aggression among students.

Aldousari & Ickes (2021) analysed how is machiavellianism related to locus of control: A meta-analytic review. It was found that the combined effect sizes from these studies which showed a significant positive correlation of medium size between external locus of control and Machiavellianism, with substantial heterogeneity in the data. The random effects moderation analysis revealed that participant gender ratio and the particular locus of control scale used in the study were significant moderators of the overall effect. The findings are consistent with the theoretical view that people who score high in machiavellianism attempt to manipulate other people in order to compensate for their perceived lack of ability to control outside events more directly.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In an Indian society during last two decades, a new social order has emerged. Pandey (1981) found that manipulative behavior has become an important consideration for recognition rather than old caste system. Those who have succeeded on manipulative basis have got a status in the society. Naturally under such conditions everybody will not succeed and those who are highly manipulative will get success. So in the context of developing societies where resources are generally perceived to be limited, manipulative behaviour are found to be more pervasive and presence of such behavior is widely observed in various organizational, political, social contexts. The significance of the study is related to the utility of findings drawn through the research investigation and finding of the present study would be beneficial to students to react intelligently to their behaviour. Gupta (1987) explored that machiavellianism can be an asset in business oriented occupations and in law professions. The present study would assist the students in the outgoing process of making decisions and choice in choosing various courses and vocations related with their manipulative behaviors.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to gender among secondary school students.
2. To study significant difference in mean scores of Machiavellianism in relation to their location among secondary school students.
3. To study significant difference in mean scores of Machiavellianism among secondary school students in relation to their annual income of the family.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to gender among secondary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to their location among secondary school students.
3. There is no significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to their annual income of the family among secondary school students.

RESEARCH TOOLS

1. Machiavellianism Scale by Kaur (2016): Machiavellianism Scale consists of 24 items (14 positive and 10 negative). The response pattern is based upon Likert 5-point scale consisting of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree weights 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 and were given according to their responses. Each respondent was requested to indicate his/her response to each statement on a five point scale continuum ranging from “Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree”. The scoring for positive statement was made by giving weight of “5, 4, 3, 2 and 1” for “Strongly agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree”. The scoring pattern of negatively worded statements were in reversed order i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

1. **Machiavellianism:** Machiavellianism is a term use to describe an individual's ability to manipulate others for their personal gain. Individuals with high machiavellian orientation, who according to their mach scores practice higher level of manipulation when given an appropriate opportunity (manipulation); having low moral values (immorality); believe that other people are deceiver, engaged in unethical behaviour(distrust); and desire to achieve higher status, wealth and power (Kaur, 2016).
2. **Secondary School Students:** The students who are studying in tenth grade of secondary schools (Punjab) are considered as students for the present study.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The present study was delimited to secondary schools affiliated to C.B.S.E.
- The present study was delimited to tenth class students only.
- The present study was delimited to privately secondary schools only.
- The present study was delimited to urban & rural location of secondary schools only.
- The present study was delimited to SC, BC & General social category of secondary school students.
- The present study was delimited to 300 students only.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

In the present study, sampling frame comprised of 294 private secondary school students of tenth grade. The sampling area was selected from twenty two districts of Punjab on basis of their literacy rate. The three groups were formed – districts of high literacy rate, average literacy rate and low literacy rate according to the Economic Survey (2019-20). The district selected from high literacy rate was Pathankot, from average literacy rate was Gurdaspur and from low literacy rate was Tarn Taran. The schools were selected by random sampling technique (lottery method). The 294 students were selected on the basis of convenient and volunteer sampling from 05 selected schools of Punjab.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA

1. t-test was used to study significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to gender and location among secondary school students.
2. The One way ANOVA was used to study significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in

relation to annual income of their family among secondary school students.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to their Gender

The mean and SD scores of male and female secondary school students along with value of t-test is given in the table 1.

Table 1
Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to their Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Male	149	65.91	8.66	3.50**
Female	145	69.39	8.40	

** $p < 0.01$

The mean score of machiavellianism among male secondary school students was found to be 65.91 (SD=8.66) as compared to the mean score of machiavellianism among female secondary school students was 69.39 (SD= 8.40). The t-value testing the significance of mean difference of machiavellianism of male and female secondary school students was 3.50 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance.

It shows that male and female secondary school students differ significantly in machiavellianism among secondary school students.

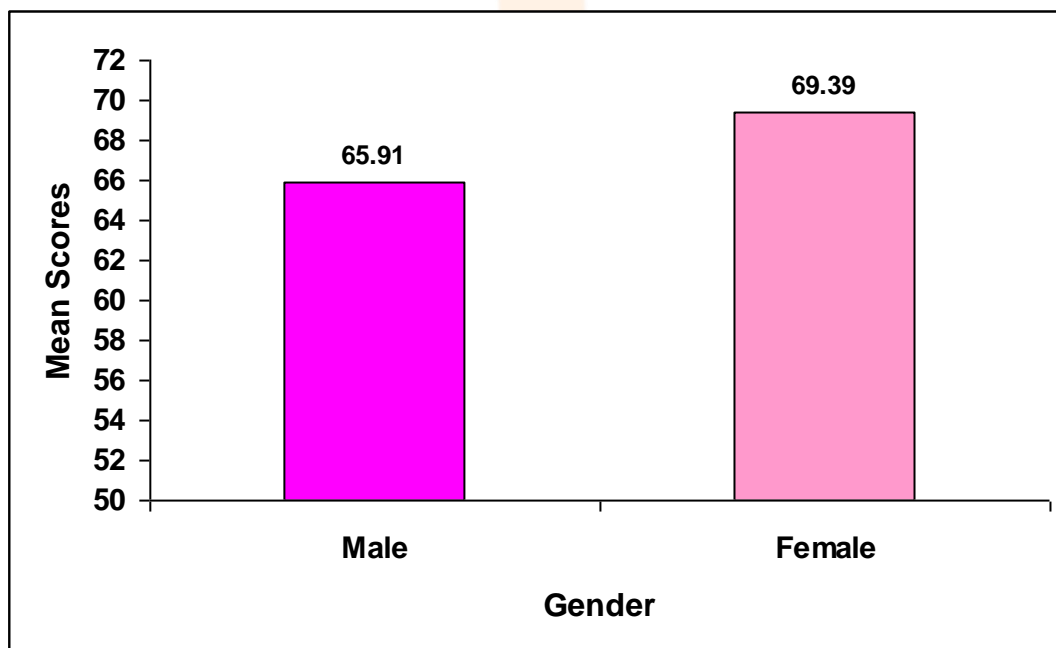


Fig. 1: Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to Gender

The fig. 1 depicts that the mean score of female secondary school students are higher than mean score of male secondary school students.

Hence Hypothesis 1: “*There is no significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to gender among secondary school students*” was not accepted. The significant gender differences were found in Machiavellianism in relation to gender. So it can be said that female secondary school students have higher level of machiavellianism than male secondary school students.

2. Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to their Location

The mean and SD scores of rural and urban secondary school students along with value of t-test is given in the table 2.

Table 2
Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to their Location

Location	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Rural	89	70.36	6.17	3.62**
Urban	205	66.44	9.36	

** $p < 0.01$

Table 2 shows that the mean score of machiavellianism among rural secondary school students was found to be 70.36 (SD=6.17) as compared to the mean score of machiavellianism among urban secondary school students was 66.44 (SD=9.36). The t-value testing the significance of mean difference of machiavellianism of rural and urban secondary school students was 3.62 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance.

It shows that rural and urban secondary school students differ significantly in machiavellianism among secondary school students.

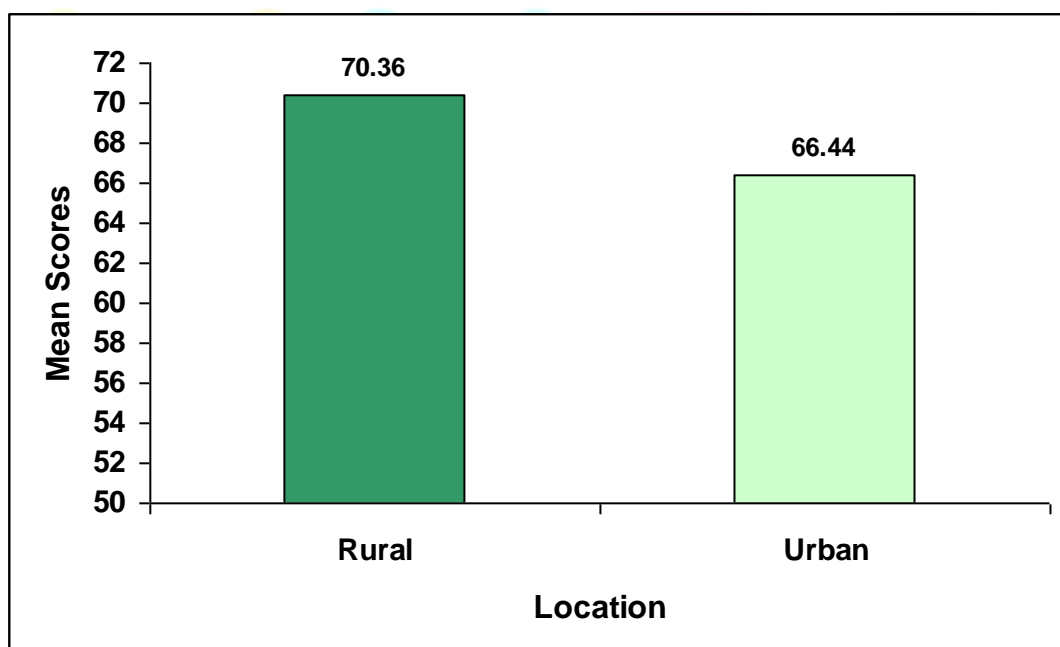


Fig. 2: Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to their Location

The fig. 2 depicts that the mean score of rural secondary school students are higher than mean score of urban secondary school students.

Hence Hypothesis 2: “There is no significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism among secondary school students in relation to their location” was not accepted. The significant difference was found in Machiavellianism in relation to their location. So it can be said that rural secondary school students have higher level of machiavellianism than urban secondary school students.

3. Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to Annual Income of their Family

The mean and SD scores of secondary school students whose family having annual income of below one lakh, between one-two lakh and above two lakh is given in table 3

Table 3
Mean and SD Scores of Machiavellianism obtained by Respondents Classified on the Basis of Annual Income of their Family

Annual Income	N	Mean	SD
Below one lakh	175	68.20	8.00
Between one-two lakh	71	66.72	9.15
Above two lakh	48	66.69	10.25

The table 3 shows that the mean scores of machiavellianism of secondary school students whose family having annual income below one lakh was 68.20; between one-two lakh was 66.72 and above two lakh was 66.69.

Table 4
Analysis of Variance for Machiavellianism Scores of Secondary School Students on the Basis of Annual Income of their Family

Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Between Groups	158.15	2	79.07	1.04 ^{NS}
Within Groups	21970.67	291	75.50	
Total	22128.83	293		

NS :Not significant

The table 4 shows that the F value of machiavellianism as a whole for secondary school students whose family having annual income below one lakh, between one-two lakh, and above two lakh was 1.04 which is not significant.

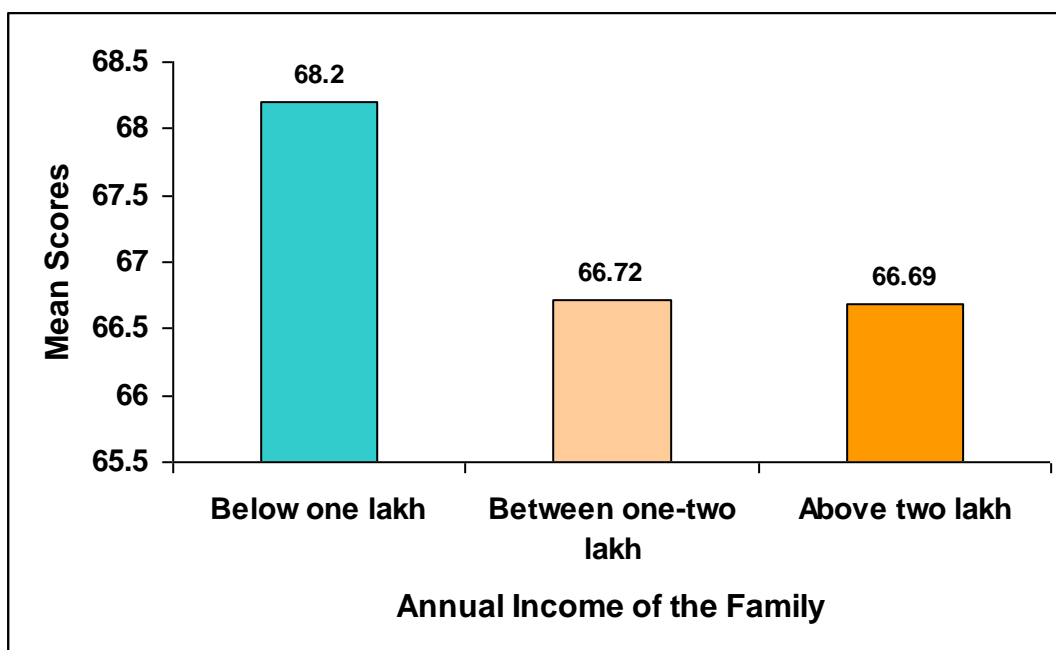


Fig. 3: Comparison of Scores on Machiavellianism among Secondary School Students in Relation to Annual Income of their Family

The fig. 3 depicts that mean score of machiavellianism among secondary school students is high in secondary school students whose family having annual income is below one lakh, which is followed by average in secondary school students whose family having annual income is between one-two lakh and low among secondary school students whose family having annual income is above two lakh. So it can be said that secondary school students whose family having annual income below one lakh have high machiavellianism.

Hence Hypothesis 3: “*There is no significant difference in mean scores of machiavellianism in relation to annual income of their family among secondary school students*” was accepted.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The significant gender difference were found in machiavellianism. The mean score of female secondary school students are higher than mean score of male secondary school students. So it can be said that female secondary school students have higher level of machiavellianism than male secondary school students.
2. The significant difference in locale were found in machiavellianism. The mean score of rural secondary school students are higher than mean score of urban secondary school students. So it can be said that rural secondary school students have higher level of machiavellianism than urban secondary school students.
3. There is no significant variance found in machiavellianism in relation to the annual income of their family among secondary school students.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. The principal of the school should encourage and allow secondary school students to attend seminars and workshops related to personality development; for better understanding of one's own personality.
2. The teachers of the school should inculcate the moral qualities such as honesty, truthfulness and compassion among the secondary students.
3. The parents of secondary school students should inculcate life skills, moral values, decision making capacity in their children because such exercises facilitates better mental health and understanding of emotions.
4. The secondary school teacher should not use harsh criticism for any misconduct (cheating, tell lie, manipulation) of secondary school students and help them to realize their mistake and take promise not to repeat it in near future.
5. There is need to replace the machiavellian attitude with emotional stability so teachers should treat students with love and care so as to strengthen emotional stability in students. The secondary school teachers must focus on importance of hard work, self-learning and life-long learning as compared to believing in luck/fate only.

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