

Self-efficacy and general well being among adolescents in context of gender

■ Samridhi Arora, Preeti Gupta and Anu Choudhary

P.G. Department of Home Science, University of Jammu, JAMMU (J&K) INDIA

(Email: samridhiarora18@gmail.com)

ARTICLE INFO :

Received : 18.02.2014
Revised : 30.04.2014
Accepted : 16.05.2014

KEY WORDS :

Self efficacy, Well being, Adolescents

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE :

Arora, Samridhi, Gupta, Preeti and Choudhary, Anu (2014). Self-efficacy and general well being among adolescents in context of gender. *Adv. Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 5 (1) : 64-68.

ABSTRACT

Adolescence is defined as a period of adjustment or as a journey to adulthood (Nurmi, 2001) where a teenager has to face rapid physical, cognitive and social changes (Nurmi, 1997)). The Self-Efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for motivation, well being and personal accomplishment in all areas of life. The present research work was carried to study the level of self-efficacy and general well-being of male and female adolescents of Samba district and to compare self-efficacy and general well-being of adolescents in context of gender. A sample of 100 adolescents (50 boys and 50 girls) from different Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools of Samba district of J&K were randomly selected. The tools used for the present research work were- General Self-Efficacy Scale and Adolescent Well-Being Scale. Data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively by using mean, standard deviation and t-scores. The results revealed that t-scores showed a significant effect of gender on self-efficacy and general well-being of adolescents. Results depicted that majority of adolescent boys (58%) fell in the level of high self-efficacy and same percentage of girls (58%) fell in the level of moderate self-efficacy. The boys had higher mean scores than girls on self-efficacy. Results also depicted that the mean scores of girls were higher than boys on non-depressive domain and the boys have higher mean scores than girls on depressive domain of Adolescent Well-Being Scale. Results concluded that boys have higher self-efficacy than girls. This means that they were more confident than girls that they could deal efficiently with unexpected events. This may be due to that males are more exposed to the outside environment. The females have to bear discrimination in the society which affects their self-efficacy. Results also concluded that boys were found more depressive than girls on general well-being. This may be due to that girls are more emotionally stable than boys and they can adjust to every situation of life.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the most vulnerable age for development, when the child once entering in this stage requires intensive readjustment to school, social and family life. While many adolescents experience anxiety, unpleasant or strange feelings. Generally males are considered to be superior and females as inferior commonly in our culture. The females have to bear the discrimination of the majority in every sphere starting from their own family to the society who provide impoverished

environment, as a result affect their well being and overall personality. The discrimination and differentiation on the basis of gender is leading to inferiority complexes among the females. Dona *et al.* (2002) have reported the superiority of males with regard to self-efficacy as compared to females in various cultures. Self-efficacy beliefs touch virtually every aspect of adolescent's lives- whether they think productively, pessimistically or optimistically, how much effort they expend on an activity, how well they motivate themselves and persevere in the face of adversities; how they regulate their thinking and behaviour, and vulnerability to stress and

depression. As a consequence, these beliefs can powerfully influence the level of accomplishment that adolescent ultimately realize. In other words, self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Self-efficacy is usually thought of as action and is considered to be a universal construct, which applies to all individuals regardless of race, gender or culture. The self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for motivation, well being and personal accomplishment in all areas of life. Self-efficacy is also a critical determinant of life choices people make and of the courses of action they pursue. Typically, they engage in activities in which they feel competent and avoid those in which they do not. This is particularly critical at the High School and college levels, where adolescents and young people progressively have more academic choices available to them. Adolescents with high self-efficacy choose to perform more challenging and difficult tasks. In terms of feeling low levels of self-efficacy is concerned with depression, anxiety and helplessness.

Well being is a broad concept that includes experiencing pleasant emotion, low level of negative mood and high life satisfaction. Well being is a contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous. It can also be defined as person's cognitive effective evaluation of his or her life. These evaluations include emotional reaction to event as well as cognitive judgment of satisfaction and fulfillment. It is defined as a combination of happiness, life satisfaction and depression. Whereas, happiness and life satisfaction are positive effects, depression is a negative affect. Both effects tell us the well-being of the individual. A strong sense of self-efficacy enhances adolescent's well being in many ways. High level of self-efficacy contributes to high levels of engagements and life satisfaction. In addition, well-being refers to achieving and successful handling of personal and divergent goals imposed by authority, attaining socially defined values, adapting to one's social environment, satisfaction of everyday needs, participating in interesting activities, positive evaluation of daily events, meaningful use of time, good health and accepting oneself (Grob *et al.*, 1991).

Objectives :

- To study the self-efficacy and well being of male and female adolescents of Samba district.
- To compare self-efficacy and well being of adolescents in context of gender.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The sample for the study comprised of adolescent boys and girls who were randomly selected from four schools of Samba district of J&K state. From these selected schools, 100 adolescents (50 boys and 50 girls) were selected randomly. The tools used for data collection were Interview Schedule for

Background Information, General Self-Efficacy Scale and Adolescent Well Being Scale. General Self-Efficacy Scale (revised version) devised by Ralf Schwarzer and Matthias Jerusalem (1995) was used to assess the sense of perceived self-efficacy with the aim in mind to predict coping with daily hassles as well as adaptation after experiencing all kinds of stressful life events. The scale is designed for the general adult population including adolescents. Person below the age of 12 should not be tested. The scale is self-administered. There are 10 items in the scale. The adolescent well being scale was devised by Birleson (1980) to pickup possible depression in older children and adolescents. The scale has 18 questions each relating to different aspects of an adolescent's life and how they feel about them. They are asked to indicate whether the statement applies to them most of the time, sometimes or never. The scale can be used by children as young as 7 or 8, but responses are more reliable for those aged 11 or more. Pre-testing was conducted on a sample of 10 adolescents (5 boys and 5 girls) to see the appropriateness of the scales. The data were collected by visiting four schools of Samba district. Initially rapport was established with the Principal of school and took permission from them. Then random sampling technique was used for the selection of adolescents. The data obtained by the use of various tools were subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The raw data were coded and tabulated for the analysis and various statistical techniques were used like mean, standard deviation and t-test to describe the data and infer whether the differences were significant or not.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The analyses of self-efficacy showed that majority of adolescent boys (58%) fell in the category of "high self-efficacy" and same percentage of girls (58%) fell in the category of "moderate self-efficacy." Not a single respondent fell in the categories of "very low" and "low self-efficacy" (Fig. 1).

Majority of adolescents both boys and girls coped with daily hassles as well as adaptation after experiencing all kinds

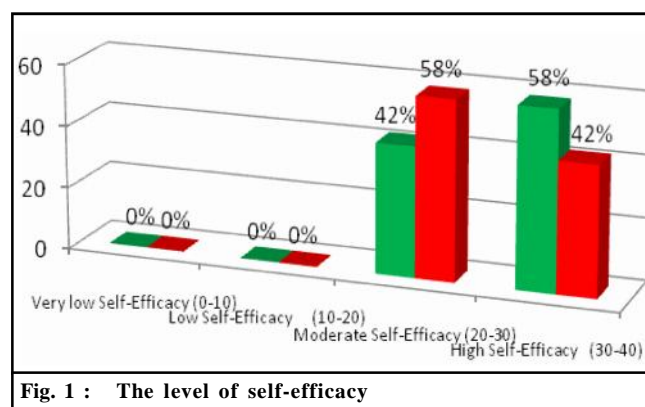


Fig. 1 : The level of self-efficacy

Table 1 : Mean scores on various domains of self-efficacy of adolescents

Domain of self-efficacy	Total (n=100)	
	Mean (\bar{X})	± S.D.
1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough. (E.I.)	3.520	±0.703
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. (P.B.)	2.470	±1.077
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. (G.S.)	2.550	±1.226
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events (P.B.)	2.770	±1.043
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situation. (P.B.)	2.810	±1.245
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. (E.I.)	3.090	±1.045
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. (K.S.)	2.830	±1.045
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. (E.I.)	3.140	±0.964
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. (P.B.)	3.160	±0.940
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way. (P.B.)	3.070	±0.902

Table 2 : t-scores of adolescent boys and girls on domains of self-efficacy

Domains of self-efficacy	Boys		Girls		t-Scores
	Mean (\bar{X}) ± S.D.	Mean (\bar{X}) ± S.D.	Mean (\bar{X}) ± S.D.	Mean (\bar{X}) ± S.D.	
1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough (E.I.)	3.360 ±0.693	3.680 ±0.683	3.680 ±0.683	3.680 ±0.683	2.419*
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want. (P.B.)	2.580 ±1.052	2.360 ±1.102	2.360 ±1.102	2.360 ±1.102	1.035
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals. (G.S.)	2.880 ±1.223	2.220 ±1.148	2.220 ±1.148	2.220 ±1.148	3.155*
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events. (P.B.)	3.160 ±0.766	2.380 ±1.141	2.380 ±1.141	2.380 ±1.141	4.198*
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situation. (P.B.)	3.020 ±1.024	2.600 ±1.262	2.600 ±1.262	2.600 ±1.262	1.584
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort. (E.I.)	2.940 ±0.978	3.240 ±1.098	3.240 ±1.098	3.240 ±1.098	1.388
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities. (R.S.)	2.740 ±1.084	2.920 ±1.007	2.920 ±1.007	2.920 ±1.007	0.815
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions. (E.I.)	3.440 ±0.837	2.840 ±0.997	2.840 ±0.997	2.840 ±0.997	3.165*
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution. (P.B.)	3.020 ±0.937	3.300 ±0.931	3.300 ±0.931	3.300 ±0.931	1.414
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way. (P.B.)	2.860 ±0.833	2.280 ±0.927	2.280 ±0.927	2.280 ±0.927	2.214*

* indicate significance of value at P=0.05, respectively

of stressful life events. Schwarzer (1994) reported that general self-efficacy aims at a broad and stable sense of personal competence to deal effectively with a variety of stressful situations. High level of self-efficacy contributes to high level of engagements and life satisfaction.

The total mean scores on various domains of self-efficacy of adolescents and item wise analysis of self-efficacy were done (Table 1). It facilitates 4 domains: Goal-setting (G.S.), Effort-investment (E.I.), Persistence in face of barriers (P.B.) and Recovery from setbacks (R.S.). Table 1 depicts that item no. 1, 6 and 8 showed Effort-investment, item no. 2, 4, 5, 9 and 10 showed Persistence in face of barriers, item no. 3 showed Goal-setting and item no. 7 depict Recovery from setbacks. Items having Effort-investment domain showed higher mean scores and this showed that adolescents try to manage and solve the problems in difficult situations. They are putting their efforts to manage the things. Higher mean scores were also depicted on domain of Persistence in face of barriers *i.e.* adolescents are persistent in problematic situations. Mean scores of adolescents on Goal-setting and Recovery from setbacks were (M=2.550) and (M=2.830), respectively.

Table 2 depicts the significant differences in the scores of adolescent boys and girls on various domains of self-efficacy. t-scores showed significant difference on the item 3 related to Goal-setting domain of self-efficacy. The calculated value of t was 3.155, which was significant at 0.05 levels. In this item, boys mean scores were higher than girls *i.e.* it is easy for majority of the boys to stick to aims and accomplish their goals. On Effort-investment domain of self-efficacy, girls had higher mean scores on item no. 1 and 6 than boys and on item no.8 boys had higher mean scores than girls. t-scores revealed significant differences on item no. 1 and 8. The calculated value of t on item no.1 was 2.419 and on item no.8 was 3.166 which was significant at 0.05 level. Mean scores of boys on item no. 2, 4, 5, 9 and 10 related to Persistence in face of barriers domain of self-efficacy which were higher than girls but on item no.9 girls had higher mean scores than boys.

t-scores showed a significant difference on the item no.4 and 10 and calculated values were 4.198 and 2.214 which was

significant at 0.05 level and calculated values of t of item no. 2,5 and 9 were 1.055, 1.584 and 1.414 which were insignificant at 0.05 level. Boys mean scores were higher than girls on this domain *i.e.* it was easy for majority of boys to find means and ways in difficult situations and they were confident that they could deal efficiently with unexpected events. On recovery from Setbacks domain of self-efficacy, girls have higher mean scores on item no. 7 *i.e.* majority of girls remained calm when facing difficulties. The calculated value of t was 0.815 which was insignificant at 0.05 level. The result is consistent with the research work of Ruiz and Silverstein (2007) in which significant effect of gender on self-efficacy was found and the male adolescents scored higher than their female counterparts. This may be due to family restriction, as females are not exposed to the outside environment and they do not direct their feelings. The results are also inconsistent with the study conducted by Kumar and Lal (2006) where female scored higher than their male counterparts on self-efficacy. Wang and Liu (2000) reported that self-efficacy was related to physical and mental health. The results of Moeini *et al.* (2008) showed greater stress associated with lower general self-efficacy and lower mental health. Bandura *et al.* (2003) reported that self-efficacy beliefs determine an individual resiliency to adversity and vulnerability to stress and depression.

The scores of adolescent boys and girls on the Adolescent Well-Being Scale is presented in Table 3. Majority of respondents both boys and girls (66%) have scores less than 13 and they were not depressive and remaining 34 per cent have scores at 13 or more than 13 and they were depressive. Tung and Dhillon (2006) found greater emotional autonomy in females as compared to the males. This study is consistent with the present research work.

Results revealed a significant effect of gender on well-being. The calculated t- values of both “non-depressive” and “depressive” dimension were significant at 0.05 level. The mean scores of girls were higher than boys on “Non-depressive” dimension and the boys have more mean scores than girls on “Depressive” dimension of “Adolescent well-being scale (Table 4).

Table 3 : Scores of respondents adolescent well-being scale

Dimensions	Boys		Girls		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Scores less than 13 (Not-depressive)	32	64	34	68	66	66
Scores at 13 or more than 13 (Depressive)	18	36	16	32	34	34
Total	50	100	50	100	100	100

Table 4 : t-scores of the adolescent boys and girls on adolescent’s well-being scale

Dimensions	Boys		Girls		t-scores
	Mean (\bar{x})	± S.D.	Mean (\bar{x})	± S.D.	
Not-depressive (scores less than 13)	8.688	±2.306	9.629	±1.573	2.527*
Depressive (scores at 13 or more than 13)	15.250	±1.689	14.500	±1.633	3.000*

Results concluded that there was a significant effect of gender on self-efficacy and general well-being of adolescents in Samba district. Boys had higher self-efficacy than girls in Samba District *i.e.* they choose to perform more challenging and difficult tasks. Adolescent boys with high level of self-efficacy approach life with a can – do attitude that allows them to see challenges as problems to be solved instead of threats that must be avoided. Girls were found more happy than boys on well being and high satisfaction scores were found to be flexible and efficient in problem solving and they were more intrinsically motivated to learn and more stable. Depressed adolescents usually are less intrinsically motivated to learn.

REFERENCES

- Bandura, A., Capara, G.V., Barbaranelli, C., Gerbino, M. and Pastorelli, C. (2003). Role of effective self-regulatory efficacy in diverse spheres of psychological functioning. *Child Development*, **74** : 769-782.
- Birleson, P. (1980). The validity of Depressive Disorder in Childhood and the Development of a Self-Rating Scale; a Research Report. *J. Child Psychol. & Psychiatry*, **22** : 73–88.
- Dona, B.G., Scholz, U., Schwarzer, R. and Sud, S.(2002). Is perceived self-efficacy a universal construct: psychometric findings from 25 countries. *Psychological Assessment*, **1** : 21.
- Grob, A., Sabatier, C., Botchera, L. and Macek, P. (1999). A cross-national model of subjective well-being in adolescence. In : Lsaker F.D., Flammer, A. (Eds). *The adolescent experience: European and American adolescents in the 1990s.* (Mahwah. N.J., Lawrence, Erkbaum) 115-130.
- Kumar, R. and Lal, R. (2006). The role of self-efficacy and gender differences among the adolescents. *J. Indian Acad. Appl. Psychol.*, **32**(3) : 249-254.
- Moeini, B., Shafil, F., Hidarnia, A., Babail, G.R., Birashk, B. and Allahverdipour, H. (2008). Adolescent perceived stress, self-efficacy, psychological well-being. *Social Behavior & Personality: An Internat. J.*, **36** : 257-266.
- Nurmi, J.E. (1997). *Self-definition and mental health during adolescence and young adulthood.* NewYork: Cambridge University Press, pp. 395-419.
- Nurmi, J.E. (2001). *Navigating through adolescence : European perspectives.* Routledge Falmer, New York, pp. 3-17.
- Ruiz, S. A. and Silverstein, M. (2007). Relationship with grandparents and the emotional wellbeing of late adolescents and young adult grandchildren. *J. Social Issues*, **63** (4) : 793-808.
- Schwarzer, R. (1994). Optimism, vulnerability, and self-beliefs as health-related cognitions. A systematic overview. *Psychology & Health : An Internat. J.*, **9** (3) : 161-180.
- Schwarzer, R. and Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized Self-Efficacy scale. In J. Weinman, S. Wright, & M. Johnston, *Measures in health psychology: A user's portfolio. Causal and control beliefs* (pp. 35-37). Windsor, UK: NFER-NELSON
- Tung, S. and Dhillon, R. (2006). Emotional autonomy in relation to family environment. A gender perspective. *J. Indian Acad. Appl. Psychol.*, **32** (3) : 297-308.
- Wang, C. and Liu, Y. (2000). The relational study on general self-efficacy, trait anxiety, state anxiety and test anxiety. *Chinese J. Clinical Psychol.*, **8**(4) : 229-230.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ^{5th} Year of Excellence ★ ★ ★ ★ ★