

## Self-Efficacy and Well-Being of Adolescents

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The present study investigated the effects of type of family and gender on self-efficacy and well-being of adolescents. Family is the source of support of any individual and one of the motivating factors for human being to grow and achieve. One hundred adolescents (50 boys and 50 girls) from joint and nuclear families were administered the measures of self-efficacy and well-being. Data were analyzed by ANOVA. Results revealed a significant effect of type of family and gender on self-efficacy. The interaction between type of family and gender was also found to be significant; however neither family type nor gender had significant effect on the measure of well-being.

**Keywords:** Type of family, Gender, Self-efficacy, Well-being.

Adolescence is defined as the period of transition between childhood to adulthood that involves biological, cognitive, and socioemotional changes. A key task of adolescents is preparation for adulthood. Indeed, the future of any culture hinges on how effective this preparation is (Larson, Wilson, Brown, Fursternberg & Verma, 2002).

It is referred as a period of transition and challenge for children and their families both. It is a psychological process of change accompanying the period from the onset of puberty to the attainment of adulthood whereas puberty refers to the physical process of maturation. It is a critical important stage between childhoods to adulthood. Broadly, it covers three stages namely, early adolescence (11-14 years), middle adolescence (14-17 years) and late adolescence (17-20 years).

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. Gender is an important aspect for investigation; generally males are

considered to be superior and females as inferior commonly in our culture. Social cognitive theory has been especially important in understanding social influence on gender (Bugental & Grusec, 2006). 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 (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). The discrimination and differentiation on the basis of gender is leading to inferiority complexes among the females in both joint as well as nuclear families. In a study conducted by Dona, Scholz, Schwarzer and Sud (2002) have reported the superiority of males with regard to self-efficacy as compared to females in various cultures.

Family is a source of positive relationship and unique bonds among members and also it is the first school of life. It plays a central role in the emotional and cognitive development of human beings. The concept of self-efficacy which relates to judgment people make concerning their ability to execute behaviour relevant to a specific task or situations. It refers to the confidence in once

ability to behave in such a way or to produce a desirable outcome (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy makes a difference in how people feel, think and act. Self-efficacy pertains to optimistic belief about being able to cope with a variety of stressors. People with high self-efficacy choose to perform more challenging and difficult task. In terms of feeling low level of self efficacy is concerned with depression, anxiety and helplessness. People 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. They also set appropriately challenging goal for themselves and maintain a strong commitment to those goals. People with strong self-efficacy enjoy life because they are highly engaged. When they encounter stressful situations their belief in their ability to manage situations to their benefit allows being self confident.

People with low level of self-efficacy typically view difficult task through the lens of fear. Low self-efficacy becomes a cycle: lack of faith in ability produces lack of action. Lack of action contributes to more self doubt. They become doubtful of their own capabilities and are more easily stressed and more frequently depressed than people with high level of self-efficacy. The self-efficacy has also been linked to the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) by suggesting that the expectations can influence the thought patterns, emotional reaction. The self-efficacy expectancies predict behavior in a variety of contents one, such being is decision making (Cavon, Jwani & Wood, 1991) task performance, (Bandura 1982, 1999; Bandura, Adams, Hardy & Howells, 1980; Feltz, 1982), and problem solving task. A study conducted by Sanna (1977) found people with high in self efficacy reported high capability of coming-up with solutions and experience in performing the task successfully as compared to low level of self-efficacy.

Bandura (1977) attributes the development of self-efficacy to four forces:

mastery, social learning, social persuasion, and emotional and physical states. Of the four, the most powerful for producing self-efficacy is mastery and the most powerful is undermining self-efficacy is social persuasion. A number of structural conditions impact self-efficacy: social class, race, level of educations rural and urban backgrounds and gender all affect an individual global self- efficacy (Birch, 1987). Family structure to have a direct relationship to adolescent's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995); Schneewind, 1995). Family have a significant place sometimes for domestic abuse demoralization, negative feedback and criticism are the most extreme example of negative social persuasion. People need positive mastery experiences to develop and maintain high level of self- efficacy. Well-being is a broad concept that includes experiencing pleasant emotion, low level of negative mood and high life satisfaction. It is not only the lack disease or illness or the absence of anxiety or depression. It is a state of complete physical and social health. 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. Subjective well being as defined by Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith, (1999) is composed of life satisfaction, the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect. Psychological well-being resides within the experience of individual (Campbell, Convers, & Rodgers, 1976). People who are successful at attending frequent positive affect will be happy (Diener, Sandvic, & Pavot, 1989). Some researchers have pointed out the role of personality and social support in psychological well-being (Nathawat, 1988); Nathawat & Rathore, 1996). A number of demographic variables such as income (Diener & Oissi, 2000), age, (Diener & Suh, 1997) marriage (Diener et al., 1999) and religion (Myers & Diener, 1995) which influences the subjective well being. A strong sense of self-efficacy enhance peoples well

being in many ways. High level of self-efficacy contributes to high levels of engagements and life satisfaction. While mastery experiences are the major force behind self-efficacy, positive role models, accurate reading of physical and emotional feelings, and positive feedback all contribute to well-being. It has been also defined as a dynamic state characterized by a reasonable amount of harmony between individual's abilities, needs and expectation, and environmental demands of opportunities (Levi, 1987). Well-being is connotative as a harmonious satisfaction of once desire and goals (Checola, 1975). Psychological well-being is the subjective feelings of contentment, happiness satisfaction with life's experiences and one's role in the world of work, sense of achievement, utility belongingness, and no distress dissatisfaction or worry etc. (Shek, 1997; Sastre & Ferriere, 2000; VanWel, Linsen & Abma, 2000) showed that various factors affect adolescent's level of psychological well-being.

The present study investigated the effects of type of families and gender on self-efficacy and well-being of adolescents.

### Method

#### Sample:

The total sample consisted of One hundred adolescents. Of these 25 male and 25 female adolescents each from joint and nuclear families participated in the study. There were four groups and each having 25 subjects. The average age of the subjects was 15.3 years.

#### Tools:

**Self-efficacy Questionnaire:** The Hindi translation of general self-efficacy questionnaire Sherer (GSESH) was used. The scale was originally developed by Sherer & colleagues, (1982). This scale was modified from the original by Bosscher & Smit (1998). It measures three dimensions such as Initiative, Effort, and Persistence. There were

12 items in the questionnaire and the participants were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with each item on a five point scale ranging from Always, Often, Sometime, Rarely, Never. The reliability of the scale was found to be 0.69.

**P.G.I General Well-being Measure:** This scale was developed by Verma & Amita Verma (1989). The scale consists of 20 statements and the subject had to respond in Yes or No.

### Results and Discussion

The data were subjected to two way ANOVA and results are revealed a significant main effect of type of families on the dimension of initiative of self-efficacy. Adolescents belonging to joint families ( $M = 12.14$ ) were found to be higher than nuclear families ( $M = 11.04$ ) on the initiative dimension. The results also showed a significant interaction effect between family and gender. Male participants of joint family ( $M = 12.64$ ) showed higher initiative than female participants ( $M = 11.64$ ). However female participants of nuclear family ( $M = 11.4$ ) showed higher initiative than male participants ( $M = 10.68$ ). The ANOVA on the second dimension of self-efficacy, namely effort also revealed a significant effect of gender. The boys ( $M = 20.38$ ) were found to be superior as compared to girls ( $M = 18.96$ ) on this dimension. Regarding the third dimension of self-efficacy namely persistence, the results showed significant effect of type families on the dimension of persistence. Adolescents living in joint families scored higher ( $M = 15.30$ ) than to adolescents living in nuclear families ( $M = 12.26$ ). The interaction between type of family and gender was also found to be significant. Male participants of joint family ( $M = 16.36$ ) are higher than female participants ( $M = 14.24$ ) on the dimension of persistence. However female participants of nuclear family ( $M = 12.64$ ) showed higher persistence than male participants ( $M = 11.88$ )

A 2X2 ANOVA on the total scores of self-efficacy measure revealed a significant effect

of type of family and gender. The mean scores of adolescents belonging to joint families ( $M = 47.56$ ) was found to be higher than the mean scores of adolescents belonging to nuclear families ( $M = 42.52$ ). The mean score of boys ( $M = 46.16$ ) was higher than the girls ( $M = 43.92$ ). Also, the interactional effect between type of family and gender was significant on the total scores of self-efficacy measure. Results clearly indicate that in joint family boys ( $M = 49.64$ ) displayed very high self-efficacy as compared to girls ( $M = 45.48$ ). Contrary to their in nuclear family boys ( $M = 42.68$ ) showed little higher self-efficacy as compared to girls ( $M = 42.36$ ) participants. The 2X2 ANOVA on the measure of well-being showed non significant findings.

The purpose of this present study was to examine the effect of type of families and gender on Self-efficacy and Well-being of adolescents. The adolescents of joint families showed higher self-efficacy than the adolescents belonging to the nuclear family. This may be due to our social culture and norms. The presence of grandparents at home is a boon for the grandchildren (Edwards, 1998). Researchers have found that the unconditional love that grandparents bestow upon grandchildren, aid in their self-esteem and efficacy. During adolescence, grandchildren find it beneficial to tap the wisdom and ancestry of grandparents to assist in ego development. This positive psychosocial role that grandparents play suggest that family units as a whole may rely less on public social recourses to aid with developmental tasks. The results of this study indicate the importance of joint family in contributing to enhanced total self-efficacy and also on the dimensions of initiative and persistence. The study of Caprara, Pastarelli, Regalia, Scabini, and Bandura (2005), reported that filial Self-efficacy was linked directly and indirectly to satisfaction with family life. The greater the adolescents perceived their self-efficacy, the more they reported of open communication with their parents.

Sometimes, in joint families the grandparents play a significant role of negotiator between child and parent which in turn helps to maintain strong communication with each other. In the present study, it is being observed that difference between boys and girls is more prevalent in joint families rather than boys and girls of nuclear families. Thornton and Fricke, (1987), reported loss of elderly power in nuclear family. In recent research by Kara, (2007), reported positive relationship between family support and self-efficacy among Turkish patients. The results of Moeini and Shafil (2008) show greater stress is associated with lower general self-efficacy and lower mental health. The present study although did not report any significant differences in context of measure of well-being, a close perusal of mean scores indicated that adolescents living in joint families showed higher well-being than living in nuclear families. In context of gender mean scores of boys was higher than the female adolescents. A study conducted by Ruiz, Merrill, and Silverstein (2007) indicate that close and supportive relationship between grandparents and grandchildren are an important factor of children's emotional Well-being and psychological benefits. In this study, significant effect of gender on self-efficacy was also found. The male adolescents scored higher than their female counterparts. This may be due to family restriction, females are not exposed to the outside environment and they do not direct their feelings. Datar (1995) and Kakar (1978) reported that adolescent's girl's relationship with her natal home is considered temporary, until she is given away in marriage. On the other hand Tung and Dhillon (2006) found greater emotional autonomy in females as compared to the males.

On the basis of these findings it can be concluded that joint family system facilitates the adolescent's development in healthier manner, Families in India are undergoing vast change like, divorce and separation, domestic intergenerational conflicts, modernizations

and industrialization, In such a scenario the model of "Joint Family System" is one such thing that has the potential to ensure sustainability of life and natural resources that can lead to secure, healthy, stress free and affluent individuals. Thus, efforts should be made to reduce the stereotype attitude about girls in our society. With over 190 million adolescents which is nearly one fifth of the total population of our country in question there is a need to encourage people, to live with their elders and to provide an energetic environment for children and grandparents.

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