Performance among the High and Low Self-efficacious Students

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The purpose of the present study is to investigate the impact of rural and urban background on performance among the high and low self-efficacious students studying in various senior secondary schools of Shimla District of Himachal Pradesh in India. The data were collected on a sample of 416 (208 rural and 208 urban) self-efficacious subjects (mean age of 16.5 years) by following the criterion of selection M ± 1 SD. The students were divided into eight groups, four from rural (males and females) and four from urban (males and females) with high and low in self-efficacy comprises of n = 52 subjects in each group. The subjects from both the backgrounds (rural and urban) were given problem solving task (anagram solution) to perform. The task comprises of several English letters words selected from adjectives placed in a jumbled up manner. The subjects have to solve these jumbled up words in a meaningful way within stipulated time. For recording the performance multifarious comparison were made by applying the appropriate statistical procedure in order to detect performance within rural and urban as well as between rural and urban conditions of both the gender with high and low in self-efficacy. The result revealed that there was a non-significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the performance of boys and girls with high and low in self-efficacy within rural and urban settings but highly significant ($p<0.01$) differences in performance were found between rural and urban setting with the males and females high and low in self-efficacy. The urban students high as well as low in self-efficacy significantly ($p < 0.01$) outperformed the rural students in problem solving task. Urban high self-efficacious females significantly ($p<0.01$) outperformed both rural males and females with high and low in self-efficacy as well as urban females with high and low in self-efficacy and urban females with low in self-efficacy. Overall the urban self-efficacious students significantly outperformed rural self-efficacious students and the females of rural and urban backgrounds competed equally well with males in problem solving task.

In India more than 76% of the country's population resides in about 6.00 lacks villages and 72% rural population is engaged in agriculture and allied occupations. Same is the position of Himachal Pradesh, a Hill State, where more than 90% population resides in rural areas or in villages (Census, 2001). There is general misgiving among the scientists that the urban students are more intelligent and superior in cognitive and social abilities as compared to their counterpart. But the situation can be vice versa where rural students can equally perform well by showing all types of abilities, provided that they are given an opportunity to reside in enriched environment. The figure as stated above compels us to think that can such huge rural population be really inferior in all types of

abilities as compared to lot. This is a question of great concern that requires microanalysis to record the change (Bandura, 1977). There have been few researches in the area and their generalization seems to be stereotyped to some extent. The psychology essentially seems to be an urban discipline, which originated from the database of urban middle class population from colleges and universities. Following independence there emerged a great trend by undertaking insightful researches in the topic in India (Sinha, 2002), which was not trustworthy and satisfactory before independence.

The rural and urban setting among the scientists is always a question of and has led to several researches in the area. A study conducted by Sharma (2005) on rural and urban background civil servant and engineers, concluded that the civil services personnel without experience belonging to urban area have maximum creativity as compared to the engineering personnel without experience belonging to rural area. The study pointed out that the subjects belonging to urban area are more creative, Further a fresher is more creative than experienced personnel.

Another study as conducted by Faroqi, (1981) on communication and influence processes among rural and urban reported that rural people avails less information from media yet interact very well and perform equally better to the urban one. Agrawal and Misra, (2002) also found difference among rural and urban sample in terms of their achievement. In their findings the rural sample held a distinct conception of achievement goals in which the individuals personal and societal concerns were undifferentiated while the urban sample construed the goals distinctly at the three level i.e. individual, family and group. The factors like approval and life satisfaction, independence, learning and knowledge and personal success noted in the urban group denoted a different set of value orientation and

lifestyle. In contrast, the rural sample was not able to project a picture of individualistic goal structure.

Bandura's (1967, 2001, 2004) explained that social cognitive of human functioning is rooted in social systems, the personal agency operates within a broad network of socio-structural influences. There is triadic reciprocal causal relationship between internal, personal factors, behavioural patterns and environ-mental influences. Bandura distinguishes between imposed, selected and constructed environment that can play important role in performance accomplishment. Cultural factors and the power structure also plays equally important role in developing sense of self-efficacy and consequently resilience to the stressors. The social cognitive theory assumes that socio-structural factors operate through psychological mechanisms of the self-system to produce behavioural effect. The core belief in Bandura's social cognitive theory can help the person in dealing with the situation effectively. The social cognitive theory specifies four core features of human agency: internationality, forethought, self-reactive ness, and self-reflective ness. The basic tenet of this theory is that a human being is an agent, who can intentionally make things happen by his actions. The agents are not only the planner and fore-thinker, but also the self-regulators as well (Bandura, 2004).

The Self-efficacy has also been linked to the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) by suggesting that the expectation can influences the thought patterns, emotional reactions, and the orchestration of performance through the adroit use of sub skills, ingenuity, resourceful ness and so forth. The self-efficacy expect-ancies predict behavior in a varieties of contexts one such being in decision making (Cervone, Jiwani & Wood, 1991), task performance (Bandura, 1982, 1999; Bandura, Adams, & Beyers, 1977; Bandura, Adams, Hardy & Howells, 1980, Feltz, 1982), and problem

solving task. In a study self-efficacy and problem solving (anagram solution) task, (Sanna, 1977) found that the people with high in self-efficacy reported high capability of coming up with solutions and experience in performing the task successfully as compared to the students low in self-efficacy. Some studies have not found difference in high and low level of self-efficacy groups in the measure of performance (Bandalos, Yates & Thorndike, 1995; Vancouver, Thompson, Tischner & Putka, 2002).

The human differentiation on the basis of gender is a fundamental phenomenon that affects virtually every aspect of people's daily lives. Gender operates in concerts with motivational and self-regulatory mechanism and its conception and roles are the products of broad network of social influences operating independently in varieties of the societal subsystem (Mischel, 1970). There are various theories with regards to gender differentiation and development. The psychological oriented theories tend to emphasize on inner-psychic processes governing in the gender development (Kohlberg, 1968). The sociological theories focus on the social and cultural determinants while the biological oriented theories focused on the differential biological roles played by males and females in the reproduction under gender role development and differentiation (Trivers, 1972). Finally, the gender schema theory focused on both social and psychological basis and centered mainly on individual differences.

It is a matter of concerns whether there is any difference in the performance in psychological abilities among the male and female subjects residing in rural and urban areas. Generally males are considered superior and females as inferior without exploring the root cause and antecedents conditions of the environmental factors. The females have to bear the discrimination of the majority in every sphere starting from their own

family to the society who provide them thorny and impoverished environment, as a result affect their performance and overall personality including their adjustment to the situation and health in India the status of females was venerated where the male's uses to respect their ideas, mind and body by considering them as Avatars of Devi's (goddess) but now a days such concepts do not exist. The discrimination and differentiation on the basis of gender which are causing inferiority complexes among the females in both rural as well as in urban settings and are resulting disparities in achievement. In a study (Dona, Scholz, Schwarzer and Sud, 2002) have reported a superiority of males with regard to self-efficacy as compared to females in various cultures. This gender differences can disappear when women judges their efficacy to perform the same activities in everyday situation in a stereotypically feminine tasks than in context of male dominated occupation (Junge & Dretzke, 1995). Women's beliefs about their capabilities and their career aspirations are shaped by undermining social practices within the family, the educational system, peer relationships, mass media, occupational system and the culture at large (Signorielli, 1990).

In tune with Vancouver's findings, Zinta (2006) also found no relationship between self-efficacy and performance. The study has reported the effect of self-efficacy, test-anxiety and short-term intervention on problem solving. The finding show that the main effects of self-efficacy and counseling were not significant whereas the test-anxiety showed a minor effect on problem solving.

Keeping in view the relevant literature the present study was conducted to examine the impact of rural and urban background on performance among the self-efficacious students. An attempt was made to explore the effect of rural and urban background minutely, operationally and empirically by comparing the

within and between group performance of rural and urban background students in problem solving task (anagram solution).

Method

Sample

The data were collected on a sample of n = 416 (208 rural and 208 urban) subjects with high and low in self-efficacy (mean age of 16.5 years), studying in various senior secondary schools of Shimla districts of Himachal Pradesh in India. These rural and urban subjects n = 208 in each group were divided into two sub-groups on the basis of n = 104 males and n = 104 females in each group. These males and females n = 104 in each group were further sub-divided into two equivalent comparable halves based on their high and low in self-efficacy that comprises of n =52 subjects in each high and low n = 52 in self-efficacy group. So, in all, there were eight groups, four from rural and four from urban background that includes both the males and females with high and low in self-efficacy. The criterion for selection in the high and low self-efficacy group was followed M ± 1 SD of the General Self-efficacy scales scores.

Tools

The General Self-efficacy scale was originally developed in Germany and translated into English by Jerusalem & Schwarzer, 1992 and in Hindi by Sud (1998). The Hindi version of the scale was used in the present study which is a four point scale for identifying the subjects in categories of high and low self-efficacy. This scale has 10 items where the scores range from minimum10 to a maximum of 40. The scale is highly reliable and its psychometric precision has been tested in 25 countries (Dona, Scholz, Schwarzer, & Sud, 2002). It yields the internal consistencies between alpha .75 and .91 respectively. Its concurrent validity has also been established on the basis of appropriate correlations.

Problem solving task

In this study the dependent variable was a problem-solving task. It consisted of anagrams having several letter words placed in a jumbled up manner. The subjects have to re-arranged and form an appropriate word. The students were presented 12 anagrams, selected from English adjective to solve within 10 minutes. These anagrams were presented to the students belongs to high and low in self-efficacy and test-anxiety. The subjects in experimental conditions were presented short-term intervention while the comparison did not follow any treatment. Each word carried equal marks resulting in the composite score of 12.

Procedure

In all 416 subjects were selected from rural and urban areas of the Himachal Pradesh. Their selection were based on the criterion of selection M ± 1SD of the obtained scores on General self-efficacy scale. Those subjects who scored 1 SD above from the mean of self-efficacy score were considered as high self-efficacious and those subjects who scored below 1 SD from the mean were considered as low self-efficacious. For recording the performance (104 males + 104 females) from rural and (104 males + 104 females) from urban background were selected. Finally these subjects were sub-divided into eight subgroups keeping in view their self-efficacy, rural and urban background and gender. These rural and urban 52 in each group were given anagrams solution task to perform. within a time limit of 10 minutes. The subjects were given adequate information regarding the task. First of all the comparison was made within rural and urban setting in order to detect the performance of male and female subjects with high and low in self-efficacy. Then the comparison of subjects between rural and urban settings was made. This multifarious comparison was made by following, mean, standard deviation and t-test.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Mean, SD, t-ratios and Probability of Rural Self-efficacious Students in Problem Solving Task (anagram solution)

	M (SD)	M (SD)	t	p
G-1	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	RHF 6.48 (2.11)	1.01	p > 0.05
G-2	RLM 6.56 (2.99)	RLF 6.13 (2.29)	0.81	p > 0.05
G-3	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	RLF 6.13 (2.29)	0.21	p > 0.05
G-4	RLM 6.56 (2.99)	RHF 6.48 (2.11)	0.15	p > 0.05
G-5	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	RLM 6.48 (2.11)	1.00	p > 0.05
G-6	RHF 6.03 (2.35)	RLF 6.13 (2.29)	0.80	p > 0.05

RHM/RLM: Rural high/Low self-efficacious male; RHF/RLF : Rural high/low self-efficacious females.

Table-1 indicates that the rural high self-efficacious females showed non- significant difference with rural high self-efficacious males (t = 1.01, p > 0.05); rural low self-efficacious males (t = 0.15, p > 0.01) and with rural low self-efficacious females (t = 0.80, p > 0.05). The rural low self-efficacious females also do not showed significant difference with rural low self-efficacious males (t = 0.81, p > 0.05); rural high self-efficacious males (t = 0.21). There was non-significant difference between rural high and low self-efficacious males (t = 1.00, p > 0.05) in problem solving tasks.

Table 2: Mean, SD, t-ratios and probabilities of urban self-efficacious students in problem solving task (anagram solution)

	M (SD)	M (SD)	t	p
G-1	UHM 7.96 (2.22)	UHF 8.67 (2.01)	1.80	p < 0.10
G-2	ULM 8.44 (2.52)	ULF 8.34 (2.27)	0.22	p > 0.01'
G-3	UHM 7.96 (2.22)	ULF 8.34 (2.27)	0.90	p > 0.05
G-4	ULM 8.44 (2.52)	UHF 8.67 (2.01)	0.54	p > 0.01
G-5	UHM 7.96 (2.22)	ULM 8.44 (2.52)	1.14	p > 0.05
G-6	UHF 8.67 (2.01)	ULF 8.34	0.78	p > 0.05

UHM/ULM: Urban high/low self-efficacious male; UHF/ULF : Urban high/low self-efficacious females.

Table-2, shows that there was non-significant difference in the performance of urban high self-efficacy males except to urban high self-efficacious females (t = 1.80, p < 0.10), urban low self-efficacious females (t = 0.90, p > 0.05) and urban low self-efficacious males (t = 1.14, p > 0.01). The urban low self-efficacious males also do not differed significantly with urban low self-efficacious females (t = 0.22, p > 0.05), and urban high self-efficacious females (t = 0.54, p > 0.05). The same trends were also found in the performance of high and low self-efficacious urban high and low self-efficacious males (t = 1.14, p > 0.05) and females (t = 0.78, p > 0.05), who showed non-significant difference in the problem-solving task.

Table 3 : Mean, SD, t-ratios and Probabilities Between Rural and Urban Self-efficacious Students in Problem Solving Task (Anagram Solution).

	M (SD)	M (SD)	t	p
G-1	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	UHM 7.96 (2.22)	4.49	p < 0.01
G-2	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	ULM 8.44 (2.52)	5.33	p < 0.01
G-3	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	UHF 8.67 (2.01)	6.16	p < 0.01
G-4	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	ULF 8.34(2.27)	5.09	p < 0.01
G-5	RLM 6.56(2.99)	UHF 7.96(2.22)	2.80	p < 0.01
G-6	RLM 6.56 (2.99)	ULM 8.44 (2.52)	3.61	p < 0.01
G-7	RLM 6.56 (2.99)	UHF 8.67 (2.01)	4.22	p < 0.01
G-8	RLM 6.56 (2.99)	ULF 8.34 (2.27)	3.41	p > 0.01
G-9	UHM 7.96 (2.22)	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	4.47	p < 0.01
G-10	UHM 7.96 (2.22)	RHF 6.48 (2.11)	3.65	p < 0.01
G-11	UHM 7.96 (2.22)	RLF 6.13 (2.29)	4.32	p < .01
G-12	ULM 8.44 (2.52)	RHF 6.48 (2.11)	4.57	p < 0.01
G-13	RHF 6.48 (2.11)	UHF 8.67 (2.01)	5.41	p < 0.01
G-14	RHF	ULF		

	6.13 (2.29)	8.44 (2.52)	5.18	p < 0.01
G-15	RLF 6.13 (2.29)	UHF 8.67 (2.01)	6.01	p < 0.01
G-16	RLF 6.13 (2.29)	ULF 8.34 (2.27)	4.88	p < 0.01
G-17	ULF 8.34 (2.27)	RHM 6.03 (2.35)	5.09	p < 0.01
G-18	ULF 8.34 (2.27)	RHF 6.48 (2.11)	4.32	p < 0.01
G-19	ULF 8.34 (2.24)	RLF 6.13 (2.29)	4.93	p < .01

RHM/RLM = Rural high/low elf-efficacious male; RHF/RLF : Rural high/low self-efficacious females ; UHM/ULM = Urban high/Low self-efficacious male; UHF/ULF : urban high/low self-efficacious females.

Table-3 Shows that the urban high self-efficacious males significantly outperformed rural high self-efficacious males (t = 4.49, p < 0.01), rural low self-efficacious females (t = 4.32, p < 0.01), rural high self-efficacious females (t =3.65, p < 0.01) and rural high self-efficacious males (t = 4.47, p < 0.01) as well. The urban low self-efficacious male outperformed rural high self-efficacious males (t = 5.33, p < 0.01); rural low self-efficacious males (t = 3.61, p < 0.01); and rural high self-efficacious females (t = 4.57, p < 0.01). The urban high self-efficacious females outperformed rural high self-efficacious males (t = 6.16, p < 0.01); rural low self-efficacious males (t = 4.22, p < 0.01); rural high self-efficacious females (5.41, p < 0.01) and rural low self-efficacious females (t = 6.01). The urban low self-efficacious females outperformed rural high self-efficacious males (t = 5.09, p < 0.01); rural low self-efficacious males (t = 3.41, p < 0.01); rural high self-efficacious females (t = 5.18, p < 0.01); rural low self-efficacious females (t = 4.88, p < 0.01); rural high self-efficacious males (t = 5.09, p < 0.01), rural high self-efficacious females (t = 4.32, p < 0.01) and rural low self-efficacious females (t = 4.93, p < 0.01).

It is clear from the results that there is no difference between male and females subjects from rural areas. They equally show better performance in problem solving abilities. There was no gender difference between high and low self-efficacious subjects from rural background. The females equally competed male. The same is the condition of urban students where the male and females with high and low self-efficacy equally perform well. From this study it can be generalized that the females students are equally competing their counter part in achievement. The females of the contemporary era are not lagging behind in any areas and are equally performing in every sphere. In education now girls are showing extraordinary performance, reason being they realize their past and are concentrating more on their studies as compared to the boys. Who get abundant affection and social support from their families. Some parents of the rural and urban background follow discriminatory attitude for their children by reckoning girls as inferior and boys as superior. So the excess affectionate relationship with the boys perhaps has caused their failure and underachievement as compared to the girls, who are actualizing, reflecting and rationalizing to their Self by making them as more resilient to tackle the vulnerability.

The result shows that there is significant difference in performance between rural and urban students in problem solving task. The urban students high and low in self-efficacy outperformed the rural students with high and

low in self-efficacy in performance. The results showed superiority of urban students in achievement in problem solving task. It doesn't mean that the rural students are inferior as compared to the urban one but requires a further insight why it happens so. The rural students live in fresh environment free from pollution, yet their performance is hampered. For good health the physical factor alone is not sufficient but the social, psychological and cultural factors are equally responsible for their adverse performance. This may be due to quality of education available in rural areas, and less exposure to enriched environment.

The reason behind the excellent performance of urban students may be the better quality of education, availability of the information from various sources including mass media and electronic media, their educated families, and peers groups which help them for better performance

The result further suggests that the females residing in urban areas, or getting social support from their parents and society are performing well as compared to their male counterpart by removing earlier shackles of dependence. Females who are getting support, co-operation, financial assistance and approval from their parents, family and society are performing well in achievement as well as in every sphere as compared to their counterpart. Education is proving to be effective instrument raising their self-belief, forethought, self-esteem and self-efficacy. Not only the females but also the youths of undeveloped villages and urban areas, who have not availed basic amenities in past are trying harder and performing well with attaining higher education which proves effective and working as a liberator for them in every spheres.

The suggestion for improving the performance among the undeveloped rural and urban students with high and low self-efficacy is that they must attain higher education, should understand their environ ment properly, maintain their inner resources like self-efficacy and self-esteem, become resilient, capable by not loosing their courage in handling adverse situation. They must take benefit of mass media, electronic media and other means of information.

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