

Effect of Psychological Interventions for Improving Self-Confidence of University Students

Manish Kumar Verma, Pardeep Kumar, Yashmeen

Abstract: *The main agenda of this research was to see the effectiveness of psychological intervention for improving the self confidence level. It is an experimental sort of research to check for the effectiveness of any particular intervention. The subjects of the study were university students. Keeping in view the research evidences, hypothesis and objectives of the study undertaken, the researcher and the supervisor found it suitable to apply descriptive analysis. Around 20 students were selected with convenient sampling technique. Among which 9 (average age 22.63) participants are males and 14 (average age 22.98) participants are females. The self made 'self confidence scale' was used to see the self confidence level of students. Paired sample t-test was used as a statistical technique in order to analyse and interpret the data. For conducting this research, pre-test was conducted to check the self confidence of students prior the interventional process. Then the implementation of the intervention took place where the main focus was to improve the self confidence level by conducting the therapy in the systematic way. For intervention REBT self help form was used. The sole objective of the study was to see the effectiveness of the intervention. After conducting the pre-test and post-test, the scoring indicating the self confidence level of the sample was matched. According to the results, t value is -3.33 and p value is 0.004 which reflects that there is a significant difference in pre test and the post test conditions. The results indicate a certain amount of effectiveness in the post test condition.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence or confidence in one-self means having self-assurance in one's ability, power and judgement. It is a belief in one-self for achieving goals once being indulged. Self-confidence comes by having mastered in certain skills or acquiring knowledge[1].

William James in his book "Principles of Psychology" 1890 had mentioned that self confidence is a very vital virtue. He also stated that have faith in something which is in the line of your need and your need would be fulfilled. One needs to have faith in his abilities, this way he would step towards accomplishment.

There are varied numbers of definitions given by different researches as per their understanding, such as: According to Basavanna (1975) "Self Confidence refers to an

individual's perceived ability to act effectively in a situation to overcome obstacles and to get things go all right[3]." In the words of (Bandura, 1986), "Self-confidence is considered one of the most influential motivators and regulators of behavior in people's everyday lives". Good (1973) defines "Self-confidence as faith in one's own abilities[4]."

Researchers suggested that one's self-confidence is the central mediating construct of achievement strivings (Bandura, 1977; Ericsson et al., 1993; Harter, 1978; Kuhl, 1992; Nicholls, 1984).

The level of self-confidence varies from person to person or time to time. One could have high self-confidence as compared to others. One could be confident at one point of the time or may lose the same in other time or situation. Like some people may feel confident in certain aspects of life such as academics, athletes etc, but lack confidence in other aspects of life, such as interpersonal relationships, physical appearance etc. It is a very dynamic aspect of human-being. Everybody aspires to be confident in all spheres of life as it is a positive belief and boost person's will-power to do something. A lack of confidence isn't inevitably permanent but it can be if it isn't addressed[5].

Self-confidence has been much discussed topic since decades. People strive to boost their self-confidence in different ways, some inculcate certain skills in them, other strive for excellence in order to build up their self confidence.

No matter how much skilled a person is; lack of self-confidence won't take him anywhere. Skills, hard work and self-confidence go parallel to each other. For example, if a person is skilled but have no confidence, he might fail to present it to others.

Being confident is a belief one has in his potential, it is a faith that wherever he goes he'll put up all his efforts and potential in order to succeed.

Self-confidence acts like a shield person carries with himself whenever he is out to perform. It is the self-confidence of a person which helps him to surpass all challenges in his life. The person who is confident in himself would travel an extra mile to achieve his goals. It is a positive aspect in a person which motivates him to keep going and not to give up. Self confident person is very firm with his decision and stick to his opinions regardless of situations[6]. A self confident person is always a reliable, whom one can trust as he never prevaricates in any

Revised Manuscript Received on December 22, 2018.

Manish Kumar Verma, Associate Professor, Deptt. of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Punjab
Email: manish.23960@lpu.co.in

Pardeep Kumar, Asstt. Professor, Deptt. of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Punjab
Email: pardeep.19468@lpu.co.in

Yashmeen, Student, Deptt. of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Punjab

situation. People with self-confidence always strive for excellence and plunges into learning something new. They are more likely to admit their mistakes and learn from them[7].

Having self confidence doesn't mean that person would be able to do everything in life. It is not an unrealistic approach which is otherwise a virtue of a 'perfectionist'. Being confident means taking setbacks of one's life positively and looking forward to make improvements. A true self-confident person is the one who learn from his setback, which increases resilience, self-belief and determination. It is fundamentally a positive attitude with a realistic perception of our-selves and our abilities. It is characterised by attributes such as optimism, rationality, assertiveness, faith and emotional maturity.

II.WHY DO WE NEED SELF-CONFIDENCE?

Without confidence a person feels vulnerable, world seems dangerous place to them where they always feel insecure and fear of being judged. Having low self-confidence feel like cage where a person feels suffocated and trapped. They feel restricted in their own negative thoughts and perceptions. They feel disconnected with people around. They waste their energies in self-doubt, debilitating thoughts and problems, which activate their alarm system. But confidence helps them to deactivate those alarming systems. They are able to recognize their own potentials and tend to achieve more. They are free from anxiety and depression. This peacefulness allows them to handle situations positivity and effectively.

Confidence certainly inculcates the feeling of security and fulfilment. Confident people are very independent. They are always clear with their ideologies and are comfortable in expressing them. They do not get affected by criticism. They have a general sense of control in their lives. They are able to do what they desire, plan or expect; despite of any obstacle which they confront. And this faith goes parallel with realistic expectations so that, even if the people are not able to meet their goals, they will continue to be positive and admit their current limitations and work for improvisation. They take things very positively and focus more on solutions rather than problems.

III.FACTORS AFFECTING SELF-CONFIDENCE

Having low self-confidence could be due to many reasons, Some of the reasons are stated as below:

Past experiences: Past experiences including failures, disappointments, disapprovals, criticism often leads to low self confidence. Certain setbacks make person feel that he would never be able to do it, thus lowering his self-confidence.

Lack of knowledge: Lacking knowledge in certain areas often leads to low self-confidence, person feels discouraged and disappointed.

Feeling of inferiority: If a person would keep comparing himself with others, he'll end up feeling inferior which would lower his self-confidence

Fear of being judged: A person would never be able to showcase his skills and potentials if he'll fear of being criticised or ridiculed. He would always withdraw from such situations, thus lowers down his confidence level.

Dissatisfaction with Physical Appearance : If a person feels he is not good-looking and people would not accept him the way he is , he would lack confidence in all spheres of life.

IV.PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS

Psychological interventions are widely used treatments to treat maladaptive behaviour or mental illness. It includes variety of techniques to treat various mental disorders ranging from mild to severe. The therapeutic techniques vary according to the problem stated. The therapeutic treatment is traditionally provided by trained experts in this field, which includes psychiatrists, psychologists, social worker, counsellor etc. these interventions usually takes some particular number of sessions mainly dependent upon the type of therapy to be provided. One must be ethically aware about the norms and procedure while providing the therapeutic sessions.

To make the treatment more affective the psychological interventions are often paired with psychoactive medications. They are only provided with clear prescriptions. Medication is mostly provided in the case of severe mental disorders such as depression, schizophrenia, OCD etc. A therapist is accountable for the kind of therapy and counselling sessions he provides. He needs to keep the record of his therapeutic sessions

V.BASIC COMPONENTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

Rapport building: Building a healthy relationship with the client/group of clients is one of the foremost requirements of any therapeutic intervention. The therapists are trained experts to bring client into the confidence to such a level that client can openly discuss his problems and look forward to the solution. Gestures of therapist play a very crucial role in therapeutic sessions as it put great amount of impact of the client. His gestures reflect his interest in the client and his problems. It is very important for the therapist to choose his words wisely while interacting with the client. He must be very kind and understanding with his words.

Unconditional positive regard: the therapist must be respectful towards the client regardless of his statements of whosoever the client is. The therapist must accept the client the way he is. And give positive response to whatever he says, he must not judge the client on any grounds and should not take things personally or get biased while providing the guidance.

Empathy: Being empathetic to one's client is the core concern of therapeutic session as the therapy must put himself into client's shoes to understand what he is going through. The therapist must have a clear understanding of the client's problems. Then only he will understand what he is going through and would help client in a better way.

Self disclosure: The therapist might have to reveal some of his personal information to facilitate the counselling process in positive manner so that the client builds the trust with his therapist. Apart from disclosing one's personal details the therapist should also keep in mind the quality of

professionalism doesn't get affected as it may lead to violence of ethical norms and regulation to conduct the interventions.

Congruence: The therapist must sound very genuine while interacting with his client. The discussion must be clear and relevant with regard to the problem stated. The statements made must pacify the client. He must bring the client into the confidence to make him ready to reveal sensitive details to get the clear picture of the problem.

Immediacy: the therapist must focus on "here and now" situation while providing the therapy. He must bring present in the focus to bring out the necessary changes. The client is encouraged to focus on his current intuition or feeling to understand him better.

Likewise there are various conditions which are required to be met in order to conduct an effective intervention.

VI. REBT: RATIONAL EMOTIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

The Rational Emotive Behavioural therapy is first form of Cognitive Behavioral therapy introduced by American psychologist Albert Ellis in 1960. This is widely used therapeutic intervention for treating mental illness such as depression, anxiety etc. It is an active and directive in nature, which means the therapeutic expert direct the client or subject to think in a certain way to get through the process of therapeutic treatment. This therapy mainly works on person's cognitive distortions or illogical thought. Through this technique the therapist targets the irrational thought patterns of an individual, make him realize that they are actually illogical ones and try to change them and make person think more rationally.

The Rebt therapy works on Rebt ABCDE model which includes key components such as Activating event, Belief, Consequences, Dispute, Effective and Feelings.

Activating event: It is the problematic event to be stated by the client which triggered the problem.

Beliefs: The set of beliefs one forms which are mostly negative, after experiencing an activating event.

Consequences: The behaviour or projection a person likely to exhibit after forming a belief. Could be withdrawing from situation, giving up etc.

Dispute: It is very crucial step of this technique, where a person's belief is challenged and changed to get the positive results.

Effective: Then the effect of changing belief is recorded and checked.

Feelings: Then person reports the positive feelings generated after the whole process.

VII. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Goel & Aggarwal (2012) in their study "A comparative study of self confidence of single child and child with sibling" stated in their findings that, self-confidence is a function of maternal child-rearing behavior. Self-confidence of a child is dependent upon family members. The research was conducted on a sample of 80 students of IX and X, in which 40 students were single child and other 40 had siblings. And the findings showed that the child with siblings have reported higher level of confidence, as compared to the ones with single child. Bénabou & Tirole (2000) discussed how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

plays a vital role in boosting the self-confidence. They analyze the importance of interactions for interpersonal confidence maintaining strategies and how much they are effective. Also the issues of institutional design, how reward giving process takes place in order to boost self-confidence. Hernandez (2015) conducted a study on the topic "building confidence and self-esteem" talks about how physical appearance of an individual affects his mental health. When a person doesn't accept the way he looks, he develops problems like anxiety, depression, stress etc. The researcher has divided this study in 4 main components including self conflict, personality characteristics, intimate relationship & motivating habits, and how correcting all these components helps in building one's confidence and self-esteem. Gürlü, & Konca (2016) revealed that the self-confidence level of experimental group shows significant changes in comparison to control group. Acting drama helps students to raise their self-confidence level. Ucar, et al., (2013) "found revealed that there was no significant difference of confidence on gender or department basis but teachers lacked confidence in computer use frequencies. Flowers & Marston (1972) study the experiment was conducted to improve self confidence of the elementary school students within the classroom setting. This was done by conducting a game, basically to increase the response attempts of students to see the increment in their confidence level [8]. The structure of game and the rules were set to increase confidence accordingly. In this game the team of six students were divided, one runs the game, 2 scores the game, 2 are judge and one keep a check on time. There was significant increase in the level of self confidence of the students.

VIII. SCOPE OF STUDY

Lacking self-confidence feels like a burden which doesn't gets off. It often leads to fear, anxiety or depression. It's a state of helplessness. Person gets socially impaired. It leads to a feeling of discouragement and hopelessness. The people who are lacking confidence are not able to perform well in any area of life. They often withdraw from situation or a place. They never realize their potentials. So it is very important for a person to be self-confident. Being confident makes a person feel free to express himself. He feels optimistic and enthusiastic and un-tap all his hidden potentials and make improvement in himself. He's ready to handle the difficult situations and never give up. People are so much occupied with their everyday activities that they almost neglect their mental health. It is very important to take care of our mental well-being just like our physical well-being, as healthy mind is a healthy body. So psychological interventions would help an individual to inculcate self-confidence within himself, so that he could sustain faith in himself and his potentials.

IX. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Research are:

- To investigate the gender differences in self-confidence of university students.

- To examine the effect of psychological intervention to improve self-confidence of the university students.
-

X. HYPOTHESES

In consideration of review of related literature and trends that emerged, the following hypotheses are generated:

- There is no gender difference in self-confidence of university students.
- There is no effect of psychological interventions to improve self-confidence of university students[14].

A. Research Methodology

Research methodology is a set of procedure which is conducted to systematically solve the research problem[15]. It can be defined as the process which is used to collect data and information for the purpose of making certain conclusions and decisions. It also provides tools and techniques with which the research is dealt with. The methodology usually includes the sampling, tools and statistical analysis.

B. Research Title

Effect of psychological Interventions for improving Self-confidence of University Students.

C. Sample

The sample comprises of 25 participants among which 14 are female participants and 9 are male participants. The sample has been selected by convenient sampling technique.

D. Tools

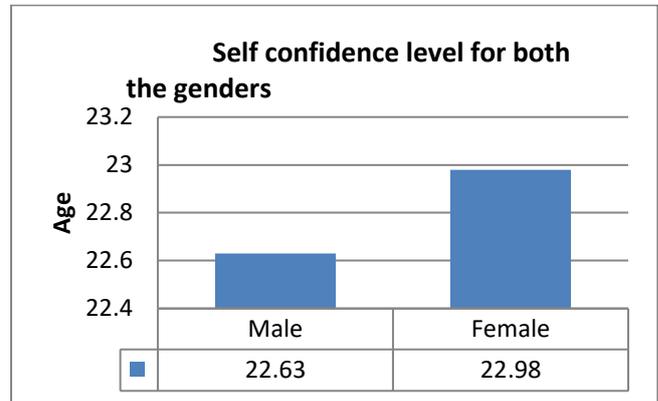
A self-developed questionnaire is used for this research. The self confidence questionnaire consists of 40 items each containing 7 options ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

E. Statistical Analysis

In context to the current study, paired t-test was used to compare the collected data. Descriptive statistics including Mean, SD and percentage would also be used to describe the results.

XI. RESULTS

Table 1.1 presents the demographic details of the sample (N = 20).In which 9 students were male and 14 were female students. The sample has been selected by the convenient sampling technique. The sample is divided into two categories as gender and age. The average age for the whole sample is 22.80 years and the average age of both male (22.63) and female (22.98) participants’ is closer to each other.



The presented sample includes the date from both the genders. The sample has been taken for particular age range that is 20-26 years. The study has been conducted on the basis of gender and age difference on their level of confidence. Table 1.2 represents the t value 1.88 at the critical value of 0.07 which means there is no significant difference in self confidence between the two genders. As the sample is small, the difference may vary in other researches with large sample sizes. As per the journal “Breaking it Down: Engineering Student STEM Confidence at the Intersection of Race/Ethnicity and Gender” Elizabeth Cate C. Samuelson and Julie A. Lorah (2014), the study claimed indifference in gender for the level of confidence[16]. But there could be the possibility of gender difference in other research samples

Table 2: Mean, t ratios and p values for gender differences in Self Confidence

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	p value
Self Confidence	Male	11	212.909	1.88	0.07
	Female	14	188.786		

Table no. 3 represents the mean, standard deviation, t value and p value for the dependent sample. As per the current study, before and after test is conducted in order to see the effectiveness of the intervention. A paired sample t-Test

correlation was conducted for the same group of individuals. As per the results, t value is -3.33 and p value is 0.004, which means there is a significant difference in the

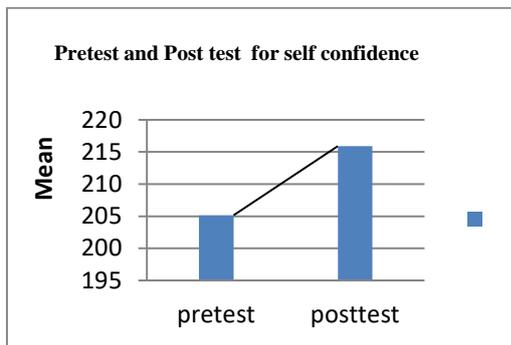
Gender	No. of participants	Average Age
Male	9	22.63
Female	14	22.98

level of confidence for the dependent sample when conducted pre-test and post-test. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected as the scores obtained lies beyond the chance region. Thus, the findings clearly indicated that interventions could be an effective for improving self confidence.

Table 3: Paired Samples Statistics to see the effect of intervention in pre and post test conditions.

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t value	pi value
Pair 1	Pre test	205.2	20	33.57831	3.33	.004**
	Post test	215.9	20	31.78199		

*Significant at .05 level, **Significant at .01 level



There have been some studies on the effectiveness of psychological interventions. In one research study, positive psychology intervention was used to see its effectiveness in order to improve the lifestyle of people titled as “Increasing Middle School Students’ Life Satisfaction: Efficacy of a Positive Psychology Group Intervention” by Shannon .m [25]. The research showed significant change in the lifestyle of the sample used[11]. In a nutshell, psychological interventions and therapeutic techniques plays a major role in treatment plans[12]. They are predetermined set of techniques which works on theories and facts based evidences. One must be expert and experienced enough to practice them to seek effective results.

XII. DISCUSSION

As per the results obtained, there is significant difference in pre test and post test sample which clearly indicates the effectiveness of the psychological intervention. According to which we can imply that psychological intervention such as Rebt, it plays an efficient role in identifying, targeting and changing the belief of a person which is responsible for low self confidence[13][17]. Certain things were kept into consideration while conducting this test, such as no extraneous variable must interfere with the findings. Proper and suitable environment was provided to the participants. All necessary norms and conditions were the prior concern such as confidentiality, accountability etc. The intervention employed multiple sessions, in which the sessions were conducted in systematic manner. The first session was interaction session in which the sample was indulged and made aware of the study which is to be

conducted[10]. Then interventional session and follow up was taken[2].

XIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study conducted was an experimental research to check for the effectiveness of psychological interventions. For making this tedious task done, one has to be very particular with all the norms and conditions before conducting this sort of research. And this must only be done under supervision[18]. This research has included activities where one has to interact and deal with different people and build a good rapport as they are very important part of this research. Any chance of biasness must be taken care of. For conducting this research one should be very well aware of all the key components related to the intervention and the proper set of techniques to employ it. One must be prepared for varying amount of responses from the sample under study. To increase the effectiveness of this intervention, one must keep a proper record of each individual before conducting it[9].

REFERENCES

1. Self-Confidence and Performance." National Research Council. 1994. *Learning, Remembering, Believing: Enhancing Human Performance*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: 10.17226/2303.
2. Aine, B., & Broadnax, S. (1994). Collective self-esteem and psychological well-being among White, Black, and Asian college students. *Personality and social psychology Bulletin*, 20(5), 503-513.
3. Basavanna, M. (1975). Manual for the Self confidence Inventory. Varanasi: Rupa Psychological Centre
4. Bénabou, R., & Tirole, J. (2002). Self-confidence and personal motivation. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 117(3), 871-915.
5. Cheng, H., & Furnham, A. (2002). Personality, peer relations, and self-confidence as predictors of happiness and loneliness. *Journal of Adolescence*, 25(3), 327-339.
6. Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1994). Motivation, self-confidence, and group cohesion in the foreign language classroom. *Language learning*, 44(3), 417-448.
7. Crocker, J., Luhtanen, R., Blaine, B., & Broadnax, S. (1994). Collective self-esteem and psychological well-being among White, Black, and Asian college students. *Personality and social psychology Bulletin*, 20(5), 503-513
8. Flowers, J.V., & Marston, A. R. (1972). Modification of Low Self-Confidence in Elementary School Children. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 66(1), 30-34.
9. Good, C. V. (1973). Dictionary of Education, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, p.7. Gürlür, İ., Konca, M. Y. (2016). Effects of Using Dramatic Texts on Self-Confidence Development: An Experimental Study. *Turkish Online Journal of English Language Teaching (TOJELT)*, 2(2), 103112.
10. Hardy, L., Jones, J. G., & Gould, D. (1996). *Understanding psychological preparation for sport: Theory and practice of elite performers*. John Wiley & Sons
11. Laird, T. F. N. (2005). college students’ experiences with diversity and their effects on academic self-confidence, social agency, and disposition toward critical thinking. *Research in Higher Education*, 46(4), 365-387.
12. Lenney, E. (1977). Women's self-confidence in achievement settings. *Psychological bulletin*, 84(1), 1.
13. Lester, F. K., Garofalo, J., & Kroll, D. L. (1989). Self-confidence, interest, beliefs, and metacognition: Key influences on problem-solving behavior. In *Affect and mathematical problem solving* (pp. 75-88). Springer, New York, NY.
14. Liping, C. (2002). A REVIEW OF RESEARCHES ON SELF-CONFIDENCE IN THE WEST [J]. *Journal of Developments In Psychology*, 4, 008.

15. Lirgg, C. D. (1991). Gender differences in self-confidence in physical activity: A meta-analysis of recent studies. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 13(3), 294-310.
16. Litzler, E., Samuelson, C., & Lorah, J. (2014). Breaking it Down: Engineering Student STEM
17. Confidence at the Intersection of Race/Ethnicity and Gender. *Research in Higher Education*, 55(8), 810-832. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24571817>
18. Locander, W. B., & Hermann, P. W. (1979). The effect of self-confidence and anxiety on information seeking in consumer risk reduction. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 268-274.
19. Martin, J. J., & Gill, D. L. (1991). The relationships among competitive orientation, sport-confidence, self-efficacy, anxiety, and performance. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 13(2), 149-159.
20. Owens, T. J. (1993). Accentuate the positive-and the negative: Rethinking the use of self-esteem, self-deprecation, and self-confidence. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 288-299.
21. Pajares F., & Johnson, M. J. (1994). Confidence and competence in writing: The role of self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and apprehension. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 313-331.
22. Shrauger, J. S., & Schohn, M. (1995). Self-confidence in college students: Conceptualization, measurement, and behavioral implications. *Assessment*, 2(3), 255-278.
23. Stankov, L., & Crawford, J. D. (1997). Self-confidence and performance on tests of cognitive abilities. *Intelligence*, 25(2), 93-109.
24. Stankov, L., & Crawford, J. D. (1997). Self-confidence and performance on tests of cognitive abilities. *Intelligence*, 25(2), 93-109.
25. Suldo, S. M., Savage, J. A., & Mercer, S. H. (2014). Increasing middle school students' life satisfaction: Efficacy of a positive psychology group intervention. *Journal of happiness studies*, 15(1), 19-42.
26. Woodman, T., & Hardy, L. (2003). The relative impact of cognitive anxiety and self-confidence upon sport performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of sports sciences*, 21(6), 443-457.