

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF EFFICACY AND DECISION MAKING ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: *The aim of the study is to analyze the relationship between self efficacy and decision making skills and Academic Performance of secondary education students and to find out whether there is a significant difference in adolescent's decision-making behaviors, from the aspect of some socio-demographic variables (gender, age, school type and education level of the parents). For this purpose, 50 subjects (male and female) from secondary education students were given The Scale of Decision Making Behaviors (Radford, Mann,) and also Bundara Self Efficacy scale. This research aims at looking at the combined impact of Decision making and Self Efficacy on scholastic academic achievement of students in the context of urban India. The findings could act as an eye opener for school authorities who generally do not accord much importance to these factors.*

Key words: *Self –Efficacy, Decision Making, and Academic Performance*

I. INTRODUCTION

ADOLESCENCE is a transition period of development and adolescents are considered as the productive members of a society. Now a days the life of adolescents are becoming miserable due to many reasons including inappropriate home and school environment. They are becoming individuals who are less motivated, less confident. One of the reasons that can be identified in adolescents for not being confident and motivated is inability to take decision in most of the important matters of their life. The importance of decision making can be seen in all phases of an individual's life, from minimal decisions on what to wear and eat, to higher level decisions regarding daily planning, and complex decisions centering on personal relationships, drug use, and career choice. Decision making is a major psychological function that allows for an examination of its process and discovery of its link between thought and action (Radford et al, 1986). Adolescence is a period when the intellectual, physical and all the capabilities are very high, but how well the person will use these abilities depends upon how well he understand himself. Self-efficacy is, how well a person will act upon at almost any challenge. A person's self- efficacy is a strong determinant of their effort, determination, strategizing as well as their following performance (Heslin&Klehe, 2006). Thus low self esteem and inability to take decisions leads to poor Academic Performance. Imparting life skill training through inculcating life skill education will help our adolescents to overcome such difficulties in life. Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life

[WHO, 1961]. Life skill education aims to provide students with strategies to make healthy choices that contribute to a meaningful life. Life skills are the abilities that help to promote mental well being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. It helps the young people to take positive actions to protect themselves and to promote health and meaningful social relationship. Life skill facilitates a complete and integrated development of individuals to function effectively as social beings. Life skills can be applied in the contexts of social and health events. With life skills, one is able to explore alternatives, weigh pros and cons and make rational decisions in solving each problem or issue as it arises. It also entails being able to establish productive interpersonal relationships with others. Developing life skills helps adolescents in translating knowledge, attitude and values into healthy behavior that makes their life fruitful. Life skills also help in empowering girls by imparting healthy behavior and helping them to avoid risks and to make appropriate decisions at the right time.

II. DECISION MAKING

A considerable time and energy of an adolescent is spend on critical thinking, discussion of opinions, problem solving, and decision-making skills. In order to be functional, trained citizens of the 21st century must be able to find logical solutions to the problems they face and they also must be able to give effective decisions. The skills of decision-making and problem solving are not only the results of development and socialization, but also inevitable processes that go on throughout the life of an individual. Modern education systems aim to develop the competency to approach problems with responsibility and make the right decision about the solutions. A school, which is an institution of socialization, is the best place where the new generations can be taught the skills of problem solving and effective decision-making. Researchers in this field point out that it would be too late to wait for the adulthood in order to give critical decisions about the type of education, job selection and social issues. Instead, adolescence would be the best time to teach the habits of giving decisions freely and in a responsible manner (Mann, Harmoni and Power, 1988). McCandless and Coop (1979) claim that it is difficult to learn how to give effective decisions and that it takes a long time. However, these are the most important skills expected from adolescents. Adolescence, the turning point at the transitional stage of life prior to full maturity, results from the rapid changes in the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development. According to Schvaneveldt and

Adams (1983), this is a period of development, but it is a period with limited experiences in terms of cognitive processes of decision-making and problem solving skills. During childhood, almost all decisions are given for them by adults. In the second decade of life, it is believed that they are either not ready or too inexperienced to carry such responsibility. It is believed that adolescents need to be protected and that they need to be kept under control in cognitive processes such as decision-making. They are especially not encouraged to give important decisions about their lives. In fact, they are not given the opportunity to do so. In cases where they are given the responsibility to make decisions, they are provided with too little support and help. Therefore, they mostly develop the habit of not being able to give effective decisions, which they carry with them to adulthood. As a result, many adolescents may take faulty decisions, which will affect their future. They may drop out of school to earn their life as soon as possible, but with a rather limited point of view of academic and occupational orientations. Mann (1989) points out that there are considerable changes in the development of decision making skills in adolescence. The aim in making decisions is to evaluate the solutions that could be realized and to attain positive results by implementing them. According to Charles and Morris (2000), making decision is a special type of solving problems the possible solutions of which are already known. Therefore, the aim is not that best fits without goals basing the pre-determined criteria. The more the criteria and choices are the harder it becomes to decide. In general, making decisions involves identifying the goals for the purpose of meeting the need gathering the necessary information related to the goals and forming alternatives by considering and evaluation such information, and selecting the one that best fits with our goals. Janis and Mann (1977) state that there is a set of processes that follow each other in decision-making and that effective decisions are the results of such processes.

These are as follow:

- Identifying problems,
- Generating alternatives,
- Considering the possible consequences of every decision,
- Gathering information so as to be able to evaluate the alternatives better,
- Evaluating the data that relate to the alternatives,
- Identifying the suitable alternative
- Implementing the decision given and evaluating the consequences by making the necessary plans.

When an individual considers the above mentioned processes in the process of making a decision, Janis and Mann (1977) state that this behavior is a vigilant information processing. They point out that the stress experienced in decision-making process directly influences the decision-making behavior and that there is an increase in stress when the possible risks are considered after the decision given. This, in turn, causes an individual to give less vigilant or inappropriate decisions. When the risks are not conceived or neglected, the

alternatives might not be evaluated sufficiently and this will cause an individual to give inappropriate decisions.

III. SELF – EFFICACY

Self-efficacy has been defined as the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy has been shown to be influential in the actions and success of individuals in many different areas, including overcoming fears, success in the workplace, hard life transitions, and academic performance (Bandura, 1986; Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001). According to Bandura (1977) when people believe that they have the ability to act and that their actions will produce the desired outcomes, they are more motivated to act, and to act in ways that are more likely to produce the desired outcome, than when they do not believe that their efforts will be successful. In the context of academic performance, self-efficacy reflects to what extent students are assured about performing particular tasks. Piper and Siegal (2000) reported, "Self-efficacy influences: what activities students select, how much effort they put onward, how continual they are in the face of difficulties, and the difficulty of the goals they set". Self efficacy helps the students to believe in themselves and use effective strategies to cope with stressful situations in academic settings such as exams, presentations etc. Students who are confident in their academic capabilities having high self efficacy monitor their work and time more effectively, are more efficient problem solvers, and show more persistence than do equally able peers with low self-efficacy. They also work harder, evaluate their progress more frequently, and engage in more self-regulatory strategies that promote success in school (Pajares&Schunk, 2005). Self-efficacy has received ample attention in educational research, where it has been shown to predict the achievement of students across academic areas and levels (Pajares&Urdan, 2006). It has also been shown to predict students' college major and career choices (Brown & Lent, 2006), and it is associated with key motivation constructs such as causal attributions, self-concept, optimism, achievement goal orientation, academic help-seeking, anxiety, and values. Chemers et al have also found that academic self efficacy is a significant predictor of academic performance and expectations. Additionally researchers have found that as students academic expectations increase, they are more likely to show higher academic performance. In the Indian school context we find labelling of students as, "poor" " weak" "dumb " rampant .These are all factors which contribute to low self-efficacy and indirectly influence students achievement hence this remains an important variable of study.

IV. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Students are potential nation builders who aspire to become engineers, doctors, managers, and scientists and materialize a nation's dreams. Hence improving academic performance must be an important goal for teachers and parents alike. At the same time mere academic performance is not sufficient

because all round development is crucial for lifelong success. In fact academic performance is in itself going to be influenced by a combination of cognitive and non cognitive factors. Prominent among these are factors like emotional intelligence, spiritual quotient and self efficacy which need to be balanced by the students be high achievers (Womble, 2003; Sansgiry, Bhosle, & Sail, 2006;). Many studies have reviewed these factors individually but none have evaluated them collectively.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Objective:

- To study the impact of Decision Making on Academic Performance.
- To study the impact of Self Efficacy on Academic Performance.

Target Respondent:

- Secondary school students of Mumbai Metropolitan city.

Sample Size:

- 50 students of Secondary school.

Data Analysis and Findings:

- Primary Data:
 - The data was collected by questionnaire.
- Secondary Data:
 - Online library (Proquest) and Internet.

VI. SUGGESTION

Adolescence, a vital stage of growth and development, marks the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is characterized by rapid physiological changes and psychosocial maturation. Adolescence is also the stage when young people extend their relationships beyond parents and family and are intensely influenced by their peers and the outside world in general. As adolescents mature cognitively, their mental process becomes more analytical. They are now capable of abstract thinking, better articulation and of developing an independent ideology. These are truly the years of creativity, idealism, buoyancy and a spirit of adventure. But these are also the years of experimentation and risk-taking, of giving in to negative peer pressure, of taking uninformed decisions on crucial issues, especially relating to their bodies and their sexuality. Adolescence is thus a turning point in one's life, a period of increased potential but also one of greater vulnerability. We find that behaviour does not always follow the mind. This is when incidents of "I know but I can't help it" occur. What we need is the ability to act responsibly. Decision making life skill enable us to translate knowledge, attitudes and values into actual abilities. Thus there is a need for Life Skills Education. Life skills training is an efficacious tool for empowering the youth to act responsibly, take initiative and take control. It is based on the assumption that when young people are able to rise above emotional impasses arising from daily conflicts, entangled relationships and peer pressure, they are less likely to resort to anti social or high risk behaviours. Different methods that can be used to enhance Life Skills in students

are

- Class discussions
- Brainstorming
- Demonstration and guided practice
- Role plays
- Audio and visual activities, e.g. arts, music, theatre, dance
- Small groups
- Educational games and simulations
- Case studies
- Story telling
- Debates
- Decision mapping or problem trees

VII. CONCLUSION

This research aims at looking at the combined impact of Decision making and Self Efficacy on scholastic academic achievement of students in the context of urban India. The findings could act as an eye opener for school authorities who generally do not accord much importance to these factors.

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