

A study on Assertiveness among rural Adolescents

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Received: July 04, 2018

Accepted: August 25, 2018

ABSTRACT

Today's adolescents face a lot of psychological problems ranging from depression, feelings of guilt, loss of interest in activities, sleep problems and have an escalating sense of confusion about things as well as distortions in thinking. For adolescents to fight through all these they need to cultivate assertive behavior. Smith (1975) explains that a person is assertive when he can stand up for his rights in such a way that rights of others are not violated. The purpose of this study is to investigate the assertiveness level of adolescents with reference to gender. A total sample of 60 students in the age group of 12-18 years selected for the study. They were equally distributed based on gender i.e. 30 boys and 30 girls selected from higher secondary school Dhana Sagar (M.P). The tool used by the researcher for this study is Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS, 1978). The findings of the study revealed that there is significant difference in the score of assertiveness among rural students. In addition to that, results showed no significant difference in their assertiveness with respect to gender.

Keywords: Adolescents; Assertiveness; High School Students

Introduction

Assertiveness is a skill that involves speaking and acting with power while maintaining respect for others. Instead of passively giving up power or aggressively demanding it (Wesley, Mark & Mattaini, 2008). It is the ability to express one's feelings and assert one's rights while respecting the feelings and rights of others. Assertive communication is appropriately direct, open and honest, clarifies one's needs to the other person. Assertiveness comes naturally to some, but it is a skill that can be learned. People who have mastered the skill of assertiveness are able to greatly reduce the level of interpersonal conflict in their lives, thereby reducing a major source of stress (Elizabeth Scott, 2006).

Assertiveness is generally formed of open, direct and honest communicating within a suitable frame (Michael, E., A. Robert, 2008). Behaviorally, assertiveness is exercised when an individual is capable of freely expressing his or her emotions, is able to defend his or her purposes or goals in general and specific situations, and can establish rewarding and fulfilling interpersonal relationships (Colter & Guerra, 1976; Herzberger, Chan, & Katz, 1984). Assertiveness as a social skill is a construct which has a number of different dimensions, including the ability to express oneself without anxiety or aggression in different situations (M. Bouvard, et al., 1999). It is defined as "it enable a person to act in his or her own best interest, to stand up for herself or himself without undue anxiety, to express honest feelings comfortably and to exercise personal rights without denying the rights of others" (Alberti & Simmons, 2002). Alberti and Emmons (1990) stated that "assertive behavior promotes equality in human relationships, enabling us to act in our own best interests, to stand up for ourselves without undue anxiety, to express honest feelings comfortably, to exercise personal rights without denying the rights of others". Assertiveness was considered to be a mean of self-development and achievement of maximum personal fulfillment and assertive skills in various communication fields in conjunction with the increased demands on social competence of the individual (Peneva and Mavrodiev, 2013). Assertion is the direct and appropriate communication of a person's needs, wants and opinions without punishing, threatening, putting down others, and doing this without fear during the process (Galassi and Galassi, 1978).

Statement of the Problem:

Assertiveness is a positive trait that in benefit of every person. It leads a person towards a healthy personality without any complexes and regrets. A non-assertive person is never satisfied with his life that creates his life difficult for himself as well as for others. There are many situations at collage where the lack or excess of this skill generates many difficulties for the students. Special attention was paid to the formation of assertive skills in upper grade and college students, as it was believed that this age was conducive to build a vision, perseverance, self-reliance and initiative, qualities that were objective

prerequisite for development of assertiveness (Khokhlova, 2008, Mutafova, 2007). Students are the pillars of nation and they are contributing much for social development, so each student should have the tendency of assertive behaviour to achieve more in their education and future life with more courage and self-confident. The studies conducted on assertiveness with reference to their gender shows contradictory results like (Uzaina & Parveen, 2015, & Eskin, 2003) reported no significant difference among gender. While other findings reported that males were more assertive (Prakash & Devi, 2015). So for the reason, the study was conducted by the researcher to find out the assertiveness level among adolescents with respect to their gender.

Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the level of assertiveness among rural students.
2. To find out the difference in assertiveness score based on gender among rural students.

Hypothesis

H₀₁- There is no significant difference in assertiveness score of rural students.

H₀₂-There is no significant gender difference in assertiveness among rural students.

Method and Procedure

The research design for present study is qualitative in nature. Convenience sampling technique was used for data collection.

Variables:

1. Assertiveness (D.V)
2. Gender (IV)

Sample:

The Sample of the present study consists of 60 students (30 boys and 30 girls) were taken from Boys and girls Higher secondary school Dhana Sagar belong to the age range of 12-18 years.

Tool:

To obtain data, Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS, 1978) has been used. It is a standardized tool consists of 30 statements and sorted from -3 to +3. The tool was administered individually to each student and the responses were taken on a 6-point scale. On the basis of the scores the researcher categories responses on the basis of their level of assertiveness.

Statistical Techniques Used:

In the present study the Researcher used the following statistical techniques:

1. Descriptive Analysis (Mean, Standard Deviation)
2. Differential Analysis (t-value, F-ratio)

Results and Interpretation of the Data: The collected data were subjected to statistical analysis by using SPSS package.

Group difference on Assertiveness with respect to their Category

Variable	Background Variables	Sources of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Level of significance
Assertiveness	Category	Between Group	3	7200.540	2400.180	95.390	S
		Within Group	56	1409.060	25.162		
		Total	59	8609.600			

From the above result it shows that there is significant difference in assertiveness score among rural students. In this way our hypothesis is rejected.

Showing the 't' - value on Assertiveness with respect to Gender**Table - 2**

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Female	11	25.1818	3.70994		
Male	17	25.7059	5.44018	.303	NS

From the results presented in table -2, the findings revealed no significant difference in assertiveness with respect to their gender. Hence, in this way our second hypothesis is confirmed.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the assertiveness level among rural students with reference to gender. The findings of the study revealed a significant difference in assertiveness score among students. In this way our first hypothesis is rejected. In addition to that the findings also revealed that there is no significant difference in assertiveness with reference to their gender. In this way our second hypothesis is confirmed. The possible reasons behind such results depicted that nowadays our society gives space also to women to show their assertiveness. It may also be due to equal education opportunities for both boys and girls. The findings of this study are supported by previous researchers (Qadir, A. et al., 2013; Parray & Kumar, 2016) who reported that there is no significant gender difference in assertiveness. Based on the above findings it is clearly indicated that there is lack of assertiveness among students.

So, it clearly indicates that there is a greater need of assertiveness training for adolescents, so that they can able to express their feelings, opinions in the right way because assertiveness is much important for the students to achieve more in their education as well as in personality development.

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