

Research Paper

The Role of Strength Self-Efficacy on Psychological Well-Being of Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the relationship between strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being of young adults aged between 18 to 25 years which mostly constituted undergraduate and graduate students from areas of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. There have been number of studies who have explored the relationship of general self-efficacy and psychological well-being. However, in this study instead of general self-efficacy, strength self-efficacy is measured which is focused more on the belief or confidence one has on using his/her strengths. The strength self-efficacy scale (SSES) developed by Tsai and colleagues was used and psychological well-being was measured using the psychological well-being scale given by Dr. Devendra Sisodia and Ms. Pooja Choudhary. The findings of the study revealed that strength self-efficacy has its positive and significant relation with psychological Well-being among young adults which suggests that strong strength self-efficacy enhance the psychological well-being. Consequently, high level of strength self-efficacy contributes to high levels of efficiency, satisfaction, and mental health dimensions of well-being. Further finding of the study shows that males scored significantly higher than females in strength self-efficacy as well as on psychological well-being.

Keywords: *Strengths, Self-Efficacy, Psychological Well-Being*

The term 'self-efficacy' was first introduced by Albert Bandura in 1977 with the publication of "Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioural Change." Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in his or her ability to carry out the behaviors required to achieve specified performance goals. (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997).

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Self-efficacy beliefs have been found to be linked to anxiety, addiction, social skills (Davis & Yates, 1982), depression (Davis & Yates, 1982), and assertiveness (Lee, 1983, 1984); to stress in a variety of contexts (Jerusalem & Mittag, 1995); to smoking behaviour (Garcia, Schmitz, & Doerfler, 1990); to pain control (Manning & Wright, 1983); to health (O'Leary, 1985); and to athletic performance (Barling & Abel, 1983; Lee, 1982). Self-efficacy beliefs are gaining popularity in academic research, particularly in investigations of academic motivation and self-regulation (Pintrich & Schunk, 1995). Caroli & Sagone (2014) studied Generalized Self-efficacy and Well-being in Adolescents with High vs. Low Scholastic Self-efficacy which revealed that Generalized Self-efficacy and Psychological Well-being have a favorable association, especially when it comes to mastery, personal progress, and self-acceptance.

These studies have suggested that self-efficacy can play an important role in task performance and vocational outcomes. Self-efficacy, in other words, has the ability to help people achieve higher levels of contentment at school and at work. Cakar (2012) examined the relationship between self-efficacy and life satisfaction of young adults which revealed that raising self-efficacy of young adults can help to achieve their developmental tasks, this is vital for their healthy development and life satisfaction.

Given the importance of self-efficacy theories and its potential to improve knowledge and use of strengths, assessing people's belief in their ability to apply their strengths in their everyday lives is a logical next step in the field of strengths-based psychology.

Strength is defined as the ability to consistently deliver near-perfect results in a specific activity (Hodges & Clifton, 2004) & also to conduct in a way that allows for optimal performance while pursuing goals and outcomes that are desired (Harrington & Linley, 2006). A strengths-based approach, or the emphasis on identifying and utilizing strengths within each individual to maximize one's capabilities and performances, has increasingly gained attention by various professionals. A study for the development and Validation of the Strengths Self-Efficacy Scale (SSES) was conducted by Tsai et al. in 2013, suggested that Strength self-efficacy moderately related to self-esteem and life satisfaction.

According to Bandura (1997), “perceived self-efficacy is concerned with people's beliefs in their capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to exercise control over task demands” (p. 316). After growing awareness of personal strengths, having strong self-efficacy views in case of implementing those talents is a critical next stage.

Strong self-efficacy beliefs help people achieve more and feel better in many ways. People who have a sense of individual competence in any domain, approach challenging tasks in that domain as challenges to be mastered rather than dangers to be avoided, and have more intrinsic interest in other activities, set challenging goals and keep committed to them, increase their efforts in the face of failure, recover their confidence more quickly after failures or hardships, and attribute failure to inadequate effort or insufficient knowledge and skills. High level of self-efficacy contributes to emotions of calm when dealing with tough tasks and activities. People with poor self-efficacy, on the other hand, may assume that things are more difficult than they are, which can lead to tension, sadness, and a limited view of how to address a problem. Self-efficacy beliefs are powerful determinants and indicators of the level of achievement that individuals eventually achieve as a result of these factors, and hence can lead to improved psychological wellbeing.

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Psychological wellbeing is a subjective feeling of containment happiness satisfaction with life experiences one's role in the world of work, sense of achievement, utility, belongingness, and no distress, sections or worry etc. Psychological well-being is kind of a flexible concept that refers to how people feel during their daily activities. These feelings can range from negative mental states or psychological strains like anxiety, expression, frustration, exhaustion, unhappiness, and dissatisfaction to a state known as positive mental well-being (Jahoda, 1958).

Thus, the aim of this paper is to assess the strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being of young adults and to find out whether and how strength self-efficacy is correlated with psychological well-being.

Hypothesis

On the basis of the above objectives the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- There would be no significant correlation of strength self-efficacy with psychological well-being of young adults.
- There would no significant correlation between strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being of male population
- There would no significant correlation between strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being of female population.

METHODS

Participants:

The sample was composed of 90 (56 females & 34 males) young adults aged between 18 to 25 (school, UG & PG students) from the state of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. Snowball sampling method was used for obtaining the sample.

Measurements:

Following tools were used in this study

- **Sociodemographic information**-The sociodemographic questionnaire included age, gender, city, and educational qualification.
- **Strength Self-efficacy Scale (SSES)**- The Strength Self-efficacy Scale (SSES) was developed by Tsai, Chaichanasakul, Zhao, Flores & Lopez, (2014) to assess individuals' perceived abilities to build their personal strengths and apply them in their daily life. This scale consists of 11 items on 10-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (corresponding to *not at all confident*) to 10 (corresponding to *extremely confident*). The internal consistency of SSES was found to be .96 and the test-retest reliability analysis on a sample of 36 adults indicated that SSES scores were stable over a 3-week period. Total maximum score obtained can be 110 and minimum can be 0.
- **Psychological well-being Scale**- Psychological well-being was assessed by using the Psychological Well-being Scale (PWBS) developed by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Ms. Pooja Choudhary in 2012. The scale consists of 50 items and is divided into five dimensions: satisfaction, efficiency, sociability, mental health and interpersonal relations. Each dimension has 10 items. It has a 5-point Likert scale; 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for undecided, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. Responses are totalled for each of the five dimensions and a total PWB score is calculated by adding all items of five dimensions. The reliability of the scale as

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determined by test-retest method was .87 and internal consistency was found to be .90. The validity coefficient obtained was .94.

Procedure:

The data was collected through an online mode. The research purpose was explained properly, consent was taken and confidentiality was ensured. It took 10 to 15 minutes for the participants to complete the questionnaires.

Data analysis was performed in SPSS 16.0. Descriptive statistical parameters such as Mean and Standard Deviation are used. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to analyze the relation between strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being.

RESULTS

After data collection, raw scores were calculated for each scale and was organized properly for comparative purposes using appropriate graphs and then analysed using Pearson correlation coefficient.

Table 1: Correlation between Strength Self-efficacy and Psychological Well-Being dimensions (N=90)

Correlations									
Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.SSE	87.23	13.80							
2.Satisfaction	36.00	5.78	0.390**						
3.Efficiency	39.33	5.38	0.518**	0.666**					
4.Sociability	36.92	4.94	0.265*	0.375**	0.281**				
5.Mental health	32.88	6.92	0.314**	0.565**	0.492**	0.324**			
6.Interpersonal relationship	38.90	4.66	0.248*	0.341**	0.489**	0.370**	0.389**		
7.Overall PW	184.03	20.57	0.471**	0.813**	0.793**	0.612**	0.790**	0.670**	

**P < 0.01(2-tailed); *p < 0.05; N= 90; SSE- Strength self-efficacy, PW- Psychological well-being

Table 1 shows descriptive data and results of Pearson's bivariate correlation between strength self-efficacy and different dimensions of psychological well-being. Results shows that there is a significant correlation between strength self-efficacy and overall psychological well-being. The Pearson coefficient correlation found is $r = .471$ which indicates moderate positive correlation at the level of $p < .01$. The dimension of satisfaction ($r = 0.390$, $p < .01$), and mental health ($r = 0.314$, $p < .01$) have a positive moderate correlation with strength self-efficacy. The dimension of efficiency ($r = 0.518$, $p < .01$) was found to have a strong positive correlation with strength self-efficacy. And the dimension of sociability ($r = 0.265$, $p < .05$) and interpersonal relationships ($r = 0.248$, $p < .05$) are weakly correlated with strength self-efficacy.

Table 2: Mean, Standard deviation and Correlation between Strength Self-efficacy and Psychological Well-Being dimensions of male participants

Correlation				
V	Variable	M	SD	1
	1.SSE	91.41	12.43	
	2.PW	191.71	19.21	.484**

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed). N= 34

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Table-2 shows mean, standard deviation and correlation of strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being of male participants. The result shows strong positive correlation of strength self-efficacy with psychological well-being of male students ($r = .484, p < .01$).

Table 3: Mean, Standard deviation and Correlation between Strength Self-efficacy and Psychological Well-Being dimensions of female participants

Variable	M	SD	1
1.SSE	84.70	14.06	
2.PW	178.16	19.24	.391**

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed). $N = 56$

Table-3 shows mean, standard deviation and correlation of and female participants on strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being. The result shows positive correlation of strength self-efficacy with psychological well-being of female students ($r = .391, p < .01$).

DISCUSSION

On the basis of the results of this study it can be concluded that strength self-efficacy has a significant correlation with psychological well-being of young adults ($r = .471, p < .01$) (see table 1) which indicates that the higher level of strength self-efficacy can contribute to high level of psychological well-being.

There have been number of studies conducted before which have indicated a positive relation between general self-efficacy and psychological well-being. Jafar & Torai (2012) studied on the relationship between optimism, social anxiety, self-efficacy with psychological well-being in students found positive significant relation between self-efficacy and psychological well-being. A significant influence of Self-efficacy on Psychological Well-being among Male and female undergraduate Graduate students was found in the study by Shamsul Siddiqui (2015). Self-efficacy is domain-specifically related to mental well-being (Andretta & McKay, 2020). People with low self-efficacy also respond to difficulties with increased anxiety, which usually disrupts performance, thereby further lowering self-efficacy, and so on. Stressful events often result in physical symptoms (e.g., headache) as well as psychological symptoms, and self-efficacy beliefs influence the relationship between stressful events and physical symptoms (Arnstein, Caudill, Mandle, Norris, & Beasley, 1999; Marlowe, 1998). Students who reported high levels of psychological well-being and life satisfaction were shown to be more adaptable, resilient, and efficient problem solvers, as well as more committed to their academic goals and pursuing achievement rather than avoiding failure (Pajares & Schunk, 2001).

High self-efficacy helps create feelings of serenity in approaching difficult tasks and activities. Conversely, people with low self-efficacy may believe that things are tougher than they really are, a belief that fosters stress, depression, and a narrow vision of how best to solve a problem. As a result of these influences, self-efficacy beliefs are strong determinants and predictors of the level of accomplishment that individuals finally attain and thus can lead to overall psychological wellbeing

The results revealed that the efficiency dimension of psychological well-being is strongly correlated to strength self-efficacy and the dimensions of satisfaction and mental health is moderately correlated to strength self-efficacy and the dimensions of sociability and interpersonal relationship is weakly correlated with strength self-efficacy. Machmud (2018)

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studied the influence of self-efficacy on satisfaction and work-related performance and found that there is a significant positive affect of self-efficacy on satisfaction. The study for the development and Validation of the Strengths Self-Efficacy Scale (SSES) by Tsai et al. (2013) also suggested that SSES scores were moderately related to self-esteem and life satisfaction which are strongly related to some aspects of psychological well-being.

The second finding of the study shows that in strength self-efficacy males scored significantly higher ($M= 91.41$) than females ($M= 84.70$) as well as on psychological well-being also males scored higher ($M= 193.71$) than females ($M= 178.16$). the correlation between strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being among male participants found is $r= .484$, $p < .01$ (see table 2) which is higher than the correlation between strength self-efficacy and psychological well-being among female participants ($r= .391$, $p < .01$) (see table 3).

The gender results are not surprising and are in line with previous research. Andretta et al. (2020) in their study concluded that females experience high level of stress that males. Patalay & Fitzsimons (2018) also concluded that girls experience a lower sense of well-being and more mental disease symptoms.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study it can be concluded that strength self-efficacy has its positive and significant relation with psychological Well-being among young adults which suggests that strong strength self-efficacy enhance the psychological well-being. Consequently, high level of strength self-efficacy contributes to high levels of efficiency, satisfaction, and mental health. Thus, Strength self-efficacy, which is believing in one's strength can improve overall psychological well-being.

Working towards developing and enhancing skills and strengths through participating in activities that help develop character strengths, vicarious learning, imagining, verbal persuasion and managing physiological and emotional states can help develop strong strength self-efficacy thus leading to improved well-being.

The current study's findings must be interpreted in light of some limitations. Firstly, the data was collected online using self-report measures which could be subject to temporal distortions or biased retrospective recall. Secondly, more longitudinal research is needed and the use of other data analysis tools is required to be able to be even more certain about the causal relevance of these variables. Finally, a limited number of people residing in the areas of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh were included in the sample with a huge difference in the ratios of male and female.

However, this study called for a better understanding of self-efficacy beliefs with a focus on application of individual's strengths on daily life and its relation to the psychological well-being of young adults also taking into account the gender difference. Further researches can explore and understand the underlying mechanisms of the relationship of these two variables through the use of more complex and effective statistical tools.

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Conflict of Interest

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