

SELF-CONFIDENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HARDINESS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BELONGING TO NUCLEAR AND JOINT FAMILIES

DR. ANJALI PURI *

ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to compare Self confidence and Psychological Hardiness of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families. The present study was conducted on 200 students out of which 100 students were selected from nuclear families and 100 from joint families. Self confidence inventory and Psychological hardiness questionnaire were used. t- ratio was calculated to infer the differences between high- School students belonging to nuclear and joint families. The conclusions revealed that there is no significant difference in Self- Confidence and Psychological Hardiness of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families.

A family plays an important role in framing the personality of a child. It is probably the most effective social support unit providing a secure and safe atmosphere for the child. Over the years, the structure of the family has been undergoing a change in India. Westernization, Modernization, Urbanization and changing economic demands have led to the shift from joint to nuclear families. This eventual change in family structures from joint to nuclear has an impact on the psychological build up and confidence of the children.

According to **Sihera (2007)** Self-confidence is essentially an attitude which allows us to have a positive and realistic perception of ourselves and our abilities. It is characterized by personal attributes such as assertiveness, optimism, enthusiasm, affection, pride, independence, trust, the ability to handle criticism and emotional maturity. Self-confidence is both a trait (i.e.

*Assistant Professor, Govt. College of Education, Sector-20D, Chandigarh

some individuals are naturally more or less self-confident than others) and a state (i.e. in certain specific situations some will have more or less self-confidence). Self-confidence can be defined as the strong relationship between a person's thoughts, feelings and behavior which if motivated correctly can help an individual excel with confidence in anything they try to do. Psychological Hardiness refers to an individual's capacity to withstand stresses and not manifest psychological dysfunction such as mental illness or persistent negative mood. "Hardiness isn't just about surviving trauma", says **Maddi (1990)**, "It's about having a good life." He defined three components of Hardiness as commitment, control and challenge. **Gentry and Kobasa (1984)** suggested that persons low in hardiness may prefer to use regressive coping strategies such as cognitive and behavioral withdrawal and denial, which neither transform the situation nor solve the problem.

According to **Kobasa (1979)**, the effects of hardiness on mental health are mediated by appraisal and coping mechanisms. The concept of psychological hardiness is not to be misunderstood. Let us remember that it is not considered as callousness, insensitivity or lack of concern for others. It refers to being tolerant and accepting for others, effectively handling stress, good in management of moods, even tempered, self sufficient, self reliant and feeling good about oneself.

Malan (1984) explored the role of parents and the nuclear family in optimal development of gifted pre-school children. The family helps the child to accomplish basic developmental tasks by adapting to the child's critical needs and interests in appropriate ways. While stimulating academic skills is important, affective education to aid the acquisition of confidence and self-worth is the family's major role. **Hoblit (1993)** in a study on 101 adolescents reported that hardiness and family support exerted significant effects on psychological health. Further, a significant two-way interaction between hardiness and family support was observed indicating that family support was an important factor in protecting psychological health of low hardy young adolescents. **Arndt and Ellen (2008)** highlighted the importance of family involvement in children's school success. Most of the people would agree that families have the greatest knowledge of their children's strengths and challenges. When teachers are able to converse with families, they can collect

detailed information about their incoming students so that they are better able to meet the children's needs. **Risko and Doris (2009)** observed that parents and family involvement in school can have a positive influence on student's self-confidence. When parents feel good about their school involvement and the school's instructional efforts, they tend to hold high expectations for their children which in turn can have positive impact on their children's interests.

Nowadays students are growing up in a very competitive environment. Even a child of 3 to 4 years of age has to clear rounds of interviews and exams to start his academic journey. Though there are reforms proposed to current Indian education system, it still remains the toughest and most stressful as compared to the rest of the world. During the entire school life, a student has to prove himself at each and every stage. Every child is expected to stand first in his class which in itself is an impossible proposition. With so much of stress all around, it is very important for a student to be psychologically tough and confident. Confidence in one's own capabilities combined with sincere efforts, helps one to achieve unthinkable heights. Also Self-Confidence is a major distinguishing factor amongst academically similar graded students.

Family plays an important role in developing confidence and psychological hardiness in a child. Over the years, the structure of the family has been undergoing a quite change in India. This eventual change in family structures from joint to nuclear has an impact on the psychological build up and confidence of the children. Since the routine interactions and expectations within the family underpin self-confidence in children, study of psychological hardiness and self confidence of students belonging to nuclear and joint families have a high significance in today's context. All the above facts drew the attention and interest of the researcher to take up this study.

OBJECTIVES

To compare Self-Confidence of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families.

To compare Psychological Hardiness of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families.

HYPOTHESES

There is no significant difference in Self- Confidence of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families.

There is no significant difference in Psychological Hardiness of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families.

The present study was conducted on 200 students out of which 100 were selected from nuclear families and 100 from joint families. The technique used for taking the sample was multistage randomization of clusters at school and section levels.

TOOLS

Psychological hardiness scale developed and validated by Nowack (1990).

Self-Confidence inventory (ASCI) by Agnihotri (1987).

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Mean and t-ratio was calculated to infer the differences between high-School students belonging to nuclear and joint families.

Interpretation of data of self-confidence of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families

Mean values of the two groups of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families come out to be 25.39 and 27.48 respectively on the variable of self confidence. t-ratio between the mean scores of self confidence of high school students of nuclear and joint families is 0.066 which on being tested at 0.05 level of significance and 0.01 level of significance does not prove to be significant. This shows that the difference existing between self-confidence of two groups is not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance. Therefore the first hypothesis of the study is not rejected i.e. there is no significant difference in self-confidence of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families.

Interpretation of data of psychological hardiness of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families

Mean values of the two groups of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families come out to be 91.33 and 90.19 respectively on the variable of psychological hardiness. t-ratio between the mean scores of psychological hardiness of high school students of nuclear and joint families is 0.308 which

on being tested at 0.05 level of significance and 0.01 level of significance does not prove to be significant. This shows that the difference existing between Psychological Hardiness of two groups is not significant. Therefore the second hypothesis of the present study has been vindicated i.e. there is no significant difference in the psychological hardiness of high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families. Hence high school students belonging to nuclear and joint families do not vary in their level of self confidence. There isn't a stark variation in case of children brought up in joint family as against that of children brought up in nuclear families. The development of psychological hardiness in children of joint families can be attributed to the numerous experiences they face on a daily basis involving a large number of family members. They grow up hearing about experiences of their elders and gain insight into the truths and ways of life. The above said factors prepare them to face the challenges of the world. Any type of stress and problems can be discussed with family members. The presence of greater number of children belonging to same age group at home also helps a great deal.

The students belonging to nuclear families owe their psychological hardiness to the parenting ways of their parents. From young age they take up more and more responsibility at home and outside. A child experiments and makes decisions on his own in case of nuclear families at an early age. These experiments, self-experiences contribute in the development of their psychological hardiness. Nowadays, children are also exposed to a lot of information and knowledge through internet and other media resources. Students are able to express their views and have their say on various issues. For example websites like twitter, facebook, blogspot etc. offer a platform for them to share their views. Social networking sites expose children to a variety of people and varied experiences as well. Instant connectivity through internet and phone has ensured that no distance is long. Even though the child is not in joint family but he is only SMS, click away from people whose advice and support he requires from time to time. Though the support may not be physically present but reaching out is a matter of seconds. This support is what builds a student's psychological hardiness.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Since psychological hardiness and self-confidence as per this study are not influenced by the fact that the student belongs to nuclear or joint family, it can

be said that this factor directly or indirectly should not influence the admission policy of any school.

Teachers while dealing with students should not give any importance to the fact that whether a child belongs to nuclear or a joint family.

While selecting the students for various co-curricular activities, teachers should not consider the fact that whether a child belongs to nuclear or a joint family

REFERENCES

Arndt Janet S.; Schwartz M. and Ellen M. Early childhood school success: Recognizing Families as Integral Partners. *Childhood Education*. 2008; vol.84n5: p-281.

Gentry W.D. and Kobasa S.C. Social and psychological resources mediating stress illness relationship in humans. In W.D. Gentry (ed.), *Handbook of behavior medicine*. New York: Guilfoed press; 1984.

Hoblit, Colleen, K. Events and the stress moderating effects of hardiness and family support on Adolescent Psychological Health, A Prospective Study. *Dissertation Abstracts international*. 1993; 54(5): 4730-B.

Kobasa S.C. Stressful life events, personality and health: An inquiry into hardiness. *Journal of personality and social Psychology*. 1979; vol.37: p1-11.

Maddi S.R. Issues and intervention in stress mastery. In Friedman (ed.), *Personality and disease*. New York: Wiley; 1990.

Malan J. A. Role of parents in optimal development of a child. www.eric.ed.gov. ED292220; 1984.

Risko; Victoria J.; Dalhouse W. and Doris. Influence of parent and family involvement on student's self-confidence. *Reading Teacher*; 2009; vol.62n5: p442-444.

Sihera, Elaine. The definition of confidence. www.helium.com/items/210734-the-definition-of-confidence; 2007.