

Positive thoughts strengthen self

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Introduction

In the present changing scenario students are suffering from many problems like adjustment, anxiety, negative thoughts and self-esteem due to which college life is becoming more or less dissatisfying to them. Thus it is important to know the optimism patterns of college students. College students face many problems in their family, society and in peer groups due to many reasons like pessimism, less expressive nature, improper knowledge about self, lack of guidance services etc. The word optimism is originally derived from the Latin word, optimum, meaning 'best'. Being optimistic, in the typical sense of the word, ultimately means one expects the best possible outcome from any given situation. Ey *et al.* (2005) ^[9] defined optimism as a cognitive construct, a set of expectations about one's future that is markedly positive and hopeful. Gillham *et al.* (2002) ^[11] distinguished three type of optimism as explanatory optimism, strategic optimism and dispositional optimism. Optimism is the ability to see the positive side of things. Optimistic thinkers are usually positive people because they approach life with the expectation that a happy outcome is both desirable and possible. Buchanan and Seligman (1995) ^[3] stated that the person with an optimistic outlook on life enjoy better health, are more motivated, higher level of achievement at work, school and in sports. Optimism is mental attitude that simplifies the situations and events as being best. It makes a person happy, confident and providing general outlook on life. Scheier & Carver (1993) ^[16] defined optimism as a generalized tendency to expect positive outcomes or the beliefs that good. Optimism gives strength to person to cope with all life situations. El-Anzi (2005) ^[7] explored the relationship among academic achievement, optimism and self-esteem of 400 students of Kuwait. The results revealed that there was significant positive correlation among optimism, academic achievement and self-esteem of students. Elpida *et al.* (2011) ^[8] examined the impact of optimism on self-esteem of 200 high school students of four schools from Bucharest. The findings indicated that optimism had positive and significant relationship with self-esteem of high school students. Gardner and Parkinson (2011) ^[10] examined optimism, self-esteem and social support as mediator of the relationship among workload, stress and well-being among 150 veterinary students. The results revealed that the students with more optimism and self-esteem were less stressed than those who were more pessimistic or lower in self-esteem. It was also found in the study that students with higher self-esteem experienced higher well-being. Brannor and Fiest (1997) ^[2] explored the relationship between self-esteem, optimism and the performance of health behaviour among 69 students attending North Georgia College and State University. The findings indicated that self-esteem and optimism were positive correlated with health behaviours of students. It was

also seen that self-esteem and optimism increase the performance of all categories of health behaviours of students. Saadat *et al.* (2012) ^[15] explored relationship between self-esteem and locus of control in 370 university students of Iran. The results indicated that all self-esteem components had a positive and meaningful relationship with internal locus of control. Akinleke (2013) studied the relationship between test anxiety, self-esteem and academic performance among 250 students of Nigeria. The results indicated that there was positive relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students. Self-esteem is individual's perception of himself as a person which includes his abilities appearance performance in his job and other phase of daily living. Hurlock (1974) ^[12] described that self-esteem as a process of looking at oneself objectively evaluating his or her capacities and limitations impartially and acquire at positive or negative judgment about him or her. Burnett (1994) ^[4] regarded self-esteem as a component of self- concept i.e., the sense of personal pride which includes one's evaluation of oneself and a tendency and a desire to see oneself as positive. Judge *et al.* (1997) ^[13] reported that self-esteem has been included as one of the four dimensions that comprise core self-evolution, one's fundamental appraisal of one self, along with locus of control, neuroticism, and self-efficacy. Self-esteem may infect be one of the most essential core self-evolution dimensions because it is the overall value one feels about oneself as a person. Chadha (1985) ^[5] defined self-esteem as one's own image in one's own eyes and it is very important in decision making and decision implementation. It is consequent reactions to various interactions of individual with the outside world. There are four popular dimension of self, perceived self, real self, ideal self and social self.

Optimism may enhance the contentment and self-esteem of an individual. Optimistic outlook among college students may help them to make themselves healthy persons with good self-esteem. The findings of investigation may provide help to teachers, parents and guidance workers to develop suitable environment so as to develop optimism among college students. Every research study has some objectives which gives directions to it.

Objective

- To study optimism of university students having high and low self-esteem.

Hypothesis

- There is no significant difference in optimism of university students having high and low self-esteem

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to 200 students of colleges affiliated to Punjabi University, Patiala.

Sample

The sample comprised of 200 students selected randomly from 4 colleges affiliated to Punjabi university Patiala.

Tools Used

- Optimistic/Pessimistic Scale by D.S Parasar (1990) [14].
- Self-esteem Inventory by Coopersmith (1981) [6].

Optimism of College Students Having High and Low Self-Esteem

Q1 and Q3 of scores on self-esteem inventory were calculated. Students who score below Q1 (24.22) means having low self-esteem and students who scores above Q3 (30.12) means having high self-esteem. Then optimism scores of students were compared with high self-esteem and with low self-esteem by using t-test. Mean scores of optimism of university students having high self-esteem is 32.12 and optimism of university students having low self-esteem is 25.14. The SD values are 3.42 and 5.02 respectively. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference in optimism of high and low self-esteem of university students came out to be 7.93. This t-value is significant at 0.01 level. This may be because students with high level of self-esteem have positive attitude towards themselves and others and having a rational thinking, which can enhance level of optimism. On the other hand students with low level of self-esteem have low level of optimism because they have negative outlook, thoughts and feelings etc. of life. On the bases of results the hypothesis "*There is no significant difference in optimism of high and low self-esteem of university students*" is rejected. This means that there is significant difference between optimism of university students having high and low self-esteem. This result in the line with the findings of Elpidabaganaa (2011) who found that optimism had a positive effect on self-esteem of students.

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