Self-Efficacy and Happiness in Youth

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As self-awareness being is the beginning of good personal and social adjustment, the present study aims at investigating the relationship between self-efficacy and happiness in youth, with special reference to age and gender differences. A sample comprising 200 undergraduate and post-graduates from Hubli, Karnataka, were administered the Generalized Perceived Self-efficacy Scale and Happiness Inventory. It has been found that self-efficacy and happiness are positively and significantly correlated, and that there is significant difference between undergraduate (UG) and post graduate (PG) students with regard to self-efficacy and no gender difference exists in self-efficacy and happiness.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, Happiness, Youth.

The present era is full of rapid changes, cut-throat competition, anxiety and unhappiness which make the youth experience tremendous stress. Self-confidence is one of the life skills recommended by the WHO for the well-being of the youth. Self-efficacy is a widely studied measure of confidence and has been consistently shown to enhance goal achievement (Maddux, 2002). Self-efficacy is not a passive trait or characteristic, but a dynamic aspect of the self-system that interacts with the environment and with other motivational mechanisms. Lent and Hackett (1987) stated that self-efficacy determines what we do with the skills we have. Bandura (1977) defined it as a belief in one's competence to produce desirable outcomes through one's own efforts. As the WHO (2001) stipulates, self-efficacy is an important factor in developing and maintaining a healthy overall well-being and for generating confidence in their ability to handle life’s difficulties and pressures (Gupta & Kumar, 2010). Self-efficacy has also been found to be related to academic achievement, behaviours and attitudes (Hagger, Chatzisarantis & Biddle, 2001; Salami & Ogundokun, 2009).

Both positive and negative affects influence the lives of students. Happiness refers to a general feeling and experience of contentment and joy (Baumgardner & Crothers, 2009). Happiness can be viewed in terms of a judgment that life is satisfying and the predominance of positive compared with negative emotions in one's life (Diener, 2000). A few studies reported associating happiness and other variables like values (Bhushan & Ahuja 1980; Coenders, Casas, Figner & Gonzalez, 2005), life satisfaction (Khosla, 2005) and emotional intelligence (Khosla & Dokania, 2010). Some researchers suggest that happiness is not only related to present and recent past events, but also to expected for positive events (Diener, 1984; Staats & Stassen, 1985).

A few studies also reported associating happiness and other variables like values (Bhushan & Ahuja 1980; Coenders, Casas, Figner & Gonzalez, 2005). Srivastava (2008) and Pandey (2006) and conducted studies on the sources or indicators of happiness on children. At present, more information is available about negative effects of depression on student success than about the benefits of happiness and life satisfaction (Khramtsova, Sarrino, Gordeeva, & Williams, 2007). According to Isen (2003), positive affect correlates positively with processes that contribute to college success-cognition and motivation.

Investigators have explored the concept of self-efficacy and other personality traits, maladaptive behavior and health outcomes etc. on children and adults. As there is dearth of