

An intervention study on self-esteem among tribal adolescent girls in Adilabad and Komaram Bheem districts of Telangana state

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ABSTRACT

Self-esteem is an overall evaluation of the person's value expressed in a positive or negative orientation towards himself/herself. Its development starts from birth and constantly changes under the influence of experience. The formation of self-esteem and shaping of personality are of pronounced significance during adolescent period. Self-esteem helps the adolescent girls to be empowered and makes it possible for them to take control over their own lives. The aim of the present study was to see the effect of intervention on self-esteem of the tribal adolescent girls in Adilabad and Komaram Bheem districts of Telangana state. A sample of 160 adolescent girls in the age range of 17 to 21 years was selected using purposive random sampling method. A scale on adolescent girls' self-empowering personal skills was constructed and standardised. The results revealed that self-esteem of adolescent girls enhanced their empowerment.

Keywords: Self-esteem; empowerment; adolescent girls; personal skills; personality

INTRODUCTION

The self-esteem is the measure of how much we like and approve of ourselves (Sanford and Donovan 1984). In other words, self-esteem is the extent to which one approves values and likes oneself. It depends on a person's attitude and on other areas such as purpose of life, independency, potential for success, strengths and weaknesses, social status and his relationships. Self-esteem partly depends upon an individual's confidence about his skills, abilities and experiences of personal success. A host of studies recognizes self-esteem as an important aspect of well-being.

It is recognized universally that adolescence is a vitally important stage of development that confronts individuals with substantial changes in many spheres of life. Adolescence period is defined

as a stage between childhood and adulthood and is a period of human development where a young person must move from dependency to independence, autonomy and maturity. The person moves from being a part of family group to being part of a peer group and standing alone as an adult (Mabey and Sorensen 1995).

Adolescents want to perceive themselves as adults with capable decision-making skills but also want to remain members of a larger peer group. Self-esteem can be defined as one's own worth, abilities, self-worth and self-respect. Self-esteem plays a significant role in all aspects of a child's development. It includes judgment of the self as well as an attitude toward the self. Adolescents with high self-esteem perform better in their work than adolescents with low self-esteem. Low self-esteem leads to unemployment; consequently one feels insecure and unstable.

The tribal population in the state of Telangana and in the country as a whole is the most deprived and vulnerable community that faces severe economic exclusion. Generally adolescents enter the labour force to render support to their families financially and therefore it is neither realistic nor desirable to isolate girls from their social fabric and expect them to be financially independent; all these occurs with self-esteem only. Moreover empowered adolescent girls will become adult women who are involved in different spheres of decision making at the local and national levels and who contribute toward the achievement of gender parity in representation.

In the past majority of the studies were conducted on rural and urban adolescents as compared to tribal adolescents. Therefore it was very much appropriate and necessary to conduct a research study on self-esteem of tribal adolescents in Adilabad and Komaram Bheem districts of Telangana. It was vital to equip the tribal adolescent girls with necessary self-esteem skills to broaden their horizon, understand and adopt those traditional beliefs which were rational and practical and become gender sensitive so as to be a part of the national development through the building of better society.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in tribal districts of Telangana state by using quasi experimental research design. A total of 160 tribal adolescent girls in the age range of 17 to 21 years were selected using purposive random sampling method. Data were collected and a scale on adolescent girls' self-empowering personal skills was constructed and standardised. Self-esteem domain had 12 items. The items were on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The item scores ranged from 5 to 1.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

The data given in Table 1 reveal that out of 160 tribal adolescents girls the highest number of the respondents had low self-esteem. Majority (84%) of the respondents were in low level followed by (9%) of the in average level and very few (7%) in high level.

This means tribes in Adilabad and Komaram Bheem districts were one of the diverse groups among

the Indian population. They remained disadvantaged mostly as they were considered as the lowest section since the ancient times. The tribes remained disadvantaged and marginalised due to the unemployment that lead to various factors like geographical and cultural isolation, lack of proper health facilities, inability to satisfy basic needs, lack of control over resources and assets, lack of education and skills, malnutrition, lack of shelter, poor access to water and sanitation, vulnerability, lack of access to proper infrastructure facilities and technologies and lack of political freedom and voice. All these challenges can make the tribal adolescent girls to have low self-esteem and hurdles for being empowered (Lakshmi and Paul 2019).

Intervention is to be more effective which emphasizes needs and priorities of the self-esteem skills and improves self-empowerment among tribal adolescent girls. Hence intervention strategy was used to improve the self-esteem levels of tribal adolescent girls to reduce or minimize their hurdles for being empowered through self-esteem.

Intervention was made on the experimental group ie tribal adolescent girls in 13 sessions (Table 2) group-wise. It comprised 160 respondents in each group on self-esteem. Intervention procedure included different techniques to improve overall self-esteem (Alleva 2015).

With respect to self-esteem, it was observed that 7 per cent of the respondents were in low level followed by 11 per cent in average and 82 per cent in high level (Table 3). In the initial sessions, the adolescent girls performed some exercises which involved introspection and self-knowledge (exercises 1, 2 and 3). Due to the lack of self-knowledge and partly due to hesitation, the girls could mention only a few characteristics, achievements and talents.

However towards the end of the intervention (in session 11) where the adolescent girls were required to perform/prepare something they were good at, they willingly performed and could readily mention their talents. The results pointed out that the intervention programme had indeed proved to be beneficial to the adolescent girls. The positive effect of SE intervention module has been demonstrated by several researches in the past (McVey et al 2004, Dalgas-Pelish 2006, Trzesniewski et al 2006).

Table 1. Distribution of self-esteem skills of tribal adolescent girls during the pre-test

Skill	Category	Respondents	
		f	%
Self-esteem	Low	134	84
	Average	14	9
	High	12	7
Total		160	100

Table 2. Sessions and activities conducted for the experimental group

Session	Aim	Exercise
1	To build rapport with tribal adolescent girls and win their confidence	Icebreaker: Baggage claim exercise
2	Introduction and overview of the programme To create an understanding of the concept of SE	Who am I? Talents and abilities
3	To generate a congenial, cooperative and healthy environment	To make a list of things that they really enjoy doing
4	To accept one's strengths and limitations in equal stride To develop an overview of SE	Role model
5	Theoretical session: six pillars of SE	
6	Development of self-esteem through various tools	
7	Use of audio-visual inputs	
8	Affirmations as a strategy	
9	Affirmations as a strategy Putting the theoretical input of sessions 5 to 8 into practice	How to raise your self-esteem: group exercise
10	Generate understanding of self and modify behaviour	Self-ability to raise SE
11	To identify methods to raise own SE	
12	To choose realistic and measurable goals: goal-setting activity	
13	Wrapping up: an overview of the programme, feedback and suggestions	

Table 3. Distribution of self-esteem skills of tribal adolescent girls during the post-test

Skill	Category	Respondents	
		f	%
Self-esteem	Low	12	7
	Average	17	11
	High	131	82
Total		160	100

Table 4. The effect of intervention on self-esteem skills of tribal adolescent girls

Area	Before intervention (pre-test) mean	After intervention (post-test) mean	Mean difference	t-value	P-value
Self-esteem	23.04375	46.475	23.43125	24.84**	0.01

**Significant at 1% LoS

As presented in Table 4, the t-value of self-esteem ie 24.84 is significant at 0.01 level of probability. Hence there was significant difference in the self-esteem skills among tribal adolescent girls as evidenced by pre-test and post-test scores.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the tribal adolescent girls improved their self-esteem after the intervention applied. There was a significant difference between mean scores of pre- and post-data. This means that self-esteem training was effective in increasing self-esteem.

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