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Self-confidence and academic achievement of rural and urban adolescents in post COVID period

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has profound consequences on various aspects of global life, including the vulnerability of adolescents who face challenges due to their age of transition and reactivity to stress. The Indian government's nationwide lockdown in March 2020 resulted in school closures, impacting the education system. This study aimed to assess the self-confidence and academic achievement of rural and urban adolescents in the post-COVID period. The sample included 200 adolescents, equally distributed between rural and urban areas. Data were collected using a background information proforma and the self-confidence inventory developed by Agnihotri (1985). The results revealed that 69.5% of adolescents displayed an average level of self-confidence, and 43.5% of II divisioners had an average level of self-confidence in academic achievement. These findings underscore the importance of understanding and promoting self-confidence in adolescents, as it significantly influences their overall well-being and academic performance.

Keywords: COVID-19, self-confidence, adolescents, academic achievement

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has far-reaching consequences for adolescents' mental health and education (Guterres, 2020) [7]. The Indian government's nationwide lockdown in 2020 resulted in significant challenges to education, particularly for rural students who faced a digital divide due to limited access to stable internet and digital devices (Maity *et al.*, 2021) [8]. The pandemic also impacted self-confidence, a crucial attribute for academic success (Sirin and Rogers-Sirin, 2004). Urban students generally performed better academically due to better facilities and access to information sources (Brown and Swanson, 2001) [9], while rural students faced dropouts and gender disparities (UNICEF, 2020) [4]. The pandemic has also resulted in increased dropout rates, particularly among students in rural areas from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as families grapple with financial hardships and unemployment (UNICEF, 2020; Chanda, 2021) [4]. Gender disparities persist, with boys facing enrollment disadvantages and lower learning outcomes, while girls may experience early marriages and increased domestic responsibilities, further impacting their educational attainment (Yadav, 2022) [4].

The proposed study aims to explore the relationship between academic achievement and self-confidence among rural and urban students in the post-pandemic period to develop targeted interventions (Patton *et al.*, 2016) [10]. The findings are expected to contribute to evidence-based strategies for enhancing students' academic achievement and self-confidence in education (Favara *et al.*, 2021) [11].

2. Objective

To assess and compare the self-confidence and academic achievement of adolescents on the basis of location and gender in post COVID period.

3. Methodology

For conducting this exploratory research study investigates self-confidence and academic achievement among adolescents (ages 16 to 18) in Udaipur district. Conducted in government senior secondary schools, the sample of 200 participants equally represents rural and urban areas (100 each). The research aims to examine potential differences between the two groups in terms of self-confidence and academic performance. This study employs t-test to compares self-confidence of urban and rural adolescents by location and gender, assessing significance. Frequency percentages used to analyse self-confidence and academic achievement distribution

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among adolescents.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings from the data analysis of the present investigation are presented in this chapter. The study's goals have been implemented into consideration for organizing and analyzing the data. The following headings and subheadings have been used to present the results:

Table 1: Comparison of self-confidence level of urban and rural adolescents on the basis of location n= 200

Dimension	Location	Adolescents	
		Mean ± SD	Paired t-value
Personal Dimension	Urban	-.190±5.21	-.365 NS
	Rural		
Emotional Dimension	Urban	-.130±5.26	-.247 NS
	Rural		
Social Dimension	Urban	1.16±3.53	3.28* S
	Rural		
Educational Dimension	Urban	1.57±5.23	2.99* S
	Rural		
Overall self confidence	Urban	2.31±17.6	1.31 NS
	Rural		

*S- Significant at 0.05%, NS- Non-Significant

Table-1 indicates that urban and rural adolescents have highest t-values in personal dimension, showing no significant differences in personal and emotional domains or overall self-

Table 3: Percentage distribution on self-confidence level and academic achievement among adolescents. n=200

Level of self confidence	Academic Achievement Level		
	I Divisioners 68(34)	II Divisioners 87(43.5)	III Divisioners 45 (22.5)
High	18(9)	2(1)	-
Average	50(25)	85(42.5)	5(2.5)
Low	-	-	40(20)

Table 3 illustrates that 34% of students belong to the I division, while only 9% exhibit a high level of self-confidence, often performing better. Additionally, 25% of students possess an average level of self-confidence. Hence, none of the students in the I division were identified with a low level of self-confidence.

Zheng (2023) study addresses the influence of personality traits on educational outcomes during pre, during, and post-COVID-19 lockdown periods. the research identifies correlations between lockdown periods, personality traits, and academic metrics. For instance, class grades and assignment submissions were affected by different lockdown periods. Students with lower extraversion and agreeableness made fewer attempts in assignment submissions.

5. Conclusion

According the study results, evident from the data presented that self-confidence levels among urban and rural adolescents have remained consistent, with no significant differences observed in personal and emotional domains. However, variations were noted in the social and educational dimensions, which may indicate the need for targeted interventions to foster stronger social bonds and enhance academic achievements and future career opportunities for both groups. Interestingly, gender differences did not play a significant role in shaping self-confidence levels among adolescents. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of focusing on social and educational support to empower adolescents in the post-COVID era, regardless of their urban

confidence. However, there were significant differences in social and educational dimensions ($p<0.05$). Social dimension impacts strong social bonds, while educational dimension influences academic achievement and future career opportunities, benefiting both urban and rural adolescents.

Table 2: Comparison of self confidence level of adolescents on the basis of gender n=200

Dimension	Gender	Adolescents	
		Mean±SD	Paired t-value
Personal Dimension	Boys	-.310±5.10	-.607 NS
	Girls		
Emotional Dimension	Boys	.150±5.25	.285 NS
	Girls		
Social Dimension	Boys	-.480±3.44	-1.39 NS
	Girls		
Educational Dimension	Boys	-1.12±5.21	-2.14 NS
	Girls		
Overall self confidence	Boys	-1.37±16.8	-.814 NS
	Girls		

*S- Significant at 0.05%, NS- Non-Significant

Table-2 highlights results of adolescents (boys and girls) on self-confidence dimensions: personal development, emotional well-being, social interactions, and education. No significant gender differences were observed across all dimensions. Overall self-confidence level also showed no significant variation between the two groups.

or rural background.

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