

Role of Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy on Life-Satisfaction in Young Adults

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Abstract:

Young adult phase of life represents the new transition from adolescence to adulthood as one goes through several changes within. The present research aims to study the role of one's own self-worth (self-esteem) and belief in one's ability (self-efficacy) on the overall life-satisfaction in young adults. Quantitative research study design was used and a sample of 84 young adults was drawn using random sampling technique. The mean age of the sample was 22.13 years ($SD=0.99$). Three scales were used in the present study, that is, satisfaction with life scale by Diener et al. (1985), self-esteem scale by Rosenberg (1979), and generalized self-efficacy scale by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). Data were coded using SPSS and statistical analyses were performed. Findings reveal that male young adults have greater life satisfaction ($M_{\text{Male}}=20.45$, $M_{\text{Female}}=20.31$), self-esteem ($M_{\text{Male}}=27.10$, $M_{\text{Female}}=25.78$) and self-efficacy ($M_{\text{Male}}=29.10$, $M_{\text{Female}}=28.71$) than female young adults. Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis revealed that life satisfaction was found to have significant, positive relationship with self-esteem ($r=0.37$, $p<.01$) and self-efficacy ($r=0.31$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, multiple regression analysis revealed that self-esteem and self-efficacy explain 18.9% of the variation in life-satisfaction among young adults as self-esteem ($\beta=.46$, $p<.001$) and self-efficacy ($\beta=.26$, $p<.01$) significantly and positively predicted life-satisfaction. The present findings confirmed the significant role of self-esteem and self-efficacy on life-satisfaction.

Keywords: Life-satisfaction; Self-esteem; Self-efficacy; Young adults

Introduction

Self-esteem is defined as a sense of one's own worthiness or significance as perceived by oneself (Makikangas & Kinnunen 2003). In other words, how we positively or negatively evaluate ourselves reflects the level of self-esteem and is an important aspect of personal well-being and happiness (Brown, 1998; Diener, 2000). According to recent research findings (Trzesniewski et al., 2003), the correlation value of self-esteem ranges from 0.50 to 0.70 throughout during childhood to old age suggesting that self-esteem remains relatively constant across lifespan. High self-esteem has been found to be associated with many positive actions and life outcomes as people with a strong sense of self-esteem are more content with their life, experience less interpersonal conflicts, are less subject to peer pressure, and can create more fulfilling romantic relationships (Brown, 1998).

On the other hand, self-efficacy is defined as an individual's beliefs about his/her own ability to perform specific tasks (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Self-efficacy is the level of confidence in an individual to perform and achieve a desired outcome (Nunez Rodriguez & Loos-Sant' Ana, 2015). Earlier studies showed that emotional self-efficacy effectively helps in coping with academic stress (Arslan, 2017) whereas, social

self-efficacy helps in achieving better social relationships within the classroom environment, and can therefore contribute to better academic achievement.

Life satisfaction has been defined as the subjective assessment of a person's quality of life in general or specific domains (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). It shows a conceptual evaluation or judgment of the individual's own life (Özdevecioğlu & Aktaş, 2007). It is also the degree of positive evaluation of the overall quality of life as a whole (Veenhoven, 1991). In other words, life satisfaction represents an evaluative judgment of overall satisfaction in life. (Pavot & Diener, 2013).

Appleton and Song (2008) suggest that life satisfaction consists of six different components, such as income level, occupation and social status, opportunities, welfare conditions, current state policy, environment, family and social relations. Dockery (2003) evaluated factors of life satisfaction such as stable personality traits, marital status, social support networks, life events, health status, lifestyle, job status, and socioeconomic status.

Who are the young adults?

Young adult phase of life represents the new transition from adolescence to adulthood as one goes through several changes in all aspects of their lives (Schulenberg, Bryant, & O'Malley, 2004). This period of development is characterized by high levels of personal exploration (Jessor, Donovan, & Costa, 1991), increased mobility and independence from parents, and the adoption of adult roles (Erikson, 1968), and orientation towards future careers, occupational achievement and family formation (Settersten, Furstenberg, & Rumbaut, 2005). This period is known to be a transition period into adulthood wherein comparisons are made between the set of ethical values acquired in the childhood and the set of values gained in life when becoming an adult (Özbay, 1997). According to Erikson, the basic developmental task of an individual in the young adulthood stage is to overcome the crisis of "intimacy versus isolation" (Corey, 2005) which means that in order to become a healthy individual, one has to achieve the capacity for closeness and intimacy through love or else suffer a sense of isolation with shallow human relationships. Young adults are bound to adapt to the new life patterns, new social expectations and new roles as they transition into this new phase of life. According to Havighurst (1972), happiness (or life satisfaction) is dependent on the successful achievement of life-phase dependent developmental tasks such as physical maturation, cultural pressure and individual aspirations and values.

Review of Literature

Some studies indicate that there is a positive relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction (Freire & Ferreira, 2019; Rey et al., 2011), while some studies show a negative relationship (Seshadri et al., 2019) between self-esteem and life-satisfaction. According to Çakar (2012), self-efficacy in young adults significantly predicted life satisfaction (48%, $p < .05$); also, self-efficacy and life satisfaction didn't significantly differ in accordance with the perceived level of income.

Self-esteem is considered to predict satisfaction with life (Diener & Diener, 1995); also, higher life satisfaction is found to bring feelings of better self-esteem (Proctor et al. 2009). Higher levels of self-efficacy reduce negative effects of stress on life satisfaction (Burger et al, 2016), and thus individuals scoring high on self-efficacy tend to have high life satisfaction scores as well.

Life satisfaction is interpreted as one of the consequences of emotional responses affected by self-efficacy perceptions (Cikrikci & Odaci, 2016). According to Bandura et al (1996), individuals can adapt to more suitable conditions for themselves if they had strong perceptions of their own efficacy. High level of self-

efficacy can contribute to an increased level of activity in young adults and being pleased with themselves, their lives and other conditions, such as their relationship with family, friends, and the environment one lives in (Kaya & Siyez, 2008).

Research Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between self-esteem and life-satisfaction in young adults
2. To examine the relationship between self-efficacy and life-satisfaction in young adults
3. To explore the role of self-esteem and self-efficacy on life satisfaction in young adults

Hypotheses

1. There will be significant relationship between self-esteem and life-satisfaction in young adults.
2. There will be significant relationship between self-efficacy and life-satisfaction in young adults.
3. There will be significant prediction of life-satisfaction by self-esteem and self-efficacy in young adults.

Methods

Sample

Eighty-four university post-graduate students in the Aizawl, Mizoram participated in the present study. The mean age of the sample was 22.13 years, with $SD=0.99$. The sample comprised of 20 male and 64 female who were pursuing their regular PG courses. Samples who were willing to give informed consent and free from any major illness took part in the present study.

Sampling Technique

Quantitative research design was used and data were collected by using simple random sampling technique.

Measures

Demographic Details: Age and gender, along with the stream of PG course were collected from the sample for assessing the demographic details.

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979) was used to measure the self-esteem. The scale consists of 10 items rated on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree) and the score ranges from 10 to 40. Greater score reveals greater self-esteem. The test-retest reliability of the original scale over 2 weeks period shows correlation value of 0.85 and 0.88, which indicate excellent stability (Rosenberg, 1979). The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the Rosenberg self-esteem scale used in the present study was found to be 0.69.

The Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) was used to measure self-efficacy, that is the belief in one's ability to respond to circumstances in life. It has 10 items scored on 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1=Not at all true to 4=Exactly true and the score ranges from 4 to 40. Greater score reflects greater generalized self-efficacy. In the present research, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was found to be 0.86.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985) was used to examine the life-satisfaction of the sample and it consists of 5 items rated on Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The range of the score is 5 to 35, with 20 being the neutral score, and 5 to 19 being dissatisfied to 21 to 35 being satisfied. The scale used in the present study demonstrated good reliability coefficient with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.83.

Procedure

Research data was collected from the sample in small group size of 5 to 10 members at a university setting during the month of August 2023. The medium of administration was English, and each sample took approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Thereafter, the collected data were scored and coded accordingly in SPSS for further analysis. Statistical analysis was performed and mean, SD, and product-moment correlation were calculated. Multiple regression analysis was performed to study the role of self-esteem and self-efficacy on life satisfaction in young adults.

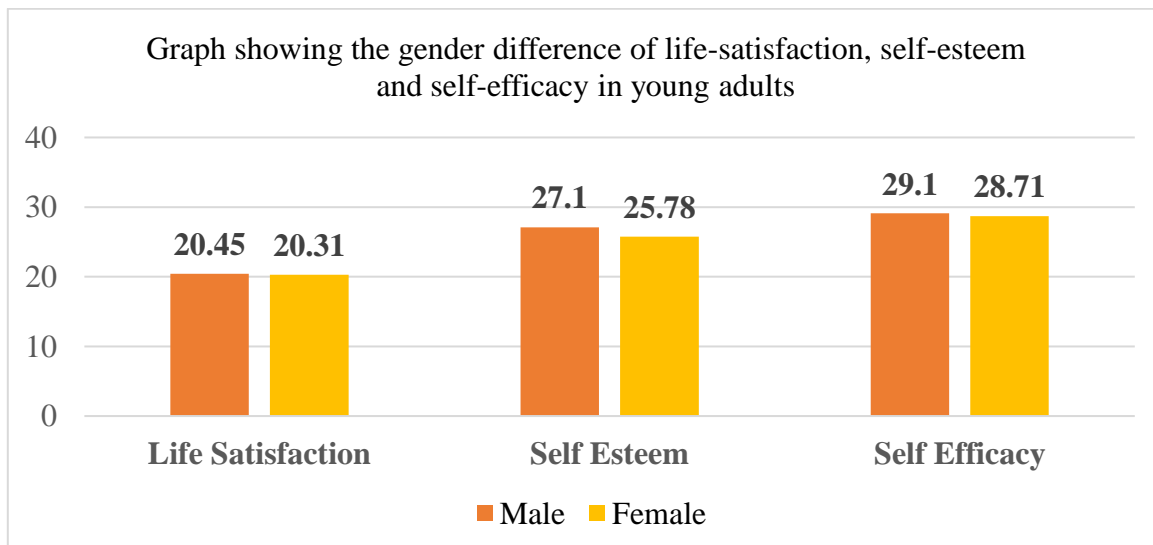
Results

The age range of the sample was 20 to 25 years (M=22.13, SD=.99). Gender differences of self-esteem, self-efficacy and life-satisfaction were calculated using descriptive statistics such as mean (M) and standard deviation (SD). Findings of the present study in Table 1 reveals that male young adults have greater life-satisfaction (M=20.45, SD= 6.98) than female young adults (M=20.31, SD=5.81); male young adults have greater self-esteem (M=27.10, SD= 4.29) than female young adults (M=25.78, SD=3.93) and male young adults have greater self-efficacy (M=29.10, SD= 5.88) than female young adults (M=28.71, SD=5.20). Graphical representation of the gender differences in these three variables are provided in Graph 1.

Table 1: Table showing the gender differences of life satisfaction, self-esteem and self-efficacy in young adults

Variable(s)	Gender	N	M	SD
Life Satisfaction	Male	20	20.45	6.98
	Female	64	20.31	5.81
Self-esteem	Male	20	27.10	4.29
	Female	64	25.78	3.93
Self-efficacy	Male	20	29.10	5.88
	Female	64	28.71	5.20

Graph 1: Graph showing the gender differences of life satisfaction, self-esteem and self-efficacy in young adults



Result analysis in Table 2 shows that there is significant positive correlation ($r=.37, p<.01$) between self-esteem and life-satisfaction in young adults, which proved H1 and thus accepting it. Further findings reveal there is significant positive correlation ($r=.31, p<.01$) between self-efficacy and life-satisfaction in young adults, and thus accepting H2. Multiple regression analysis with the two predictor variables (self-esteem and self-efficacy) produced $R^2 = 0.189, F(2, 81) = 9.46, p<.001$ which infers that self-esteem and self-efficacy explain 18.9% of the variation in life-satisfaction. It was found that self-esteem ($\beta=.46, p<.001$) and self-efficacy ($\beta=.26, p<.01$) significantly and positively predicted life-satisfaction in young adults, and thereby proving H3 to be truthful.

Table 2: Table showing the Mean, SD, Pearson’s correlation and multiple regression analysis of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and self-efficacy in young adults

Variables	Mean	SD	Pearson’s Correlation of life satisfaction with	Multiple regression analysis			
				B	Standardized Error	Beta	p
Life-satisfaction	20.34	6.07	1				
Self-esteem	26.09	4.03	0.37**	.46	.15	.31	.004***
Self-efficacy	28.79	5.34	0.31**	.26	.11	.22	.031**

$N=84; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001$

Discussion

The present research examined the role of self-esteem and self-efficacy on life-satisfaction among the young adults. The gender differences of self-esteem, self-efficacy and life-satisfaction in young adults showed that male young adults have greater score on self-esteem, self-efficacy and life-satisfaction than female young adults, which reveals that male young adults have greater sense of self-worth, greater belief in oneself and greater overall life-satisfaction than their female counterpart.

Results also showed that there was significant, positive correlation between self-esteem and life-satisfaction which was supported by previous research of Freire and Ferreira (2019) and Rey et al. (2011) as they reported positive correlation between self-esteem and life satisfaction. Further, it may be mentioned that results of regression analysis in the present study showed self-esteem positively and significantly predicted life-satisfaction. This is supported by previous research findings as according to Diener and Diener (1995), self-esteem considerably predicts satisfaction with life, and higher life satisfaction is also found to bring feelings of higher self-esteem (Proctor et al. 2009).

Further analysis of results in the present study showed that there was significant, positive correlation between self-efficacy and life-satisfaction, and self-efficacy significantly and positively predicted life-satisfaction. This re-confirms the previous research findings of Çakar (2012) which indicated that self-efficacy of young adults significantly predicted their life satisfaction. Bandura et al (1996) also showed that individuals can adapt to more suitable conditions for themselves if they had strong perceptions of their own efficacy.

Conclusion

Findings of the present study confirmed that having a strong sense of self-worth and believing in the ability of oneself contributes to greater life-satisfaction in young adults. Self-esteem and life-satisfaction, and self-efficacy and life-satisfaction are significantly and positively correlated. Male young adults have greater self-esteem, self-efficacy and life-satisfaction than female young adults.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares there is no conflict of interest.

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