

Self-efficacy and Mental health among university students: Mediating role of assertiveness

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Objective: To examine the self-efficacy and role of assertiveness as predictor of mediator on mental health among university students.

Methodology: This study had 400 university students (200 males and 200 female) selected through convenient sampling technique with age range 20 to 24 (mean 21.5 ± 3.1). Urdu translated Generalized Self Efficacy scale, Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale, and Self-Assertiveness Scale were used.

Results: Self-efficacy and self-assertiveness were significant negative predictors of mental health (Depression, Anxiety and Stress). Self-efficacy

was significant predictor of assertiveness. Results supported the mediational role of assertiveness in the relationship between of self-efficacy and mental health (Depression, anxiety & stress).

Conclusion: Self-efficacy and assertiveness are important negative predictors of the indices of depression, anxiety and stress on mental health. Self-efficacy influenced mental health indirectly through assertiveness. Gender predicts significant differences in depression, anxiety, and stress. (Rawal Med J 202;46:416-419).

Keywords: Depression, self-efficacy, assertiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The sense of self plays an important role in a person physical health, mental health and interpersonal relationships of individuals. Bandura describes that self-efficacy as beliefs are faith about one's abilities to "sort out and execute the plans that are required to making the given fulfillments for required accomplishments".¹ A person who has feelings of grounded self-efficacy or authority desires, feels more energy for the actions which are related to task.² The core of self-efficacy theory portrays that self-efficacy strongly influence the functioning of humans. Result and efficacy desires are separated, in light of the fact that people can trust that a specific game-plan will deliver certain results. However, in the event that they engage genuine questions about whether they can play out the fundamental exercises such data does not impact their behavior.²

Assertiveness in generally characterized as the real and genuine articulation of a person own rights, feelings, beliefs and interests with no damage to the rights of others.³ Assertive communication helps a person to speak and communicate in a way that he had to look upon and respect the rights and opinions of others while also stand for his own rights, needs and personal boundaries.⁴

Mental health issues can develop due to low level of

self-confidence, self-adequacy and failure of capacity to manage wellbeing.³ Self-efficacy has a fundamental part in people's reasoning modes, the nature of their experience with problems, their decision-making and their anxiety and stress status.⁵ Strong sense of self-efficacy leads to high mental health literacy and less stigmatized attitudes among college students.⁶ Most academic self-efficacy strongly affects academic results, while the more generalize measures were less closely related.⁷ Self-efficacy has a positive impact on the mental health of students.⁸

An immediate and proper correspondence of a man's requirements and conclusions without intimidating, punishing, insulting others, without threat they do it and keeps their psychological health good.⁹ Assertiveness had positive relationship with self-efficacy which helps students to control their aggression.¹⁰ Gender differences in the manner in which females and male regularly adapt to stress could be one motivation behind why females have more mental problems.¹¹ Female and young people with poor social support experience mental health problems more frequently.¹² Depression, anxiety and stress can be indicators of mental health.¹³ The aim of this study was to examine the self-efficacy and role of assertiveness as predictor of mediator on mental health among university students

METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional survey, included 400 students of university of Sargodha. Convenient purposive sampling technique was used. Students with any physical disability or admitted on sports quota were not included in the study.

A self-reported questionnaire which included translated version of generalized scale of self-efficacy translated version of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale, Self-Assertiveness Scale was used.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ Incomplete questionnaire were discarded. Final data analysis was carried out on 400 participants.

Statistical Analysis: All data analysis was performed using PROCESS macro and SPSS Statistics 21. Reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and mediation analysis and multiple regression analysis were rundown to test the hypothesis. $p < 0.05$ was considered significant.

RESULTS

The reliability coefficient, skewness and kurtosis for all study variables were satisfactory. Pearson correlation revealed indicates that self-efficacy and assertiveness has significant negative relationship with depression, anxiety and stress. Self-efficacy has positive relationship with assertiveness (Table 1). Linear regression analysis revealed that self-efficacy and assertiveness appeared as significant negative predictors of depression ($p < 0.001$, $p < 0.000$) and both explained 18% variance in depression. Self-efficacy and assertiveness appeared as significant negative predictor of Stress ($p < 0.022$, $p < 0.000$) and both explained 8% variance in the stress. Moreover, self-efficacy and assertiveness appeared as significant negative predictor of anxiety ($p < 0.001$, $p < 0.000$) and both explained 20% variance in anxiety (Table 2).

Table 1. Alpha reliability and Pearson correlation of study variables (n = 400).

Variables	α	2	3	4	5
SE	.84	-.29**	-.29**	-.29**	.38**
Dep	.83		.76**	.83**	-.39**
Stress	.79			.76**	-.27**
Anx	.85				-.43**
SA	.77				

Table 2. Linear regression analysis predicting mental health from self-efficacy.

Variables	B	S.E.B	B	R2
Depression				
SE	-.16	.04	-.16***	.18
Ass	-.15	.02	-.34***	.18
Stress				
SE	-.10	.05	-.12**	.08
Ass	-.09	.02	-.22***	.08
Anxiety				
SE	-.15	.04	-.16***	.20
Ass	-.16	.02	-.37***	.20

Table 3. Mediating role of assertiveness in the relationship between self-efficacy and mental health.

Variables	Depression					
	Direct effect			Indirect effect		
	95 % C.I			95 % C.I		
	B	LL	UL	B	LL	UL
Self-Efficacy	-.87***	-1.38	-.35	-.67***	-.98	.42
Assertiveness	-1.78***	-2.29	-1.27			
Anxiety						
	Direct effect			Indirect effect		
	95 % C.I			95 % C.I		
	B	LL	UL	B	LL	UL
Self-Efficacy	-.82**	-1.32	-.32	-.32	-.74***	-1.05
Assertiveness	-1.96***	-2.46	-1.46			
Stress						
	Direct effect			Indirect effect		
	95 % C.I			95 % C.I		
	B	LL	UL	B	LL	UL
Self-Efficacy	-.55*	-1.02	-.07	-.40**	-.63	-.19
Assertiveness	-1.06***	-1.54	-.59			

Table 4. Gender differences among study variables.

DV's	SS	df	MS	F	P	Part η^2
Dep	520.27	1	520.27	20.34	.000	.049
Anx	288.30	1	288.30	10.86	.001	.027
Stress	207.80	1	207.80	10.07	.002	.025

Mediating analysis revealed that self-efficacy (independent variable) was positively predicting assertiveness and explained about 14% variance in it, which was statistically significant ($p < 0.000$) for depression, anxiety and stress. Secondly self-efficacy (independent variable) ($B = -.87$, $p < 0.000$) and assertiveness (mediator) ($B = -1.78$, $p < 0.000$) were significantly predicting depression (dependent

variable) in negative direction. This model shows 18% variance in depression.

Self-efficacy (independent variable) ($B = -.55$, $p < 0.000$) and assertiveness (mediator) ($B = -1.06$, $p < 0.000$) were significantly predicting anxiety (dependent variable) in negative direction. This model showed 8% variance in anxiety. Similarly, self-efficacy (independent variable) ($B = -.82$, $p < 0.000$) and assertiveness (mediator) ($B = -1.96$, $p < 0.000$) were significantly predicting anxiety (dependent variable) in negative direction. This model showed 20% variance in anxiety (Table 3). Multivariate analysis indicated that gender had significant effect in depression, anxiety and stress (Table 4).

DISCUSSION

Due to low level of self-efficacy individual feel depressed, anxious and as a result they get easily stressful and give up the situation and choose to escape rather than coping with the situation. easily instead of coping with problem.¹⁷ Another study reported that self-efficacy had a significant negative correlation with depression and anxiety.¹⁸ Findings of our study revealed a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and mental health among the professional students. It also revealed a significant positive correlation of self-efficacy with general positive affect, and psychological well-being.¹⁹

Results of linear regression revealed that assertiveness was significant negative predictor of Stress, Anxiety and Depression. People with lower assertive value usually experience poor level lead to lower social relationship which ultimately leads to withdrawal and Interpersonal relationship problems, depression and anxiety.²⁰ Another study revealed that assertiveness had a significant negative correlation with depression, anxiety, and stress and training programs can help the students to deal with the level of depression, stress, and anxiety.²¹

Current study hypothesized that assertiveness mediates the negative relationship connection between self-efficacy and among student's mental health (depression, anxiety, and stress) and self-efficacy. The mediation analysis supported this

hypothesis. Furthermore, it was reported that a highly assertiveness ability people have more experience less mental health issues supportive relationship and have strong protective factors against mental health problems.²⁰ People have high sense of self-efficacy means people have high assertiveness ability and it ultimately leads towards self-efficacy via assertiveness helps in determining the good mental health.¹³

Women can effectively deal with stressful events because they focus on social support and religion to cope with depression, stress and anxiety as compared to men.²² Male students experience greater depression, stress and anxiety compared to female students.²³

CONCLUSION

Self-efficacy influenced mental health (Depression, anxiety & Stress) indirectly through assertiveness. It can be inferred that the relationship between self-efficacy and mental health varies across assertiveness. Gender predicts significant differences in depression, anxiety, and stress.

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