



A Gender based study on Assertiveness among Adolescents.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate gender differences in assertiveness among adolescents. The sample included 50 adolescents (25 girls and 25 boys) in the age group of 18 to 20 years from South Goa. The data was collected using a bio-data sheet and the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule. The data was analyzed using t-test and chi square. The results revealed that there was a significant gender difference in assertiveness. However, there was no association was found between assertiveness and the place of residence, neither was there a significant difference found in assertiveness based on religion.

Key words: Assertiveness, religion, gender

Introduction

The term 'Adolescence' is derived from the Latin term 'Adolescere' which means to develop into mature human beings. Adolescence is a period from 10-19 years of age as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO). It is a time classified by physical, psychological and social changes and is usually distinguished into two: early adolescence ranging from 10-14 years of age and late adolescence ranging from 15-19 years of age.

Assertiveness

Assertiveness is being firm and expressing one's emotion and views without hurting anyone. Colman's (2008) Dictionary of Psychology defines assertiveness as "as expression of one's needs, wishes and feelings frankly, honestly and directly, in a way that causes others to take them into account."

An assertive person directly and openly asks what she wants openly. He or she communicates confidently without any anxiety. An assertive person does not hurt other people with his or her opinion. It is considered to be one of the most effective ways of communicating with others.



Assertiveness is a social skill that relies heavily on effective communication while simultaneously respecting the thoughts and wishes of others. People who are assertive clearly and respectfully communicate their wants, needs, positions, and boundaries to others. There's no question of where they stand, no matter what the topic.

From a cognitive standpoint, assertive people experience fewer anxious thoughts, even when under stress. From a behavioral standpoint, assertive people are firm without being rude. They react to positive and negative emotions without becoming aggressive or resorting to passivity. Individuals who are high in assertiveness don't shy away from defending their points of view or goals, or from trying to influence others to see their side. They are also open to both compliments and constructive criticism. Assertiveness is often associated with higher self-esteem and confidence.

Characteristics of an assertive person

- ✓ An assertive person:
- ✓ Respects oneself and others
- ✓ Maintains high self esteem
- ✓ Does not require constant approval
- ✓ Is open and free

Review of literature

WM Parry ,Sanjay Kumar conducted a study where in the level of Assertiveness was examined from undergraduate students with reference to their gender, residence and stream of study . The sample consisted of 100 students 50 males and 50 females, age ranging from 16 to 22 years of age. They were all Bachelor of Arts, Commerce and Science. The Rathus assertiveness schedule revealed no significant difference in the level of assertiveness in the level of assertiveness among students with respect to gender.

Jackson and Huston (1975)found that attractive American Women were more assertive than non attractive women.

Hersen et al. (1973), Ory and Helfrich (1976), Adejumo (1981) and Eskin (2003), all reported that men are more assertive than women



A study was conducted by Anna Deltsidou on 298 nursing students studying in different semesters and were studying in different nursing colleges in Greece. The sample was presented with a questionnaire. The data was analysed using ANOVA and Pearson's correlation. The results revealed assertiveness levels displayed by students increase slightly in advanced semesters by comparison to those displayed by first-semester students.

Eucharia U. Onyeizugbo conducted a study which investigated the effects of gender, age, and educational attainment on assertiveness among married persons in Nigeria. Two hundred fourteen (214) married persons, 101 men and 113 women aged 20–60, who had at least high school education were included in the sample. The Assertive Behavior Assessment scale (ABAS; Onyeizugbo, 1998) was used to measure assertiveness. The hypothesis state that persons with higher educational attainment will report more assertiveness than persons with lower educational attainment. Results supported the hypothesis. Relations between gender and age, and gender and educational attainment were found. Younger men reported more assertiveness than younger women whereas older women reported more assertiveness than older men. Women participants of lower educational attainment reported more assertiveness than their men counterparts whereas men of higher educational attainment reported more assertiveness than their women counterparts. Results of this study suggest that women in Nigeria may become more assertive with age.

Research Method

Objectives

1. To study gender differences in assertiveness.
2. To study the relation between assertiveness and demographic variables.

Hypotheses

Ha₁ There will be a significant gender difference in assertiveness.

Ha₂ There will be a significant association between assertiveness and place of residence.

Ho₁ There will be no difference in assertiveness based on religion.

Variables

- Assertiveness
- Demographic factors



Tools

The Rathus Assertiveness Scale (RAS) was developed in 1973 by Spencer Rathus.

Reliability: Test-retest reliability was established using a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient over a two month period ($r = .78$), indicating moderate to high stability of test scores. Split-half reliability (a measure of internal consistency reliability) was calculated to be .77, suggesting that the qualities measured by the RAS possess moderate to high homogeneity.

Validity: The validity of the RAS was established by comparing self-reported RAS scores to two external measures of assertiveness. The RAS has demonstrated discriminant validity with respect to aggression.

Sample

The sample chosen for the study consists of 50 adolescents, out of which there were 25 boys and 25 girls around the age of 18 years to 20 years of age. The study was conducted on students who were pursuing their graduation. The method random sampling was followed for selection of the sample and the data was collected from those samples willing to participate.

Data Collection

The data was collected from 50 adolescents studying in Goa. The adolescents were met in the college environment and were told about the objectives of the study. They were given a bio-data sheet to complete along with the questionnaire. They were instructed properly after establishing a good rapport. Some returned it at the end of the day while others gave it back on the next day.

Data Processing

The data collected using the questionnaires were scored and fed in Excel Sheet and entered into SPSS for further analysis. Mean, Standard Deviation, t test, and Pearson's correlation was used.



Results and discussions

Table no 1: Frequency distribution of gender with the variables of the study.

Variables	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency (n=25)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n=25)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage (%)
Place of residence						
Rural	13	26%	10	20%	23	46%
Urban	12	24%	15	30%	27	54%
Religion						
Muslim	5	10%	5	10%	10	20%
Hindu	8	16%	6	12%	14	28%
Christian	12	24%	14	28%	26	52%
Working status of father						
Yes	24	48%	23	46%	47	94%
No	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	3	6%
Working status of mother						
Yes	10	20%	8	16%	18	36%
No	15	30%	17	34%	32	64%

The frequency distribution of gender with all the socio demographic variables can be seen in table no.1.

There were a total of 50(25 males and 25 females) adolescents included in the sample for this study. 13 adolescent boys lived in rural areas and 12 in urban areas. 5 males were Muslims, 8 were Hindus and 12 were Christians. Except 1 adolescent, all the male adolescents' fathers were working. 10 male adolescents' mothers were working and 15 were

not. 10 adolescent girls lived in rural areas and 15 in urban areas. 5 girls were Muslims, 6 were Hindus and 14 were Christians. Except 2 adolescents', all the girl's fathers were working. 8 girl's mothers were working and 17 were not.

Ha 1. There will be a significant gender difference in assertiveness

Table no 2: Description of assertiveness test scores of adolescents and t test results (n=50)

Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	t- value	Significance
Males	10.72	13.936	3.356	.002
Females	-.04	7.924		

The mean Assertiveness score of the boys was 10.72, which shows that the boys are assertive whereas the girls have -.04 indicating that the girls are situationally assertive.

The t value from table 2 (3.356: $p=.002$) indicates that the gender difference in assertiveness is significant. Ha1 i.e there will be a significant gender difference in assertiveness is accepted. The finding that gender is a significant predictor of assertiveness among undergraduates goes along with the previous findings of some researchers, such as Hersen et al. (1973), Ory and Helfrich (1976), Adejumo (1981) and Eskin (2003), all reported that men are more assertive than women.

Ha₂ There will be a significant association between assertiveness and place of residence.

Table no.3: Description of assertiveness test scores and t tests score.

Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	t- value	Significance
Male	10.72	13.936	1.478	.146
Female	-.04	7.924		

We can observe the t test (1.478: $p=.146$) values in table no.3. Ha₂ i.e there will be a significant association between assertiveness and place of residence is rejected. These results obtained are opposing to the ones found by Parray, Waqar & Ahirwar, Ghooman & Kumar, Sanjay. (2018), they found a significant difference in assertiveness among rural students.

Ha3: Ho₁ There will be no difference in assertiveness based on religion.

Table no.4: Results of chi square assertiveness and religion

Variable	χ^2	p value
Assertiveness and religion	4.313	.365

A look at table no.4 reveals the chi square(4.313: $p=.365$). H_{01} i.e There will be no difference in assertiveness based on religion is accepted. The findings that there is no difference in assertiveness based on gender is also shown in a study conducted by A. A. Arigbabu, S. E. Oladipo and M. A. Owolabi-Gabriel(2011).

Summery and conclusion

The present study was conducted to find any gender difference in assertiveness. The sample consisted of 50 adolescents, out of which there were 25 boys and 25 girls around the age of 18years to 20 years of age. The data was obtained after administering a questionnaire designed to study assertiveness. Statistical tools like mean, standard deviation, t-test and Pearson's correlation were used to analyze the hypotheses.

After analysing the results the following conclusions were drawn.

Implications of the study

1. A significant gender was found in assertiveness. Boys are more assertive than the girls.
2. Assertiveness was not found to vary based on religion among the adolescents.
3. There was no association found between the place of residence(rural and urban) and assertiveness.

Limitations of the study

1. The number of people chosen for the sample was few.
2. The sample was collected mainly from undergraduate students studying in South Goa

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