

## **Effect of Self Confidence on Defence Oriented Reactions among Adolescents**

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**ABSTRACT:** The present study was undertaken to study the gender differences with regard to the effect of self-confidence on defence-oriented reactions among adolescents. Keeping in view the main objective of the study, two levels of self-confidence (high and low) were grouped together with the two levels of sexes (boys and girls) to yield four conditions. All the subjects were matched on their educational level and SES level. The selection of the subjects was done using randomization technique. A 2x2 factorial design was made. A sample of 100 subjects was equally divided among high and low self-confidence which was further equally divided on the gender. "Self-confidence Inventory" developed by Rekha Gupta (2013) was administered to determine the level of Self-Confidence. "Defence Mechanism Inventory" developed by Mrinal N R and Singhal Uma (2012) was administered to determine the level of defence-oriented reactions. The Mean and ANOVA were utilised to examine the outcome of the study. The results revealed that significant difference exists between adolescents with high and low level of self-confidence on defence-oriented reactions and its dimensions but with no gender differences as such.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

As defined by the Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary [1977], adolescence refers to the, 'process of growing up' or to the 'period of life from puberty to maturity'. Linguistically as well the word is a Latin word meaning 'to grow up' or to 'come to maturity.' If we start at the beginning as it were and set out to define the term adolescence from a psychological perspective, then immediately two aspects become apparent. First – that adolescence as a period cannot even be defined in a way that makes it a period of development independent or immune of human judgment. In other words, the question is as to whether adolescence is a social construction. Second – that it usually has to be defined with the sort of ambiguity that has left the door open for rival theories of adolescence [Vaness, 1960].

Taking for example, Buhler's [1954] definition which has most likely reached general acceptance among developmental psychologists: Adolescence is an in-between period beginning with the achievement of physiological maturity and ending with the assumption of social maturity- that is with the assumption of social, sexual, economic and legal rights and duties of the adult. The definition is biological at the outset, but except for the word 'sexual', its termination is entirely in social terms. In other words, the termination of adolescence is subject to the particular customs of the culture- it is culturally specific. Adolescence is thus subject to human judgment. It has the implication that adults can wilfully prolong adolescence by decisions about what defines the termination of it.

Self-confidence is a person's belief or trust in their own ability. Confidence is a feeling of trust in someone or something. To be self-confident is to have confidence in yourself. Self-confident people don't doubt themselves. Self-belief has been directly connected to an individual's social network, the activities they participate in, and what they hear about themselves from others. Positive self-esteem has been linked to factors such as psychological health, mattering to others, and both body image and physical health. Low self-esteem in adolescents has been shown to be an important predictor of unhealthy behaviours and psychological problems such as suicidal ideation later in life.

The concept of the defence mechanism originated with Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and was later elaborated by other psychodynamically oriented theorists, notably his daughter Anna Freud (1895-1982).

Defence mechanisms allow negative feelings to be lessened without an alteration of the situation that is producing them, often by distorting the reality of that situation in some way. While they can help in coping with stress, they pose a danger because the reduction of stress can be so appealing that the defences are maintained and become habitual. They can also be harmful if they become a person's primary mode of responding to problems. In children, excessive dependence on defence mechanisms may produce social isolation and distortion of reality and hamper the ability to engage in and learn from new experiences. Defence mechanisms include denial, repression, suppression, projection, displacement, reaction formation, regression, fixation, identification, introjection, rationalization, isolation, sublimation, compensation, and humour.

### **HYPOTHESIS**

1. Adolescents with high and low self-confidence will differ significantly from each other on defence-oriented reactions and its dimensions.
2. Boys and girls will differ significantly from each other on defence-oriented reactions and its dimensions.

## **II. METHOD**

Sample- The total sample is consistent of 100 subjects equally divided among high and low self-confidence and boys and girls. All the subjects will be matched on their educational level and SES level. The selection of the subjects has been done using randomization technique from the schools of Delhi. The sample for the study consists of 100 adolescent students studying in XI and XII class. The age range of the sample happens to be 16-18 years.

Tools – a) Gupta Rekha (2013). Description - The SCI has been designed to assess the level of Self-Confidence among adolescents and adults. The test consists of 56 statements related to one's thinking on different situations. Responses are given to all 56 statements as right or wrong.

b) Mrinal N R and Singhal Uma (2012). "Defence Mechanism Inventory". Description - In this inventory, Defence Mechanisms have been classified under five clusters which are, TAO (turning against object), PRO (projection), PRN (principalization), TAS (turning against self) and REV (reversal). The DMI consists of ten small stories on each page. After each story, four questions have been given and each question has five answers from which an answer has to be selected. These four questions are related to four types of behaviours, viz., a) real, b) fantasy, c) thinking, and d) feeling. From these, only the real behaviour is expressed and not the other three. For each question, out of five answers, only two have to be selected, (1) which most resembles the subject's attitude or behaviour, for which a plus sign will be put in the answer sheet and (2) which does not represent subject's attitude or behaviour, for which a minus sign will be put in the answer sheet. There are a total of 200 questions in the test.

## **III. PROCEDURE –**

The above mentioned two scales were administered on the selected sample of adolescents. First, some basic personal information was collected with bio-data sheet prepared for the same purpose. A day was chosen for the administration of test basis the availability of the adolescents. The adolescents were seated in a separate room and briefed about the tests being conducted and taking them through the procedure of each test separately. After clarifying their doubts and queries, each student was handed over a set of the two tests each along with standard stationery like pen, pencils, erasers etc. The room was kept noise free as much as possible during the process of administration along with proper amenities like drinking water, air conditioning etc. After this, the tests were administered as per the time allotted for each test. Finally, all the test sheets were taken back from the adolescents and they were thanked for their time and effort for taking this test with us. Post this, the raw data was tabulated with the help of scoring keys and raw data was evaluated. The obtained responses were further processed with the help of statistical techniques using Mean, SDs and ANOVA to draw the inferences.

## **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS –**

To test the proposed hypotheses the obtained data was statistically analysed by computing Means, SDs, and F-values. The results of which were summarised in tables below.

The first hypothesis which states that “adolescents with high and low self-confidence will differ significantly from each other on defence-oriented reactions and its dimensions”, to test this, F-value was computed. 'F' Value of High and Low for SCI was not found to be significant, hence the H1 hypothesis was not approved assuming that no significant difference exists between the two groups.

In a similar study, Cramer P. (2018) “Change in Children's Self Confidence and the Use of Defense Mechanisms” concluded that an increase in self-confidence was unrelated to the use of defense mechanisms.

The second hypothesis which states that “Boys and girls will differ significantly from each other on defence-oriented reactions and its dimensions”, to test this hypothesis, F-value was computed. No gender difference was found on level of DMI (Defence Mechanism Inventory) and its values as the F value was not

found to be significant, hence the H2 hypothesis is not approved assuming that no significant difference exists between the two groups.

In a similar study, Levit, David B (1991) "Gender differences in ego defences in adolescence: Sex roles as one way to understand the differences", concluded that boys scored higher on projection and aggression-outward defences, and girls scored higher on turning against the self.

Table 3 shows the trend of the sample and the observation clearly shows that Analysis of Variance for Turning against object (TAO), Projection (PRO), Principalization (PRN), Turning against self (TAS), Reversal (REV) and Defence Mechanism Inventory (DMI) showed no significant value for group that is high and low SC. It means, both the groups do not differ significantly on these levels. Likewise, no gender difference was found on these levels as the F value were not found to be significant. The interaction between the two levels of groups and the two levels of sex also did not show any significant impact on these levels in a combined manner. It means that when the level of self-confidence matched with sex, no significant impact is observed on these levels.

The overall results of the present study have shown that adolescents with high and low self-confidence do not differ significantly from each other on defence-oriented reactions and its dimensions. Also, no gender difference has been found as such.

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**TABLE NO. 1**

**MEANS OF TOTAL BOYS AND TOTAL GIRLS**

VARIABLES	BOYS MEAN	GIRLS MEAN
Self-Confidence Index (SCI)	20.36	20.24
Turning against object	39.12	38.86
Projection	39.76	39.48
Principalization	39.54	39.80
Turning against self	38.62	38.60
Reversal	39.48	39.46
TOTAL Defence Mechanism Inventory	196.52	195.70

**TABLE NO. 2**

**MEANS OF TOTAL HIGH SC AND TOTAL LOW SC**

VARIABLES	TOTAL HIGH SC MEAN	TOTAL LOW SC MEAN
Self-Confidence Index (SCI)	12.66	27.94
Turning against object	39.16	38.82
Projection	39.52	39.72
Principalization	39.70	39.64
Turning against self	38.70	38.52
Reversal	39.80	39.34
TOTAL Defence Mechanism Inventory	196.38	195.84

**TABLE NO. 3**

**ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR TOTAL DMI (Defence Mechanism Inventory) AND ITS DIMENSIONS**

VARIABLES	SOURCE OF VARIATION		
	H. L.	SEX	H.L. SEX
Turning against object	0.79	0.52	0.21
Projection	0.14	0.50	0.03
Principalization	0.02	0.38	0.06

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Turning against self	0.25	0.05	0.25
Reversal	0.01	0.63	2.25
TOTAL Defence Mechanism Inventory	2.13	3.84	0.85

\* Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

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