



A STUDY OF SOCIAL PROVISION AND SELF ESTEEM AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

The present study is on social provision and self-esteem among adolescents with 100 adolescents (50 males and 50 females) from Aizawl town serving as participants. The study was carried out using two psychological test - The Self Esteem Scale (Dhar & Dhar, 2009) and The Social Provision scale (Cutrona and Russell, 1987). The age of the subjects ranges from 13 to 17 years, from low to high socio-economic status. The result shows the tests to be reliable and significant gender difference was found in self-esteem but not on social provision. Lastly and unexpectedly, the result shows negative relationship between social provision and self-esteem.

Keywords: Social Provision, Social support, Self-Esteem, Adolescents.

Self-esteem refers to an individual's sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes or likes him or herself (Blascovich and Tomako, 1991). It occupies a key place in the structure of adolescent individual because it is related to mental health and definition of life goals. Researchers have suggested that social support is one of the main components influencing self-esteem, especially the support of one's parents early in

development. Social support generally refers to the different ways that individuals help others. Researchers found that the best self-esteem predictor in adolescents is the amount of perceived social support they receive from their classmates and the degree of parental approval. In other words, the perception of support from an individual tends to influence their self-esteem. Therefore the more support one believes he or she is receiving, the higher his or her self – reported self – esteem. In addition, social

supports moderate the self-esteem level based on the degree of proficiency in an area. In other words, individuals who are extremely skilled in an area but who receive little aid report lower self-esteem rates than individuals who are extremely skilled but who receive a lot of social support. However, the higher the degree of conditional support, the lower will be the self-esteem.

Objectives

- (i) To find out the internal consistency of the scales on the target population
- (ii) To find out if there's any 'gender' differences in the two psychological scales used
- (iii) To find out the social provision's relationship with self-esteem
- (iv) Finding out predictability of social provision on self-esteem

Method

Sample:

100 adolescents (50 males and 50 females) were selected as a sample for the current study. The samples were taken from Rev. Saiaithanga Memorial School, College Veng, Aizawl and Gov't Aizawl High School, Republic, Aizawl, Mizoram. The age of the subjects ranges from 13 to 17 years, they are from low to high socio-economic status. The tests were administered in the classrooms with the permission of the teacher.

Measures

- 1. Self Esteem Scale:** This scale consists of 23 statements and is developed by

Dr. Santosh Dhar & Dr. Upinder Dhar in the year 2009. The test takes about 10 minutes to complete. The statements are to be answered in terms of strongly agree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. It can successfully be used for assessing the Self – Esteem of the individual. The scale may be administered on the individual regardless of gender, age and educational background. The scale has a reliability of 0.87 and a validity of 0.93.

- 2. Social Provision Scale:** Developed by Cutrona and Russell in the year 1987, this scale consists of 24 items with six subscales. It also takes about 10 minutes to complete the response. All the statements are to be answered in terms of strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree. The SPS has internal consistency and good test – retest reliability and the total consistency reliability for the Social Provision Scales is excellent ($\alpha.93$).

Procedure

Written consents were taken before the questionnaires were filled up with full confidentiality given to the participants; they were also informed about their right to withdraw from the research at any time they feel like. Responses on the two scales were scored according to standardized procedure and the result was then analyzed using “Statistical Package for Social Sciences” (SPSS, 20).

Results and Discussion

Following the objectives, the result was analysed and the result for the Cronbach

Alphas, Mean scores and Standard Deviation are given in Table – 1 whereas bivariate correlation for the behavioral measures are highlighted in Table – 2. As indicated in the second column, the reliability coefficient of Social provision Scale was estimated to be 0.77 for 24 items

which means a good internal consistency of the scale and the reliability of self esteem scale was also very robust with a coefficient of 0.78 which also indicates a good internal consistency of the scale on the present population – the Mizo adolescents.

Table 1: Table showing reliability coefficients, Mean $\pm$ SD for the behavioral measures

Scales	Reliability coefficient	Statistics	Male	Female	Total
Social Provision Scale	0.77	Mean	50.2	52.8	51.5
		SD	8.67	8.07	8.4
Self Esteem Scale	0.78	Mean	86.8	79.52	83.1
		SD	8.7	7.1	8.7

The mean scores (Table 1) suggests female adolescents to be higher in the level of social provision when compared to their male counterparts with a mean of 50.2 and 52.8 respectively for male and female. But the result of t-test for independent samples failed to reveal significant gender differences ($t = -1.53$; $p > .05$). This observation is consistent with Sailo et al (2014), Sailo (2007) and Jones et al (1982). Contrary to our result, Davis, Veeh, Davis and Tripodi (2017) observed that males reported higher rates of negative social support overall and females reported higher rates of both mixed and positive social support compared to their counterparts. However, Soman et al., (2016) reported perceived social support to be significantly higher in males than females ($p < 0.001$) – males perceived significantly higher social support from friends than females ($p < 0.001$), whereas support from significant

others was higher in females. In addition, Hamdan, M. A and Dawani A.H, (2008), also found females to perceive more social support from friends than males.

In the self esteem scale, male adolescents ($M = 86.8$) scores higher than their counterparts, the females ($M = 79.52$). The t-test result made it clear that there is gender difference ($p < .01$) with an effect size of 0.179. The findings are consistent with Kling et al. (1999), when they conducted on a study of “Gender differences in self-esteem: A meta analysis”, which found males to score higher than females on standard measures of global self- esteem, but with a small difference. Moreover, many nations have women who reported lower self-esteem than their men (Sprecher, Brooks, & Avogo, 2013). Researchers also found that self-esteem tended to increase with age, from adolescence to adulthood,

Table 2: Table showing the Relationship between the Behavioral Measures

Social Provision	Self Esteem
Pearson r	- 0.20*
Sig (2-tailed)	0. 044

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

and men tended to have higher levels of self esteem at every age than women around the world.

The table above shows the relationship between Social provision and Self Esteem on the target population. The correlation between the behavioral measures was found to be significant at .05 level ($p=.04$). Although significant relationship was observed, the effect size is quite small (accounts for only 4% of variance, $r^2 = .04$) and a reciprocal relationship was found which indicates that adolescents who scores high on Social Provision (having more social support) tends to have low self-esteem which is contrary to expectations and

previous findings (Warda et al., 2015; Kumar et al., 2014 & Nolen et al., 1999). Our result suggests that, among the Mizo adolescents, the more aid we get from the society, be it family, friends or religious community and others; it resulted in a lower self esteem. In a more developed cultures of the world, it would be quite contradictory to find such results. But in a Mizo culture, experience shows us that adolescents are still provided with lots of aid from parents especially in terms of finance and in facing stressful events. This constant providence might affect the development of self esteem and level of independence among Mizo adolescents.

Table 3: Table Showing Predictability of Social Provision on Self Esteem

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	93.899	5.311		17.679	0.000
	Soc_Provision	-0.208	0.102	-0.202	-2.043	0.044

Model Summary ^b						
Model	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	0.041 ^a	4.175	1	98	0.044	1.373

In the above Linear Regression Model, the predictability of Self esteem on Social Provision was examined which is significant ($p=.04$). The Durbin-Watson statistic was on acceptable range ($DW > 1$). The R Square Change was .041 which indicates that Social provision contributes lesser amount of variation (4%) on self esteem scores and is suggestive that if a larger model with larger sample be constructed which would include appropriate and significant covariates. The standardized coefficient was -.20 which indicates that with every increase in one standard deviation on Social Provision there was decrement by .20 standard deviation on Self esteem which looks quite contradictory to previous studies (Tahir et al., 2015; Warda et al., 2015; Kumar et al., 2014 and Farzaee, 2012).

In sum, the present study like other studies, have indicated that males and females are indeed differ on many factors including self-esteem and in the present sample, there exist negative relationship between the two psychological measures which could be due to cultural factors and societal structure of the Mizo society. One factor could be the kind of support that adolescents receive from significant people in their lives; as conditional support could lead to decreased self-esteem. In addition, the reciprocal relationship between social provision and self esteem could be because as adolescents received more social provision or social support, they tend to rely too much on these supports which could disturb the normal development of their self-esteem and self- worthiness. It is obvious that when one depends too much on others

for their needs, they can easily lose their confidence, independence and self worthiness when alone or without others; this could in turn have an effect on their emotional and relationship development as it will be difficult for them to deal with life problems and challenges on their own. Lastly, additional study with more sample and additional variables could throw better light on the relationship between the variables under study.

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