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# The Effect Of Psychological Training On Intrapersonal Competency Among Rural Youth

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## ABSTRACT

Psychological training is a form of support that may help the rural youth face challenges, take risks, overcome hurdles, become resilient, outspoken, enhance career growth etc. Psychological training will help an individual to personally realize his capability and other's ability to be psychologically empowered and socially skillful. Empowerment among youth in general and issues of rural youth, in particular, will be a challenging task that needs to be taken care by psychologists. Therefore, youth require help in order to feel good about themselves that in turn will help them to become good citizens to the society. Therefore, the present study focuses on identifying the components required for Psychological training and its effect on Intrapersonal Competency of rural youth. The study aims to promote Psychological Empowerment among the youth. It also aims to bring rural youth to the main arena with the application of training and practice. The training also aims at enhancing the potential of rural youth that will help them become independent and self-sufficient. It helps the targeted group in the management of their emotions, behavioural regulation, increasing social acceptability and desirability.

**Keywords:** Youth, Psychological training, Psychological empowerment, Intrapersonal competency etc.

## INTRODUCTION

Youth Development Index is defined as a composite index of indicators that reflect socio-economic & political status of youth, besides their health & well-being (Youth Development Index, 2017). It is a multidimensional index that measures youth development in India on basis of six domains namely: Education, Health, Work, Political Participation, Civic Participation & Social Inclusion.

The first domain, Education (Youth Development Index, 2017) certainly raises the standards of the country by empowering the youth. It stands as a catalyst that would help them quench their thirst for achieving their potential to the fullest. Youth ought to be equipped with the most ideal environment to help them achieve their abilities, be it in any field.

Although there seems to be a tremendous increase in adult literacy rate (15 years & above) in India to 71 percent according to National Sample Survey Office 71<sup>st</sup> round (2014), there is a gender disparity. Since education, as imagined, looks to change the way one lives and considers, the youth require incredible opportunities, guidance and reasonable conditions, to help them overcome the obstacles laying in their way.

Health, the second domain identified by Youth Development Index (2017) is something which is most often neglected. Youth are prone to both physical and psychological health issues that need to be addressed immediately to enhance their productivity and well-being of the whole country.

The third domain, (Youth Development Index, 2017) Work refers to the employment opportunities available to the youth of the country. The right fit for the right job is still a question not answered. Although there is improvement in adult literacy rate, the employment opportunities for youth are yet a big lacuna. Another issue that is pertinent with is the gender bias that is present with regard to employment opportunities. Opportunities for the fairer sex are comparatively less in the Indian context. Also, factors such as household work, taking care of children, issues of dowry etc. are also issues that limit women from coming forward in the field of employment.

The fourth domain, Youth Participation in Politics has always been criticized to be inactive in the yester years (Youth Development Index, 2017). It is an undeniable fact that the scenario of politics with relevance to youth involvement is drastically shifting. Youth have started to show interest in politics yet the statistics is still not much explored in this area. The political situation in India is also quite hopeless for youth willing to enter themselves in the arena. Families who have been in the ruling for long generations and thereby make it difficult for interested youth to rise in the area dominate political arenas. However, the political scenario in India is also changing with youth beginning to express their interest in reforming the field.

According to Youth development Index (2017, p.75), Civic Participation, the fifth domain is “complementary to political participation and is a key marker of human development as it ensures active citizenry & empowerment of communities”. Community development is solely based on the interest of youth in the area to look into the issues that hinder development of their immediate community and to take measures that will enable reformation.

The sixth domain, Youth Social Inclusion Index, according to Youth Development Index (2017) tries to capture the social inequality across various social categories among youth & helps to achieve constitutional promises. Social structure inequalities such as reservation, privileges for the backward classes, casteism, gender inequality etc. are evils still present in the Indian scenario. The Government must take efforts to initiate measures that enable equal and fair treatment along with access to equal opportunities for all.

Based on the domains measured by Youth Development Index (2017), it is also important to understand the various obstacles encountered by youth including: scarcity of decent job opportunities, lack of support from concerned educational institutions, health reasons etc. When compared to people from the adult category, adolescents are

largely unemployed and they are more vulnerable to psychological disorders. Owing to the development stage that they are in, the incidence of mood related problems, anxiety and identity issues are also more among this category (Bradley, 2001).

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT**

Psychological Empowerment emerged due to the consistent failure of economic and social empowerment programs (Oladipo, 2009) probably because they failed to understand psychological framework of people being empowered. Human beings are psychological entities and therefore they play a very important role in formulation and amendment of policies related to them. Lack of focus on the psychological aspect may lead to the propagation of inappropriate attitudes and behaviours which can lead to the ineffectiveness of government policies.

Emphasis on Psychological Empowerment will lead to the enhancement of development which will in turn lead to patriotism & commitment to national progress. Psychological Empowerment will lead to a positive change in values, ability to delay gratification of one's impulses, to enhance self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-awareness which evidently will contribute to a harmonious and peaceful society (Zhang et al., 2018).

According to Oladipo (2009), "an individual's cognitive state characterized by a sense of alleged control, competence, and goal internalization" (p. 121) is what psychologically empowered is operationalized as. Thus, it is regarded as an umbrella term that reflects the various aspects of having a strong psychological foundation, a sense of having personal control, a proactive way of living, and a clear understanding of the socio-political environment. It is firmly rooted in an action framework that includes societal change, potential development, and community.

Zimmerman (1995, 2000) proposed a multidimensional model of empowerment, which assesses empowerment in three levels namely, psychological, organizational, & community levels. This model is widely utilized in the field of community research (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010; Peterson et al., 2006). According to Zimmerman's (2000) model, Psychological Empowerment is treated as a context-based construct that favours influence of culture and not as a personality characteristic (Speer & Peterson, 2000). The focus of Zimmerman's (2000) model was to bring about change in the social context rather than intrapersonal transformation. The model also states that an individual becomes psychologically empowered when they involve in community action and that Psychological Empowerment is in fact, proactive community involvement.

In Zimmerman's (2000) model, the individual level focuses on perceptions of personal control, understanding of socio-political environment, & proactive behaviours that facilitate social change. Organizational level empowerment focuses on processes that enhance skills required to improve organizational effectiveness. Community level empowerment focuses on activities that enable community members to work collectively to improve the quality of community life. All the levels are interdependent and the level of empowerment at each level differs from time to time.

Zimmerman's (1995) model in Figure. 1 focuses on 3 components of Psychological Empowerment namely, intrapersonal, interactional, & behavioural. The

intrapersonal component focuses on aspects such as socio-political control, self-efficacy and motivation to control. The interactional component focuses on aspects such as awareness of socio-political contexts, familiarity with the norms, knowledge of resources & methods that can induce social change (Zimmerman, 1995). The behavioural component refers to the various steps initiated to influence results within a particular context. Such steps may include: volunteering in mutual help groups, stress management steps, assembling in voluntary associations etc.

Christens (2012), expanded Zimmerman's (1995) model by adding a relational component, which is the component that centers around the transformative power to bring change in socio-political domain. The component proposed by Christens (2012) includes factors such as collaborative competence, facilitating the empowerment of others, actions to eliminate social divisions, activate networks, & impart legacy.

Oladipo (2009) has stated that development of the community cannot be achieved until Psychological Empowerment is targeted at a mass level as Psychological Empowerment facilitates a change at the very roots of an individual beginning from attitude and cognitive changes to behavioural changes. When this transformation happens within an individual, they will be able to delay the process of gratification, reassess their values, and a sense of patriotism is triggered within them that motivates them to contribute to the society.

The model proposed by Oladipo (2009) for empowering the masses in Nigeria consisted of focusing on Government and the related agencies which included the community, media groups, faith-based groups, voluntary help groups such as NGOs, and organizations involved in the process of empowerment.

Oladipo (2009) states that any intervention or training planned for the benefit of the commons must include their participation and involvement, failing which, they tend to perceive the program as rooted for economic gains of one section of the society. Failing to ensure people's participation in such programs leads the community to adopt a non-cooperative attitude which results in the failure of the program though it was intended for a good purpose.

Since Psychological Empowerment deals with the emotional, behavioural and cognitive components of an individual, it is necessary that the concerned faculties take measures to ensure that the interventions or trainings designed are illustrative of the components. It is also essential that when such trainings are planned, the benefactors of the training are well briefed on the implications of the training and any suggestions or modifications suggested by the target sample be included in the training or intervention.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To find out effect of Psychological training on Psychological Empowerment of rural youth in the experimental group.

## **HYPOTHESES**

- **H1:** Psychological training would have an effect on Intrapersonal Competency among rural youth in experimental group.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to World Youth Report (2020), there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 per cent of global population. Youth are also often caught in a trap between their emotional independence from their parents and growing dependence towards their peers. This increased dependence on their peers often instigates behaviours such as impulsive responding to their immediate environments, lack of self-control, and disinclination, lack of concern regarding long-term consequences, etc. These factors in turn lead to reduced quality of decision-making during an emotionally charged situation.

Bailey (2020) stated that it is imperative to appreciate the aspirations of the rural community and that there is a dearth of evidence of research conducted among this community in India. The Government needs to take immediate measures to initiate research work amongst this community to understand their aspirations in order to enhance their well-being. A few of the suggestions recommended include: focus on education, better employment opportunities, enhanced standards of living that are in par with the urban community, etc.

Batista et al. (2018) examined the effect of Youth Empowerment Programs (YEPs) on Psychological Empowerment of foster care alumni in United States. This study aimed to identify effect of participation in youth empowerment programs on young adults who were part of the Florida foster care system. The results of the study were in line with other studies which also predicted similar results stating an increase in dimensions of Psychological Empowerment pertaining to YEP participation. Variables such as age, race, number of placements, time spent in foster care etc. were not significant predictors of Psychological Empowerment. The implications of the study stress on importance of YEPs for foster care youth in order to prevent negative outcomes in the future. Though the study talked about the benefits of empowerment programs for youth, it also stressed on the excessive demands it may place on the youth causing them to feel burdened leading to a drop in self-efficacy.

A study by Zimmerman et al. (2018) on youth empowerment solution evaluated the after-school program to engage middle school students in community change. The study found that youth who received more training or for a longer period reported better Psychological Empowerment & prosocial outcomes and less antisocial outcomes than youth who received after school programme for a lesser period. The study results also support both empowerment theory and program effectiveness. The drawback was that, self-report measures of the programme received was a limited assessment of the program engagement and models did not explain major variation in antisocial outcomes.

Vinoth Kumar and Karunanidhi (2017) did an intervention study on the impact of Psychological training on Psychological Empowerment and social skills among rural youth in Tamil Nadu (a state located in the southern part of India). The results obtained were analyzed using independent sample 't' test and paired 't' test. Results of study indicated that there was a significant increase in Psychological Empowerment score of the experimental group. The paired 't' test results also indicated an increase in

Psychological Empowerment scores of the experimental group from pre-test to post-test. Therefore, it could be understood that Psychological training lead to an increase in Psychological Empowerment. The limitations of the study stated that there was no follow-up study conducted that could confirm the long-lasting effect of the training. Future recommendations of the study suggest an intensive training session based on Psychological Empowerment to be administered for the rural community. The study also recommends the need for a tool that can assess Psychological Empowerment of youth within the Indian context.

A study was done by Morrel-Samuels et al. (2016) to understand the impact of community engagement to reduce youth violence. Community engagement focused interventions namely, Youth Violence Prevention Centres (YVPC) Program are administered to youth at Centres for Disease Control and Prevention with the aim of reducing youth violence in high-risk communities. The target sample consisted of a diverse racial group. Issues present in the region included homicides, socioeconomically disparities, child poverty, etc. By ensuring that the four critical values were taken care of during the intervention, the NC-YVPC intervention helped to modify most of the negative views that the community held with regard to community-based intervention.

In the study done by Motamedi et al. (2017), a quasiexperimental approach was adopted to observe the effect of emotional intelligence training on a sample of 23 adolescents (13 to 16 years) belonging to single-parent families who were selected via purposeful sampling. The results of study indicated that after training, an increase was observed in all of the variables of the study. An increase from pre-test to post-test score of emotional intelligence was seen for members in the experimental group depicting the effectiveness of the training program. Similarly, when comparing the scores of experimental group in pre-test & follow-up, a difference was found which evidently portrayed the sustaining effects of the training program.

Jenaabadi (2014) did a study to understand the impact of optimism training on emotional intelligence of males who were part of education and improvement centres. Individuals who obtained similar scores on an Emotional Intelligence Scale in the pre-test were assigned to experimental & control groups. The experimental group alone participated in the educative workshop for 35 days. The control group continued with their routine day-to-day activities and were not included in the training. The sessions of the training included: concepts and characteristics of optimism/pessimism, confronting pessimistic thoughts, recognizing pessimistic thoughts based on incompatible beliefs through examples, avoiding tragedy, analyzing unpleasant experiences of participants based on explanatory style, education on problem solving skills, etc. After a period of onemonth of training, post-test assessment was conducted. Results of the study revealed that the group education on optimism skills had increased emotional intelligence among the sample in the experimental group.

A study by Rusk et al. (2013) talks about the features of effective training and interventions administered to adolescents. It states that a) effective training programs must help the adolescents to build skills required for their career advancement, b) youth are active participants in effective training programs, c) effective training programs call

for cognitive engagement of the youth and they are also intrinsically motivated to be part of such initiatives when they understand the link between the program and their future, and lastly, d) effective training programs offer the youth real-life problem-like situations to work upon thereby exposing them to the demands and challenges of the real world which is accompanied by timely feedback.

Cattaneo and Chapman (2010) detailed that most of the definitions on empowerment focused on intrapersonal characteristics of an individual and did not give regard to components of the community or social environment. Empowerment has been globally used as an evaluation criterion for progress in research that discourses social concerns that affect the population.

Oladipo (2009) has stated that development of the community cannot be achieved until Psychological Empowerment is targeted at a mass level as Psychological Empowerment facilitates a change at the very roots of an individual beginning from attitude and cognitive changes to behavioural changes. When this transformation happens within an individual, they will be able to delay the process of gratification, reassess their values, and a sense of patriotism is triggered within them that motivates them to contribute to the society.

Empowerment, according to Maton (2008), is "a group-based, participatory method of growth that enables marginalized or repressed individuals or groups to acquire valuable resources and rights, achieve significant life goals, and lessen social isolation."

Hur (2006) said that community psychologists carefully assessed the individual and contextual characteristics that lead to empowerment of individuals and communities & researchers found a connection b/w empowerment & other variables including community participation, sense of community, & wellbeing.

Rose (2000) proposed that there are five main domains around which empowerment models are conceptualized namely, individual, interpersonal, professional, political, and organizational. Some of the earliest empowerment models were initiated within the context of organizations based on the kind of interventions given to the workers and the effects it produced.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The researcher contacted the concerned individuals over the phone and obtained their permission for collecting data. According to the convenience of the respective individuals, the researcher fixed appointments in order to collect data from them. The interview began with the self-introduction of the researcher followed by explaining the objective of the study. The schedule consisted of ten open-ended questions for which detailed responses were collected. The interviews lasted for about an hour with each person. All interviews were audio recorded with the knowledge of the respondent. For sample following criteria was used-

- Individuals in age group of 30 years & above
- People from NGO are who work for/along with youth: 20 volunteers who worked with reputed NGOs over 5 years and above.

- Teachers from Schools: 10 teachers from different schools with an experience of 10 to 15years.
- Assistant Professors from Colleges: 14 Assistant Professors from different departments of various colleges having an experience of 10 years and above.

## ANALYSIS RESULT

**Table 1 Analysis of Variance of Intrapersonal Competency of Young Adults after Psychological Training**

	Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Sum of Squares	F	Sig	Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared)
<b>Pre-test, Post-test</b>	Linear Component	57.600	<b>1</b>	57.600	56.301	.000	.419
<b>Follow-up</b>	Quadratic Component	16.875	<b>1</b>	16.875	29.656	.000	.275

The results of Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance in table 1 indicates that the change in intrapersonal competency was significant over the time periods (pre-test, post-test & follow-up). The result also indicates that linear trend & quadratic trend is significant. Further, it can also be observed that the linear trend is higher when compared to quadratic trend. Moreover, the effect size indicates that over time periods, there was 41.9% change in the linear trend and 27.5% in the quadratic trend.

**Table 2 Analysis of Variance of Intrapersonal Competency of Young Adults in Experimental and Control Group after Psychological Training**

	Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Sum of Squares	F	Sig	Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared)
<b>Pre-test, Post-test</b>	Linear Component	<b>67.600</b>	<b>1</b>	67.60	66.75	.000	.459
<b>Follow-up</b>	Quadratic Component	9.075	<b>1</b>	9.075	15.949	.000	.170



The results in table 2 indicates that change in intrapersonal competency was also significant between the groups (experimental and control). The result indicates that linear trend and quadratic trend is significant. It can also be observed that the linear trend is higher when compared to quadratic trend. Moreover, the effect size indicates that there was 45.9% change in the linear trend and 17% in the quadratic trend.

**Table 3 Estimated Marginal Means of Experimental and Control groups in Intrapersonal Competency across Time**

Variable	Group	Time	Estimated Marginal Mean	Mean Difference	Std. Error of Mean Difference	Sig
Intrapersonal Competency	Pre-test	Experimental	13.45	.075	.634	.906
		Control	13.37			
	Post test	Experimental	15.67	2.200	.584	.000
		Control	13.47			
	Follow-up	Experimental	15.95	2.675	.522	.000
		Control				

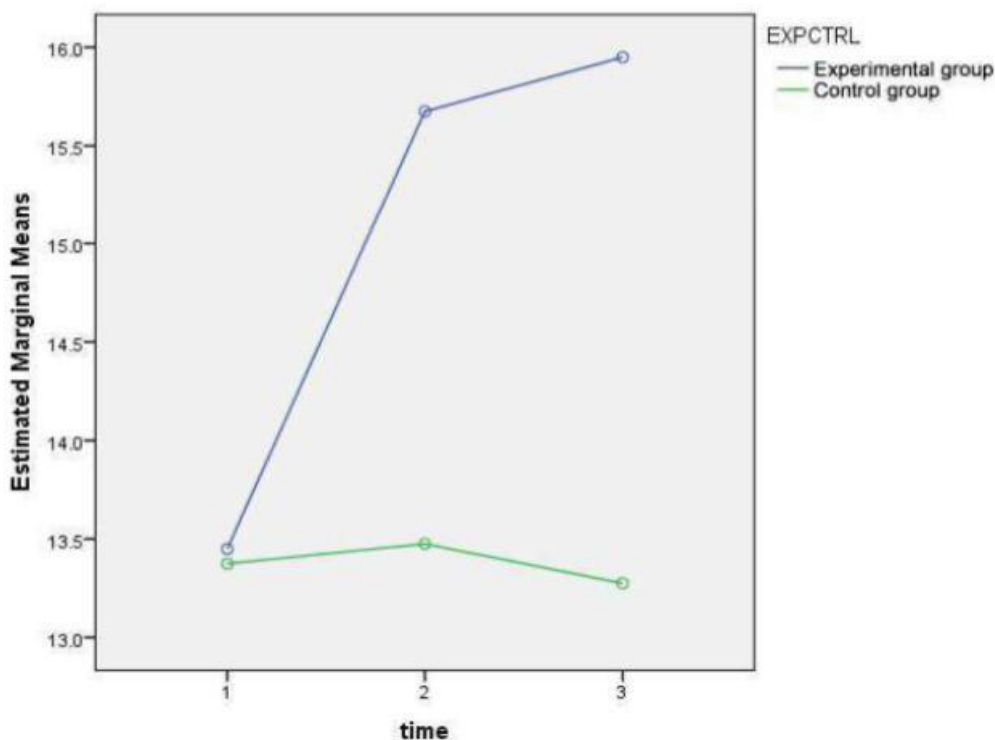
Table 3 shows that the difference in intrapersonal competency between the experimental & control groups, across time periods. The value indicates that there was no significant difference b/w groups in pre-test. However, there was a significant difference b/w two groups in post-test and follow-up. The mean values indicate that after Psychological training, the experimental group was found to have higher levels of Psychological Empowerment when compared to control group in post-test & follow-up.

**Table 4 Estimated Marginal Means of Pre-test, Post-test & Follow-up of Experimental & Control Group in Intrapersonal Competency**

Time	Estimated Marginal Mean	Mean Difference	Std. Error of Mean Difference	Sig
<b>Experimental</b>				
Pre-test	13.45	2.22	.209	.000
Post test	15.67			
Pre-test	13.45	2.50	.226	.000
Follow-up	15.95			
Post test	15.67	.27	.3156	.000

Follow-up	15.95			
<b>Control</b>				
Pre-test	13.37	.10	.209	.634
Post test	13.47			
Pre-test	13.37	.10	.226	.660
Follow-up	13.27			
Post test	13.47	.20	.156	.205
Follow-up	13.27			

Table 4 shows the post hoc pair-wise comparisons which indicates that there was a significant difference in intrapersonal competency scores within group in between pre-test, post-test, & follow-up of the experimental group. Further, the mean score indicates that in the experimental group, Intrapersonal Competency has increased significantly from pre-test to post-test. There was no significant change in the scores of Intrapersonal Competency of the experimental group from post-test to follow-up. The mean score indicates that in control group, Intrapersonal Competency did not change significantly from pre-test to posttest and to follow-up. The same is illustrated in the figure 1.



**Figure 1: Estimated Marginal Means Intrapersonal Competency**

## CONCLUSIONS

Intrapersonal competency refers to individual's ability to identify & evaluate themselves based on their strengths, talents, weaknesses, opportunities available to them and the barriers that hinder their progress (Bolton & Brookings, 1998; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; Zimmerman, 1995). The researcher has operationally defined intrapersonal competency

as “the ability of the individual to be aware of themselves”. The training session for intrapersonal competency was designed in a way that enhances self-awareness, self-confidence, empathy and social support. Psychological training provided could have helped them understand themselves better and they were very eager to explore themselves in identifying their personal strengths and weaknesses. The training also made them understand about the importance of empathizing and providing social assistance to their fellow beings. The motivation and enthusiasm of the participants could have further helped them to internalize the learning happened.

Results of Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance indicated that the change in intrapersonal competency was significant between the experimental & control group. This indicates that training has been beneficial for the participants by an increase in their intrapersonal competency. Intrapersonal competency helps an individual to develop an understanding about themselves and provides the skill sets to interact with other members of community. It allows an individual to have healthy relationships with community people and also allows them to get along with others easily. Further, the post hoc pairwise comparisons indicate that there was a significant increase in intrapersonal competency scores from pre-test to post-test and follow-up of the experimental group. This might be due to the awareness that the individual gained mindful of themselves due to the activities which could have been utilized to do tasks better, for realistic execution of tasks and to gauge better the opportunities and weaknesses in their life. This finding is in line with the study conducted by Mertens et al., (2020) which reported that interventions on intrapersonal competence that focus on self-awareness & problem solving by using active learning approaches combined with extensive interventions paved the way for stronger intervention effects.

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