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Effect of Arousal and Task Orientation On Self Efficacy, Achievement Attribution and Self Image

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Abstract
The present study investigated the effect of task orientation on self-efficacy judgement, attribution and self-perception. It was a 3 by 2 factorial design. A significant effect of arousal was noticed as the subject reported highest self - efficacy judgement under failure condition. The main effect of strategy was also significant. The subjects under no strategy condition reported higher level of self-efficacy. A significant effect of arousal was noticed for six variables in self -perception and performance attribution.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, Attribution, Arousal

Introduction
According to Bandura 1982 efficacy is dealing with one's environment is not a fixed act or a simply a matter of knowing what to do rather it involves a generative capability in which component cognitive, social and behavioral skills must be organized into integrated courses of action to serve innumerable purposes. Self-efficacy is concerned with judgement of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations (Bandura, 1982)
Self-efficacy judgement whether accurate or faulty influence choice of activities that they believe exceed their coping capabilities, but they undertake to perform assuredly relieve those that the judge themselves capable of managing.
Judgement of self-efficacy also determines how much effort people will expand and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles or an aversive experience when beset with difficulties. People who entertain serious doubts about their capabilities slacken their efforts or give up altogether whereas those who have a strong sense of efficacy exert greater effort to master the challenges. High perseverance usually produces high level of performance.
In a recent analysis Bandura (1982) has proposed that in any given instance behavior would be best predicted by considering both self-efficacy and outcome beliefs. Different patterns of outcome and efficacy beliefs are likely to produce different psychological effects. A high sense of personal efficacy and a responsive environment that rewards performance attainment fosters assured, active responsiveness. High self-efficacy with low environmental responsiveness is a different combination.
Efficacious persons who cannot achieve positive outcomes by their actions will not necessarily cease behaving. Those with low efficacy will give up readily while self-efficacious individuals will intensify their efforts and if necessary, try to change the environment.
The pattern in which competency goes unrewarded or is punished underscores the need to differentiate 2 levels of control-control over outcomes and control over social systems that prescribe what the outcomes will be. Gurin and Lacey (1979) have analyzed the influence over social systems, which typically receive scant notice in psychological analysis on controllability. Conditions combining high self-efficacy with environmental unresponsiveness tend to generate resentment, protest and collective efforts to change existing practices. Should change be difficult to achieve given suitable alternatives,

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people will desert environments that are unresponsive to their efforts and pursue their activities elsewhere.

Considering the joint influence of self- efficacy and outcome beliefs, provide a basis for differentiating conditions conclusive to apathy from those likely to induce despondency. When people have a lower sense of personal efficacy and no amount of effort by themselves or comparatively by others produce results, they become apathetic and resign to a dreamy life. The pattern in which people perceive themselves as ineffectual but see similar others enjoying the benefits of successful effort is apt to give rise to self- disparagement.

The present study investigated the effect of task orientation and affective arousal on self-efficacy judgement attribution and self -perception.

In the light of relevant studies', it was assumed that nature of task orientation would significantly influence the judgement of self- efficacy performance attribution and self -perception.

The task orientation variables is conceived in the form of emphasis on strategies. The work of Langer 1983 suggests that involving subjects in thinking about strategies results in greater confidence and higher level of perceived probability of success. Based on this finding it was expected that if subjects are required to think and write about strategies to solve problems pertaining to the self-efficacy judgement. The subjects will report greater probability of attaining success treated as a measure of self -efficacy judgement.

The second variable was affective arousal. The research literature in consequences of arousal indicates that arousal is an effective way to enhance the effective states facilitating as well as inhibiting relevant behaviors. Following this reason, it was expected that putting subjects under success (competence), failure (incompetence) & task related condition would yield different degrees of self - efficacy judgement, self -perceptions to attribution. It was predicted that the subjects would have greater amount of self -efficacy judgement under positive affective condition of success than failure conditions. Also, the task condition would result greater self - efficacy judgement than failure condition.

Methodology

Design: The design of the study was a 3 by 2 factorial design with three levels of arousal (success/failure /task) and two levels of task orientation (strategy and/ no strategy)

Participants: 48 male ninth graders from a higher secondary school at Bhopal in Central India participated in the study their age range from 13 to 15 (mean=13, standard deviation=.29)

Materials:

Self-efficacy judgement: - A set of five life tasks were prepared. They dealt with challenging situations like earning money to join yoga classes without any financial help from the family, seeking approval of elders, managing oneself in a city when the family has moved out, visiting an aunt without her address and making friends in new surroundings. The subjects were asked to read each situation and indicate the probability of completing the task. This provided an index of the strength of self-efficacy.

*Attribution questionn*aire: This measure consisted of rating scales for 14 causal categories ranging from very much contribution to performance (5) to very less contribution to performance (1). The subjects' task was to indicate the degree of contribution of each of these causes to the probability of task completion.

Self-perception task- It included the following 10 bipolar rating scales successful-successful, attractive – unattractive, imaginative- unimaginative, healthy-Unhealthy, popular-Unpopular, optimistic- pessimistic, valuable –worthless, active- passive, cruel- kind and competent- incompetent. The subjects' task was to rate his feelings on the scales. The scores on the task could range from 10 to 70.

Procedure: - The subjects were randomly assigned to the three experimental conditions namely success condition, failure condition and task condition. The part of instructions given below were common to all these conditions-

"This study involves reactions to problems of problematic situations likely to occur in daily life. In our day to day life we always face different types of problems. We will provide you a description of some problems. Your task will be to describe your own reactions."

The following instructions were specific to each condition: -

Success condition: - *"Before I provide you these problematic situations you are requested to write down a situation you dealt with and from which you emerged successfully."*

Failure condition: - *"Before I provide you with these problematic situations, you are requested to describe a situation which was difficult and in which you tried but could not succeed."*

Task condition: - *"Before I provide you these problematic situations, you are requested to describe a situation, which according to you would be of interest to everyone."*

The subjects were equally divided into two groups. After providing each subject with a copy of five problems, half the subjects were instructed to write down the strategies they would employ to solve the problems. The following instructions were given: -

"Please read the descriptions of problematic situations given to you and imagine yourself in those situations. After reading the situations, describe the strategies or strategy, you might employ to cope successfully with the problem. In other words, your task will be to describe the action or actions, you might take that may enable you to achieve the goal."

The other half of the subjects were told to judge the probability of success and the following instructions were given: -

"Please read the description of some problematic situations given to you and imagine yourself in these situations. After reading each situation estimate on a scale of 0 to 100% your likelihood of achieving success."

After doing so, the subjects who wrote down the strategies were given a task of stating their probability of success and subjects who wrote down the probability of achieving success were given the task of writing down the strategies they employed to solve the problems.

They were then provided with the attribution questionnaire and the following instructions were given: -

"*All of us know that success in handling any problematic situation depends upon a number of factors. Below is a list of such factors. These factors contribute differently towards solving problems. Please indicate the extent to which these factors contribute to your performance in the problematic situations in which you have just responded. You have to put a tick on any of the five numbers I.e. 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 by judging them on the points given at the end of the paper*."

The subjects were then provided with the self-perception task. The following instructions were given: -

"*You have just compiled the various tasks involved in our experiment. We would also like to know how you feel about yourself. Below are given some scales you have to mark them according to your feeling. For example, if you are feeling very successful then put a tick mark under the space provided within the category of 'very highly' highly similarly others are to be done.*"

The subjects were then thanked and dispersed.

Results

Self-efficacy judgement

The means and standard deviation of self-efficacy judgement appear in table 1. Mean percentages of judgements made by each subject was the raw data for obtaining these means.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviation of scores of Self Efficacy Judgement

		Success	Failure	Task
Strategy	Mean	54.5	56.12	55.25
	S. D	6.63	8.18	9.0

No Strategy	Mean	63.57	56.55	47.87
	S. D	14.79	14.79	6.77

The 3 X 2 factorial between group model ANOVA revealed a significant effect of arousal, $F (2, 42) = 28.11$, p <.01. The subjects reported highest self-efficacy judgement under failure (M = 85.12%) followed by task (M= 79.5%) and success conditions (M=68.75%). The main effect of strategy was also significant $F (1, 40) = 4.51$, p, .05. The subjects under no strategy condition reported higher level of self-efficacy judgement (M= 79.50 %) than the strategy condition (M=76.08%). The result also yielded interaction of arousal and task orientation, $F (2, 42) = 13.01$, p< .01. The mean scores as a function of this interaction are shown in figure.

1. The shape of curves show that the use of strategy has no effect under failure condition. The subjects who were asked to write the strategies before making self- efficacy judgements scored lower under success condition. The task condition however shows a different trend. The strategy group scored higher than the no strategy group.

Self -perception and performance attribution

The mean and standard deviation of scores on these measures appear in table 3 and 2.

Table 2: The means & SD's of score on self -perception task

		Success	Failure	Task
Strategy	Mean	68.25	77.25	82.75
	S. D	8.51	5.54	11.70
No Strategy	Mean	79.14	82.66	76.25
	S. D	7.28	12.64	9.09

Table 3: Means & Standard Deviations of Attribution scores

Causal Categories	Strategy						No Strategy					
	Success		Failure		Task		Success		Failure		Task	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	Sd	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Contact with other persons	3.25	1.28	4.25	0.70	3.75	1.28	2.87	1.80	4.37	1.06	2.25	1.28
Your own ability	3.37	1.40	3.75	1.38	3.0	2.13	4.25	0.88	4.37	.74	2.75	1.48
Friends	2.5	1.06	3.0	0.53	3.62	1.30	2.62	1.99	2.5	1.60	3.11	1.16
Tact	2.0	1.19	2.62	1.30	3.75	1.38	2.87	1.35	4.37	1.18	3.37	1.18
Hard Work	4.62	0.14	3.75	1.58	3.12	2.03	4.12	1.45	4.37	1.18	2.37	1.40
Luck	2.66	1.32	3.12	1.64	3.12	1.80	2.5	1.41	2.62	1.50	3.62	1.06
Diff.of the Prob	3.25	1.48	2.75	1.16	3.37	1.59	2.5	1.19	3.5	1.41	3.75	1.16
Facility	2.62	1.40	3.5	0.92	2.75	1.58	3.37	1.40	3.87	.99	2.5	1.30
Effort	3.12	1.24	3.87	1.35	3.37	1.18	3.25	1.46	4.0	1.19	2.75	1.38
God	3.5	1.41	3.0	1.41	3.0	1.51	4.0	1.51	3.75	1.48	3.25	1.48
Co-operation	3.0	0.92	3.62	1.30	2.8	1.05	3.87	1.80	3.75	.88	3.5	1.19
Guidance	2.37	1.06	4.12	0.83	3.87	1.80	2.87	1.80	4.12	.83	2.5	.75
Family members	2,87	1.35	3.87	0.83	3.62	1.30	2.25	1.48	4.22	1.09	3.5	1.30
Planning	3.0	1.19	4.12	1.45	3.5	1.51	4.0	1.41	3.81	.64	3.12	.83

The three by two factorial ANOVA revealed significant main effect of arousal for six variables.

The main scores as a function of this effect are shown in table 4.

Table 4: Mean Scores as a function of arousal for attribution & self- rating.

Variables	Success	Failure	Task	P (2, 42)
Contact	3.6	4.31	2.0	5.37
Tact	2.12	3.50	3.50	4.75
Hard Work	4.50	4.06	2.75	7.09
Guidance	2.62	4.12	3.18	5.75
Family	2.50	4.60	3.31	4.60
Self- Rating	55.06	59.87	51.51	3.24

The first variable contact with other persons is significant in the failure condition (mean= 4.31) followed by success condition (mean =3.6) and task condition (mean =3.0). The second variable task was found to be significant into two conditions namely failure and task condition (mean= 3.50) followed by success condition (mean =2.12). The third condition hard work was significant in the success condition (mean = 4.50) followed by failure condition (mean =4.06) and task condition (mean = 2.75). the fourth condition, guidance, was significant in the failure condition (mean= 4.12) followed by task condition (mean = 3.18) and success condition (mean =2.62). The fifth variables family members were found to be significant (mean =4.60) in

failure condition, this was followed by task condition (mean= 3.31) and success condition (mean = 2.50). The last variable, self-rating was significant in failure condition (mean = 59.87) followed by success condition (mean =55.06) and task condition (mean =51.56).

Discussion

The results indicated significant effect of the type of arousal on self- efficacy judgement. This was in the predicted direction. It was assumed that arousal would significantly influence the judgement of Self- efficacy. It was evident that the subjects reported highest self-efficacy judgement under failure condition, followed by task and success conditions.

The task orientation variables', which formulated in the form of emphasis on the strategies. Based on the findings reported by Langer (1983). It was contented that involving subjects in thinking about strategies would result in greater confidence and higher level of perceived probability of success. The results indicated significant effect of strategies. However, the results were not in expected direction. It was found that the subjects gave higher level of self-efficacy judgements under no strategy condition. The use of strategy had no effect on failure condition. However, in success condition the subjects who had been asked to write the strategies before making self -efficacy judgement scored lower. The task condition however showed a different trend. The strategy group scored higher than the no strategy group.

The variable of affective arousal was also found to be significant. The findings of the present experiment clearly indicate that arousal is an effective way to enhance the affective states facilitating as well as inhibiting relevant behaviors. It was found that when subjects were put under success, failure and task conditions they yielded different degrees of self – efficacy, self- perception, and attribution. It was noticed that self – efficacy judgement was highest in the failure condition. It seems that the experience of failure led to the feeling of challenge, which in turn made them more efficacious in their perception. This is further, supported by higher self- rating under failure condition.

The attributional analysis revealed that five factors evidenced significant effect of arousal. It was noticed that the subjects attributed failure more to external causes than success. Surprisingly hard work was the attributional factor in case of success & failure both. This suggests that the outcome is dependent upon effort or lack of effort irrespective of outcome.

In conclusion, it can be attributed that arousal is a significant determinant of self- perception, attribution and self-efficacy.

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