

Goal Setting and Fear of Failure among Indigent Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Goal setting is the action plan designed by an individual to achieve his/her goals while fear of failure is a motive to avoid failure in most of evaluative situations based on anticipatory shame upon failure of the person in concern. This study aims at finding correlation between goal setting and fear of failure among indigent adolescents of Kalina, Mumbai. For this, the sample size of 87 indigent students was taken among which 53 were females and 34 were males. Goal Setting Formative Questionnaire by Gaumer Erickson, A.S. & Noonan, P.M (2018) and Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (PFAI) by David E. Conray, Ph.D. were used, which has high reliability. Exploratory research design was used for the study and this study gives further scope for parents, counselors, educational sectors and social workers to give needful opportunities to indigent population and to acknowledge their levels of Goal setting and reduce fear of failure.

Keywords

Goal setting, gender difference, indigent adolescents, fear of failure.

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Introduction

Goal Setting

Goal setting is the action plan designed by an individual which motivates an individual towards a goal. (Grant, Antony M., 2012). Goal setting can also be defined as focusing on your own improvement by identifying goals that are meaningful and based on data. (Guamer Erickson & Noonan, 2016). Students who establish their own goal, take the responsibilities of their goals, such goal oriented behavior is an outcome of goal setting which empowers children. (Hasna Abu Khalid & Dr. Mary Ann Hollignsworth, 2017).

Theory of goal setting

According to Lock & Latham (2002), there is a direct correlation between conscious goals and their effect on action. The theory given by Lock and Latham states that written goals and performance have a direct relationship. The studies done by Lock and Latham showed that goals provide standards to compare work and provide feedback regarding competence and continued motivation for learning.

Goal setting and Low Socio Economic Status (SES)

Dweck and colleagues (2014) have mentioned that goal setting activities are valuable for children with low socio economic status (SES); this helps children develop higher academic tenacity and enthusiasm.

It is been found that both gender and Socio Economic Status(SES) are believed to shape and may influence the change of goals and their effect on each other over time. (Sarah J. Beal & Lisa J. Crockett). Children belonging to low

SES lack adequate learning facilities. (Becker & Tomes, 1979). Parents with low SES have stated that it has been hard for children to make children realize their life goals and education goals due to scarcity of financial resources. (Drummond & Stipek, 2004) , on the other hand children of low SES have stated that they are ready to work hard and smart in order to meet their goals. (Hasna Abu Khalid & Dr. Mary Ann Hollignsworth, 2017)

Goal setting among Adolescents

The present study focuses on goal setting among adolescents living in low SES. Adolescence is a period where young people's future aspirations and expectations begin to crystallize. (Sarah J. Beal & Lisa J. Crockett). With the increase of age people feel less confident, in control and capable of accomplishing goals. (Berry & West, 1993).

Fear of failure

Failure is the neglect or omission of expected or required action (Oxford Dictionary). It is the fear which hinders a person from achieving the set goals.(Mindtools content team). When it is in its extreme form then it is termed as Atychiphobia (Jacob Olesen), whereas, the present research only focuses on the normal tendencies of an individual to be afraid of performing actions directed towards the goal.

When an individual imagines all negative outcomes of an action that leads to the failure of the planned goal it has emotional, cognitive and behavioral reaction that can be observed. Fear of failure has an influence over the type of goal, the type of strategy used, and in marking the standards of success. Individuals having higher level of fear of failure tend to focus their efforts on prevention of loss than achieving gains. (Theo Tsaousides Ph.D.)

According to the author Sherrie Hurd, the causes for fear of failure is, lack of confidence, perfectionism, personalization, comparison with others work, and childhood issues such as strict parenting. Keeping things simple, being in the present moment, and accepting fear as path towards success can be few ways of overcoming fear of failure (Sherrie Hurd, 2019).

Fear of failure and age

Age is another factor which can have an influence on fear of failure, as the present study focuses on adolescents, it is important to state that a research done by Marco Correia shows that preadolescents(12-14 years) have less fear failure than adolescents(15- 20 years). (Marco Correia, et.al, 2017).

Fear and low socio economic status

Social factors play an important role in development of fear of failure, it was seen that people belonging to low socio economic status tend to show higher level of fear of failure than middle and upper socioeconomic status. (Vivek Tiwar, 2018). Further, the growth of country's economy has an impact as, it is observed that, when the economy of country is growing, fewer people fear to fail.(Prof. Dr. Richard Geibel, 2014).

Fear of Failure and Goal setting

The researcher, Theo Tsaousides Ph.D., says that based on the outcome, there are two approaches shown by people, that is promotion and prevention goals. when a person achieves positive outcome, it is called as promotion goals, on the other hand, prevention goals are characterized by less self-determination, lower engagement, disorganized approaches to goal pursuit and anxiety.

Fear of failure leads to creation of prevention goals, outcome of which is underestimation of performer's efforts, reducing confidence in setting goals. Fear of Failure (FoF) is cause for that hinders people from setting goals. Individuals having FoF have self-doubts while setting goals, this can be due to the past experiences of failure which embarrasses the individual. (Austin Bollinger, 2019)

People do not try to attain their goal due to fear of failure; such people may lack belief in their potentials, (Douglas Vermeeren, (ND)).

Theorists of achievement goal and intrinsic motivation reveal that there two primary orientations towards goals, that are mastery and performance. Performance goals can be further partitioned into independent approach and avoidance approach. While setting goals strive to avoid incompetence indicating that these individuals are driven by fear of failure(Elaine Houston,2019).

Slum

Slums are usually characterized by urban wastes, poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment and diseases due to lack of cleanliness, nutrition and basic needs (UN-Habitat, 2003) Originally the word slum was evolved in 1845 in East End of London, as a British slang meaning 'room', which later was termed as back slum, meaning street of poor

people.(Douglas Harper,2001). The word slum has negative connotations, and usage of this word to an area can be an attempt to undermine that land. (Alfredo Stein). Hence, the research uses a replaceable word for 'Slum', that is indigent

Rationale of the study

There are impoverished population in India which is lacking the basic education for which there are governmental policies and non-governmental organizations to improvise their lifestyle. It becomes important to see the psychological aspects to analyze their mental wellbeing and readiness for attaining the desired level of education. Goal setting and fear of failure are two such variables taken into consideration to see the levels of these variables and how it affects the gender of indigent population. In accordance to the results of these study possible changes for the betterment of education system, at national or international level, can be provided to indigent population.

Method

Research question

1. What is the level of goal setting and fear of failure among indigent adolescents?
2. Is there a significant relationship between goal setting and fear failure among indigent adolescents?

Aim

To study the relationship between goal setting and fear of failure among indigent adolescents.

Objectives

1. To analyze the level of goal setting and fear of failure among indigent adolescents.
2. To find the relation between goal setting and fear of failure.

Hypothesis

H₀ – There is no significant relationship between goal setting and fear of failure among indigent adolescents.

Variables

Independent variable – Gender

Dependent variable – Goal setting and fear of failure

Operational Definition

1. Fear of failure - A motive to avoid failure in most of evaluative situations based on anticipatory shame upon failure of the person in concern.
2. Goal setting- Focusing on one's own improvement by identifying goals that are meaningful and data based.
3. Indigent Adolescent- Any individual falling under the age of 10-19 years, living in the impoverished area. (generally known as people living in slum)

Participants

Participants included 87 indigent adolescent students of Kalina, Mumbai among which 53 were females 34 were males. The age of the participants ranged from 10-18. The annual income of the participants ranged from 8,000 to 10,000 Rs. per annum. The participants above the income of 10,000 Rs. per annum were excluded.

Sample

Purposive sampling method was opted for the study

Sample composition

Groups	No. of participants	Total
Males	34	87
Females	53	

Research Design

Exploratory research design was used for the study.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Participants living in slum area of Mumbai from past 10 years, from the date of assessment.
2. Participants who are read and understand English.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Participants having family income more than 10,000 per month.
2. Participants above the age of 19 years were excluded.

Tools

1. Goal setting formative questionnaire – this questionnaire is developed by Gaumer Erickson, A.S. & Noonan, P.M. in the year 2018. It consists of 19 items. The questionnaire has high reliability of 0.91 and adequate validity.

The questionnaire measures the goals in three major components, goals that are meaningful to the individual, goals that focus on one’s personal improvement, and goals based on data. Meaningful goals include items related to short and long term goals that help the individual to meet various purpose of life (e.g., I set long term goals such as of earning a college degree or entering a career). Personal goals include questions of goals that lead to self improvement and healthy competition. (E.g., even if I lose a competition, I am pleased if I have improved). Data based includes questions of setting goals based on prior life experiences & focusing on the outcomes of planning the goals (e.g., when setting a goal, I think about my past success and failures).

2. Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (PFAI) short form was used – this questionnaire was developed by David E. Conroy, Ph.D., (Department of Kinesiology,

College of Health & Human Development, Pennsylvania State University), in the year 2003. It consists of 5 items. The questionnaire has reliability of 0.72 and factorial validity.

Procedure

The Purpose of the study was explained to the participants. The participant’s willingness to participate in the study was ascertained after the establishment of rapport. The participants were briefed about the Goal setting questionnaire and PFAI (short form) separately and were provided with clear instructions. There was a gap of 15 minutes provided between the administrations of two. After the completion of administration, the scoring was done for the responses obtained and results were obtained.

Statistical analysis

- Descriptive statistics - Mean and Standard deviation.
- Inferential statistics- Pearson’s Correlation.

Ethical Consideration

- Consent was taken from the participants
- Data was used only for the research purpose.
- Confidentiality was maintained

Results and discussion

In the study descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation was used to find the levels of goal setting and fear of failure. Pearson’s correlation was used to test the relationship between goal setting and fear of failure.

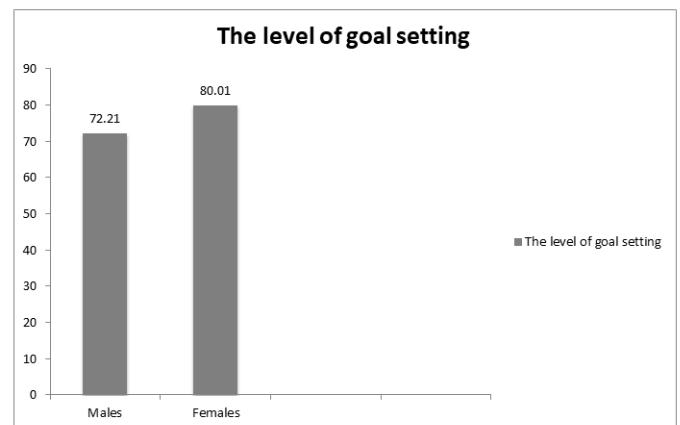


Figure 1- shows the gender difference obtained in the level of goal setting

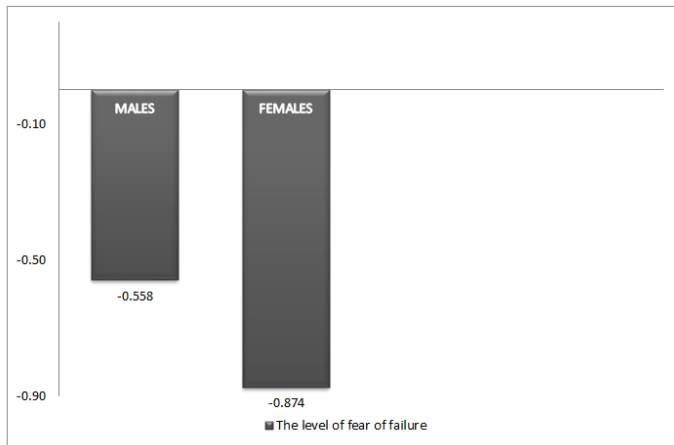


Figure 2- shows the gender difference obtained in the level of fear of failure.

The figure 1 shows that females have high level of goal setting than males. The research entitled, The Goal Setting Components: A Study Of Serbian EFL Learners, by Aleksandar M. Zivanovic & Mirjana D. Subotin on a sample of 100 participants shows that females obtain high scores in 3 aspects of goal setting, viz., commitment, self-efficacy and autonomy, and low score on goal conflict, the research states that female students are more committed, self-efficacious, have less goal conflicts and exhibit more autonomy.

The figure 2 shows that females have less levels of fear of failure when compared to males. This data contradicts the research done by Krista L. et.al . which finds that females have higher scores on fear of failure when compared to males.

Table 1- Shows the relationship between goal setting and fear of failure.

	r- value	p- value
Goal setting	-0.435**	0.001
Fear of failure		

The above table shows the correlation of fear of failure and goal setting; there is a negative correlation in fear of failure and goal setting with a value of -0.435 which is significant at 0.01 level. The Pearson’s correlation analysis gives a negative correlation between fear of failure and goal setting which indicates that if the level of goal setting increases there would be decrease in the level of fear of failure and vice versa. Here the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between goal setting and fear of failure, is been rejected.

A research done by J.M Wikman, R. Steler, M. Melzer (2012), shows that an intervention program on goal setting can reduce the fear of failure.

Conclusions

- With the increase fear of failure there is decrease in goal setting.
- The researchers see that though there are less of resources to the population, it sets aim towards accomplishment of it of goals. The negative correlation obtained in the levels of goal setting and fear of failure gives an insight that enhancing the levels of goal setting and reducing the levels of fear of failure will have a positive outcome. Hence adolescents need to consider goal setting and fear of failure as some of the important aspects of better decision making and career planning.

Limitations

- A sample size of 87 students was used, which can be increased.

Implications

This research data can be used by parents, teachers, counselors and social workers to in built facilitations to enhance goal setting and reduce fear of failure among adolescents

Scope

- There is scope for intervention studies on the same sample to study the effects of practicing goal setting and its impact over fear of failure.
- The subscales of the questionnaires of goal setting and fear of failure can assessed for detailed analysis of each factor under the variables.

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