

EMPOWERING SELF-EFFICACY: A PATHWAY TO ENRICH PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLNESS

By

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Abstract

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviours necessary to produce specific performance attainment. It reflects an individuals' ability to exert control over one's own behavior, motivation and social environment. Good physical maintenance also helps the person to achieve good self-efficacy. A person with high self-esteem, self-confidence and self-concept will maintain a very good self-efficacy. The people with high self-efficacy will reach high achievements in their life. Psychosocial well-being is a superordinate construct that includes physical, emotional, as well as social and collective well-being. Self-efficacy plays an important role in psychological well-being. This article mainly highlights self-efficacy, its types, characteristics and strategies to enhance it for psychological wellness.

Keywords: *self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-concept, psychological wellness.*

Introduction

Self-efficacy is the self-evaluation of one's competences in successfully executing a course of action necessary to reach desired outcome. It determines how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce diverse effects through four major processes. They include cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes. Bandura (1986)

states that self-efficacy is a major component of social cognitive theory. They set appropriately challenging goal for themselves and maintain a strong commitment to those goals. People with strong self-efficacy enjoy life because they are highly engaged. When they encounter any stressful situations, they should have belief in their ability to manage those situations. High self- efficacy is related to positive well-being, regulation of

stress, higher self-esteem, better physical condition, better adaptation to environment and recovery from illness.

Self-efficacy is defined by experts in psychology as the confidence an individual has in their ability to gain and maintain control over their:

- a) Emotions - such as motivation
- b) Behaviour - such as the ability to stay visibly calm
- c) Social environment - such as being an active listener

Types of self-efficacy

There are three types of self-efficacy. They are:

Self-regulatory self-efficacy: Self-regulation is a systematic process of human behavior that involves setting personal goals and steering behaviour toward the achievement of established goals. It means that ability to resist peer pressure, avoid high risk activities etc. Self-regulation makes students' self-efficacy beliefs actionable in order to attain positive academic outcomes.

Social self-efficacy: Social self-efficacy is the extent of confidence in one's ability to conduct the social interactions needed to establish and sustain interpersonal relations. It is not only important for the effectiveness of social behavior, but also for psychological adjustment and mental health. Social problem solving skills and social self-efficacy beliefs are crucial factors in an individual's life.

Academic self-efficacy: It means the ability to do the course work, regulate learning activities, and meet expectations. The students with high self-efficacy in various academic domains choose to engage in tasks that foster the development of their knowledge, skills, and abilities in those areas; exert effort in the face of difficulty; and persist longer at challenging tasks.

Characteristics of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy possesses some characteristics which are listed below.

Self-confidence: This is the most obvious characteristics of high self-efficacy. Self-confidence helps one to approach tasks or situations with a

sense of their ability to be successful. This self-confidence tends to lead to more experience which increases their ability which leads to greater self-confidence. This positive cycle lends itself to increasing self-efficacy even further.

Accurate self-evaluation: Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be able to accurately evaluate their performance. They are neither overly-critical nor overly positive but are able to examine themselves realistically in order to pursue self-improvement.

Willingness to take risks: Individual with high self-efficacy is willing to take risks because they understand that taking calculated risks increases the chances of success. As they are not fearful of failure or mistakes, reasonable risks can only increase self-efficacy.

Sense of accomplishment: Generally, individual with high self-efficacy feel a sense of accomplishment because they are often more successful due to the willingness to take risks and to pursue interests. Even if they fail or make mistakes, they feel a sense of accomplishment because they view

mistakes as opportunities to improve themselves.

Psychological wellness

Psychological wellness refers to an individual's emotional health and overall functioning. It consists of positive social relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, a sense of purpose, and personal growth. The absence of distress does not necessarily indicate that a person has high psychological well-being. High psychological well-being is about feeling happy and doing well. People with high psychological well-being report feeling capable, happy, well-supported, and satisfied with life. Indeed, studies show that psychological well-being have many benefits. They increase resilience to stress and encourage us to learn, grow, and bond with others.

Components of psychological wellness

Psychosocial wellness involves some emotional, social, mental and physical components, which are:

Autonomy: Autonomy is the ability to make one's own decisions about how to think and behave, rather than over-relying on others' opinions or approval. Autonomous people resist social pressures that are inconsistent with their inner standards or preferences. They pursue freely chosen goals that they genuinely value.

Competence: Competence means having knowledge, skills, and abilities and using them to solve problems and accomplish worthwhile tasks. Competent people can manage the responsibilities and demands of daily life and get things done. They make good use of their opportunities and arrange their living environments in ways that suit them.

Healthy relationships: Most people need connections with others. Some enjoy large circles of friends, family, and coworkers; others prefer more solitude and independence. The ability to develop caring, trusting, and supportive relationships is an important element of psychological health, whether one want many relationships or only a few.

Self-acceptance: Self-accepting people understand that, like everyone else,

they have strengths and weaknesses. They recognize that life has ups and downs; that everyone makes mistakes, misses opportunities, and feels regret, disappointment, and other unpleasant emotions. They're understanding and nonjudgmental of themselves and how their lives have gone so far.

Personal growth: People who value personal growth are open to learning and new experiences. They recognize that perspectives change with time and see themselves as maturing and developing. They're interested in broadening their horizons and fulfilling their potential.

Purpose in life: People with purpose have a sense of direction in life. They understand what they value most deeply, such as being a loving parent, supportive friend, productive professional or contributing member of a community. They find satisfaction in setting goals and working to achieve them and feel that their lives have meaning.

Why psychological wellness important?

Psychological well-being is considered a core aspect of mental health. People

with higher psychological well-being are more likely to:

- Live healthier and longer lives
- Enjoy a better quality of life
- Experience fewer social problems
- Have lower disease and mortality risk
- More likely to engage in healthy behaviors
- Cope better with stress
- Adapt more easily to setbacks or change

Strategies to enhance self-efficacy for psychological wellness

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to accomplish tasks and overcome challenges. Enhancing self-efficacy is crucial for promoting psychological wellness as it can lead to increased motivation, resilience, and overall well-being. Various interventions and strategies can be used to enhance self-efficacy for improved psychological wellness. These may include setting achievable goals, providing positive feedback and reinforcement, role modeling, practicing self-reflection, and offering skills training and support.

Set realistic goals: Encourage individuals to set specific, challenging, yet attainable goals. Research shows that setting realistic goals can significantly improve self-efficacy.

Provide positive feedback: Offer positive reinforcement and constructive feedback to boost confidence and reinforce belief in one's capabilities.

Use modeling and social learning: Encourage individuals to observe and learn from others who have successfully overcome similar challenges. Modeling can enhance self-efficacy by showing that success is achievable.

Promote self-reflection: Encourage individuals to reflect on past successes and setbacks, focusing on strengths and lessons learned. Self-reflection can enhance self-awareness and self-efficacy.

Provide supportive environments: Create environments that are supportive, nurturing, and conducive to growth. Supportive environments can help individuals feel empowered and capable.

Encourage self-compassion: Foster self-compassion by encouraging individuals to be kind to themselves, especially during challenging times. Self-compassion can buffer against negative self-talk and enhance self-efficacy.

Offer skills training: Provide opportunities for skills development and mastery. Acquiring new skills and competencies can significantly boost self-efficacy.

Promote physical wellness: Encourage regular exercise, healthy eating, and sufficient sleep. Physical wellness is closely linked to psychological wellness and can enhance overall self-efficacy.

Positive thinking: Thinking positively improves your self-efficacy, which in turn improves one's psychological wellness.

Write about a better future: Take a few minutes and write down all the good things that could happen to you in the future. Imagine how you could be spending your time and who you would be spending it with if you were living your best life. When you're

working toward a better future even if the steps are really small it gives you a sense of purpose.

Recall positive life events: Recognizing the good things that have happened to you over time, the people you have built memories with or the good times that you have experienced is an important part of improving your well-being. They serve as reminders of the fullness life have to offer, especially when circumstances may be pulling you down.

Perform acts of kindness: Doing nice things for other people reminds you that you have the power to make a difference in the world. Giving to others also helps you think more positively and feel happier. Helping a neighbor in need, volunteering for a community activity, or raising money for a charity are just a few simple ways to improve your psychological wellness.

Practice mindfulness: Mindfulness, which means staying in the moment, has been linked to multitude of benefits, ranging from increased happiness to better resilience.

Express gratitude: Expressing your gratitude will keep you focused on all the good things in life.

Identify your strengths: Always remind yourself of what you are good at or your character strengths. Try reflecting on your past achievements and the qualities that helped you succeed.

Practice forgiveness: Letting go of past hurt and anger is key to good psychological wellness. Forgiving someone doesn't mean you have to allow that person to hurt you again. Instead, forgiveness is about releasing yourself of the anger that is holding

you back and keeping you bound to that person.

To sum up

High levels of self-efficacy motivate an individual to take part in relevant academic, mental, emotional and social activities, which can develop positive attitudes that leads to success at all endeavors. Also Persons with high self-efficacy and psychological wellness were more flexible, resilient, efficient in problem solving, committed to their goals and pursued success which will make their life as happier and satisfied one. Thus, self-efficacy is a pathway to obligate psychological wellness in navigating one's life.

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To cite this article

Delfia Viji Raj, P. & Jasmine Agnal, A. (2024). Empowering Self-Efficacy: A Pathway to Enrich Psychological Wellness. *John Foundation Journal of EduSpark*, 6(2), 26-33.

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