



ASSERTIVENESS BEHAVIOUR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

N. R. Prakash¹ Ph.D., Research Scholar, Department of Education,
Institute of Advanced Study in Education (A), Saidapet, Chennai.

Dr. S. Nirmala Devi, Principal, Institute of Advanced Study in Education (A), Saidapet,
Chennai

Abstract

Assertiveness is a tendency of expression one's feelings, beliefs and opinions in an appropriate way without any fear. When an individual stands up for his or her legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of others are not violated, he or she is being assertive. The main objective of this study is to find out the level of assertiveness among undergraduate students and also to find out whether there is any difference in their Assertiveness among undergraduate students based on few personal and demographic variables. Sample for this study consists of 100 UG students (both [50] male and female [50]) from government, government aided and private colleges in and around Chennai constitution. The tool used in this investigation "Assertiveness Rating Scale" was developed by the investigator (N.R. Prakash, and S. Nirmala Devi, 2014). Collected data was analyzed using SPSS package. The investigator found that the level of assertiveness among undergraduate students is moderate in nature. The researcher also found that there is significant difference in their Assertiveness with respect to Gender, Stream of study, Medium of instruction, Place of living, Sibling constellation and Type of Management.

Keywords: *Assertiveness; Social Skills; Undergraduate Students; Personality Development*

Introduction: Assertiveness involves recognizing one's right to let others know how their behavior affects you and asking them to change that behavior. By behaving assertively, it's the way for honest communication with others and for the possibilities of negotiation and compromise. Assertiveness is an interpersonal communication skill that can be learned and practiced in an ongoing way.

Assertiveness is generally formed of open, direct and honest communicating within a suitable frame (Michael, E., A. Robert, 2008). Behaviorally, assertiveness is exercised when an individual is capable of freely expressing his or her emotions, is able to defend his or her

purposes or goals in general and specific situations, and can establish rewarding and fulfilling interpersonal relationships (Colter & Guerra, 1976; Herzberger, Chan, & Katz, 1984). Assertiveness as a social skill is a construct which has a number of different dimensions, including the ability to express oneself without anxiety or aggression in different situations (M. Bouvard, et al., 1999). Assertiveness has also been defined as the process of direct and appropriate communication of a person's needs, wants and opinions without punishing or putting down others (W. A. Arrindell and J. Van der Ende, 1985). Affectively and cognitively, assertive people are capable of expressing and reacting to positive and negative emotions without undue anxiety or aggression (Gladding, 1988). It can be used as an instrument for initiating and maintaining socially supportive relationships and hence enjoying better emotional wellbeing (M. Eskin, 2003). It was also necessary to differentiate between the assertive and aggressive behaviors, as the manifestations of the latter should be avoided (Lazarus, 1973). Assertiveness was considered to be a mean of self-development and achievement of maximum personal fulfillment and assertive skills in various communication fields in conjunction with the increased demands on social competence of the individual (Ivelina Peneva and Stoil Mavrodiev, 2013).

Need and Significance of the Study: Assertiveness is a personal and social character which needs to value competition, success, and progress; communicate directly and unambiguously; control over the environment; expect subordinates to take initiative; build trust on basis of calculation. Students are the pillars of nation and they are contributing much for social development, so each student should have the tendency of assertive behaviour to achieve more in their education and future life with more courage and self-confident. Assertive behaviour are different in nature such as self, communicative, interpersonal and social assertiveness. Student stage is the period for learning and to become meaningful human beings in the society. Assertiveness can develop social skills as a result of personality development, so the study is needful for students.

Objectives of the Study: The following objectives were formulated for the present study:

1. To find out the level of assertiveness among undergraduate students.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in their Assertiveness based on the following personal and demographic variables:
 1. Gender
 2. Stream of study
 3. Medium of instruction
 4. Place of living
 5. Sibling constellation
 6. Type of management

Review of Related Study: Qadir, A. et al. (2013): The study was conducted with an aim to study the assertiveness level of adolescents with reference to their gender and locality. The samples were taken from schools in Chennai city for urban sample and schools in Cumbum, Madurai District, and Tamil Nadu for rural samples. A random sample of 100 adolescents was chosen for the study. They were divided as 50 boys and 50 girls. The 50 boys were further divided as 25 from urban area and 25 from rural area. The same division was followed for the 50 girls also. The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (1967) was used to study the assertiveness of the selected adolescents. The data was subjected to statistical analysis and the following results were revealed. The result of the study showed no significant difference in assertiveness level between the adolescents based on gender. But when assertiveness was studied based on locality it was found that the urban adolescents had better assertiveness scores than the rural adolescents both among boys and girls.

Hypotheses of the Study : There is no significant difference in their Assertiveness based on the following personal and demographic variables:

1. Gender
2. Stream of study
3. Medium of instruction
4. Place of living
5. Sibling constellation
6. Type of management

Method and Procedure : In the present study survey method was adopted.

Tool Used In the Study : A four-point attitude scale with 41 items of Assertiveness Rating Scale was developed by the researcher (N.R. Prakash, S. Nirmala Devi, 2014). The tool consists of 30 positive and 11 negative statements.

Sample: Hundred undergraduate students (Male 50 and Female 50) studying in Arts and Science Colleges in and around Chennai constituted the sample for this study. Sample includes 32 Government, 47 Govt. Aided and 21 Private under graduate students.

Collection of Data: The investigator personally visited all the institutes for collecting the data. The students were given the copies of the tool and requested to respond to all parts of the questionnaire without omitting any single question.

Scoring Procedure : The investigator used Likert’s type of attitude scale on a four-point scale and the items has been scored by giving weights 3, 2, 1 and 0 in the case of positive items in the tool; and 0, 1, 2, 3 for the negative items respectively. The grand total to each individual on the entire scale was obtained by adding the weights on all the statements. The information provided by the respondents in the personal data sheet was numerically coded to suit the computer analysis.

Statistical Techniques Used: In the present study the investigator used the following statistical techniques:

1. Descriptive Analysis (Mean, Standard Deviation)
2. Differential Analysis (t-value, F-ratio)

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data: The collected data were subjected to statistical analysis and it is analyzed using SPSS package. The mean and standard deviation for the variable Assertiveness scores were computed for the entire sample.

Table 1: Level of Assertiveness

Variable	Level	Range	No. of Student	Percentage
Assertiveness	Low	39-59	12	12
	Moderate	60-98	82	82
	High	99-117	6	6

From Table 1 inferred that the overall nature of the assertiveness among undergraduate students is moderate in nature.

Figure 1: Level of Assertiveness

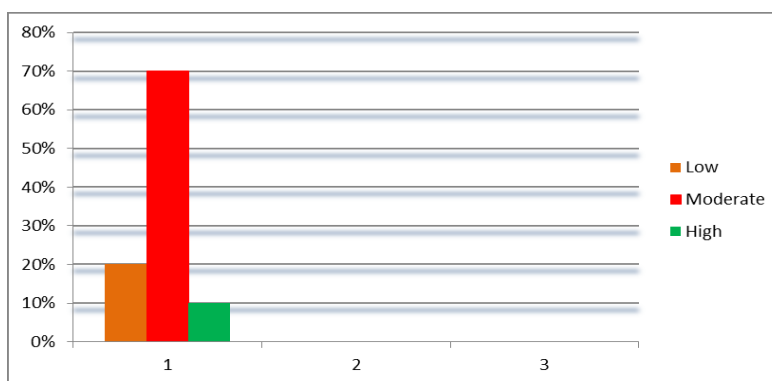


Table 2: Showing the ‘t’ - value on Assertiveness with respect to Gender

Variable	Background Variables	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value	Level of Significance
Assertiveness	Gender	Male	50	98.20	13.71	2.3504*	S
		Female	50	91.00	16.77		
		Total	100				

*denotes significant at 0.05 level.

Table 2 shows that there is significant difference found between male and female students in their assertiveness with respect to gender. Calculated ‘t’ value 2.3504 and it is significant at 0.05 level.

Table 3: Showing the ‘t’ - value on Assertiveness with respect to Stream of study

Variable	Background Variables	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value	Level of Significance
Assertiveness	Stream of study	Arts	39	97.23	14.09	5.1005**	S
		Science	61	80.92	16.48		
		Total	100				

**denotes significant at 0.1 level.

Table 3 shows that there is significant difference found between arts and science students in their assertiveness with respect to stream of study. Calculated ‘t’ value 5.1005 and it is significant at 0.1 level.

Table 4: Showing the ‘t’ - value on Assertiveness with respect to Medium of instruction

Variable	Background Variables	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value	Level of Significance
Assertiveness	Medium of instruction	Tamil	45	92.77	16.97	4.2862**	S
		English	55	78.24	14.89		
		Total	100				

**denotes significant at 0.1 level.

Table 4 shows that there is significant difference found between Tamil and English medium students in their assertiveness with respect to medium of instruction. Calculated ‘t’ value is 4.2862 and it is significant at 0.1 level.

Table 5: Showing the ‘t’ - value on Assertiveness with respect to Place of living

Variable	Background Variables	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value	Level of Significance
Assertiveness	Place of living	Rural	49	86.51	17.57	3.2356**	S
		Urban	51	96.61	13.45		
		Total	100				

***denotes significant at 0.1 level.*

Table 5 shows that there is significant difference found between rural and urban students in their assertiveness with respect to place of living. Calculated ‘t’ value is 3.2356 and it is significant at 0.1 level.

Table 6: Showing the ‘t’ - value on Assertiveness with respect to Sibling constellation

Variable	Background Variables	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value	Level of Significance
Assertiveness	Sibling constellation	Only Son/Daughter	21	77.14	11.87	2.8132**	S
		With Siblings	79	86.63	14.18		
		Total	100				

***denotes significant at 0.1 level.*

Table 6 shows that there is significant difference found between only son/daughter and with siblings’ students in their assertiveness with respect to sibling constellation. Calculated ‘t’ value is 2.8132 and it is significant at 0.1 level.

Table 7: Group difference on Assertiveness with respect to Type of management

Variable	Background Variables	Sources of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F- ratio	Level of Significance
Assertiveness	Type of management	Between Group	2	2.4259	13.49	5.3925**	S
		Within Group	97	2.4286	250.1		
		Total	99	4.8545			

***denoted significant at 0.1 level.*

Table 7 shows that there is significant difference their assertiveness with respect to type of management. The calculated ‘F’ value is 5.3925 and it is significant at 0.01 level.

Table 8: Showing the ‘t’ - value on Assertiveness with respect to Type of management

Variable	Background Variables	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value	Level of Significance
Assertiveness	Type of management	Govt.	32	93.84	18.12	0.3070	NS
		Govt. Aided	47	94.94	13.50		
		Total	79				
		Govt. Aided	47	94.94	13.50	0.0166	NS
		Private	21	95.00	16.87		
		Total	68				
		Govt.	32	93.84	18.12	3.3992**	S
		Private	21	95.00	16.87		
		Total	53				

**denotes significant at 0.1 level.

From the Table 8, its shows that there is no significant difference found Government & Govt. Aided and Government Aided & Private college students in their assertiveness with respect to type of management. There is significant difference found between Government and private college students with respect to type of management. The calculated ‘t’ value is 3.3992 and it is significant at 0.1 level.

Major Findings

1. The study revealed that the level of assertiveness among undergraduate students is moderate in nature.
2. The researcher found that there is significant difference in their assertiveness with respect to the following personal and demographical variables:
 1. Gender
 2. Stream of study
 3. Medium of instruction
 4. Place of living
 5. Sibling constellation
 6. Type of management

3. Further analysis of type of management, the 't' value shows that there is no significant between Govt. & Govt. Aided and Govt. Aided and Private. The 't' value shows that there is significant difference found between Govt. and Private undergraduate students.

Discussion: The present investigation revealed that the level of assertiveness behaviour of undergraduate students is moderate in nature and found significant difference with respect to gender, stream of study, medium of instruction, place of living, sibling constellation and type of management. The findings of this study are supported by previous researchers (Qadir, A. et al., 2013) which examined the study on Assertiveness among adolescent, using 100 adolescent students. The result of the study showed no significant difference in assertiveness level between the adolescents based on gender. But when assertiveness was studied based on locality it was found that the urban adolescents had better assertiveness scores than the rural adolescents both among boys and girls. The study on Assertiveness Level of College Students who is doing Orienteering Sports (Zeki Coşkuner, et al., 2013) and it is found that males' assertiveness level is higher compared to female participants. Students' with ages to have higher assertiveness levels. Study also shows that where students come from makes no difference in terms of assertiveness level. As a result, it has been found that students involved in Orienteering Sports have higher assertiveness level and their previous sports history also contributes in a positive way. Ercüment Erbay and Sinan Akçay (2013) conducted research on assertiveness skill of social work students: a case of turkey and found that 1st grade students are being more assertive than 4th grade students, male students are being more assertive than female students and assertiveness level of students is reduced when the income of their families increased. S. E. Oladipo (2012) reported that total of 350 participants participated in the study. 127 (36.3%) were male, 223 (63.7%) were female. 150 (42.9%) were from female only schools, 150 (42.9%) were from co-educational schools and 50 (14.3%) from male only schools. Validated scale was used for data collection. The two hypotheses stated were rejected based on statistical insignificance. There was no significant relationship among gender, need achievement, assertiveness and conceptions.

Educational Implications :

A person who is positively assertive will exhibit full and free expression of their emotion, and they are able to confidently take steps towards specified goals in personal, education and profession. The assertive person will find peace and enjoyment in most processes of daily life. Assertiveness is a method of self-development, self-fulfillment, and significant quality in various

communication fields. So the students' community should have the quality of assertive behaviour to achieve more in education as well as in personal life. Based on the findings the students can develop his or her assertive behavior to express their feeling, opinions in the right way. It can be more helpful for the students to communicating their ideas with much confident and clear. Therefore the teachers and parents should understand the importance of assertiveness and help them to develop assertive behaviour and thoughts to become more successful personality in the society.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to study the level of assertiveness among undergraduate students and found that the level of assertiveness is moderate in nature. Assertiveness is much important for the students to achieve more in their education as well as in personality development. Students should aware the importance of assertiveness and each student must learn how to develop the assertive behaviour. Teachers and parents should aware of it and help the students to develop such a character among students. The study may helpful for the students, teachers and parents to understand the level and importance of assertiveness in the present generation.

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