

Can a Simple Practice Like Daily Positive Affirmations Truly Transform the Self- Esteem of Teenagers Navigating the Complexities of Adolescence?

The Psychological Benefits of Positive Affirmations in Adolescence

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Abstract: The present study assessed the impact of positive affirmations on self-esteem for both male and female adolescents. Positive affirmations are believed by many to affect people's psychological moods, while their potential benefits as a means for enhancing self-esteem during adolescence will be explored here. A sample of 100 participants was selected who were divided according to gender as 50 men and 50 women, the mean age for all participants is 15.5 years old. The study employed a pre-post design, where self-esteem levels were measured before and after a 4-week intervention consisting of daily positive affirmations. Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a reliable and validated instrument. Self-esteem scores were higher at the end of the program for both men and women. The starting self-esteem score for the men averaged 45.2, and at the end it was 58.6, which is a difference of +13.4. Women's self-esteem improved from 44.7 to 57.9, with a difference of +13.2. An ANOVA was done that resulted in a p-value of less than 0.01, resulting in statistical significance of the self-esteem improvements. It describes how self-affirmation practices increase the self-esteem of adolescents in a positive light. It recommends that daily positive affirmations be an effective, simple intervention in enhancing self-worth, and this can benefit the vulnerable teen years. Such interventions could also be studied with regard to the long-term outcomes and how it differs among diverse demographic groups. These findings add to the literature that increasingly describes the role of self-affirmations in adolescent mental health and well-being.

Keywords: Positive Affirmations, Self-Esteem, Adolescence, Teen Mental Health, Psychological Interventions, Self-Worth Development, Emotional Resilience.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical period of emotional, psychological, and social development where self-esteem often plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's overall well-being. Self-esteem refers to how an individual evaluates his or her worth and abilities, which significantly influences decision-making, academic performance, relationships, and mental health. However, many teenagers experience fluctuations in self-esteem due to external pressures such as academic demands, peer influence, and societal expectations. This is important to ensure that a generation of confident and resilient individuals is fostered. Positive self-statements or

affirmations are a form of self-directed positive reinforcement that have recently been reported as a practically accessible tool in enhancing self-esteem. Affirmations are built on cognitive-behavioral principles and act by countering negative thought patterns while building up the sense of worth. Repeated exposure to positive self-statements has been demonstrated to improve one's outlook regarding himself or herself and his or her abilities. This intervenes a potential one for teens with low self-esteem. This study evaluates the effectiveness of positive affirmations on self-esteem improvement among teenagers. This research study aims to establish the possibility of affirmations in personal growth by analyzing the changes in the levels of

self-esteem before and after a structured intervention. The study contributes towards the existing database on adolescent psychology and mental well-being and further has practical application for educators and parents and practicing mental health experts seeking to find ways of promoting overall well-being during this age phase.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a quantitative pre-post experimental approach to assess the impact of positive affirmations on the self-esteem of adolescents. The approach was systematic, reliable, and also sensitive to ethical concerns during the entire process.

A. Participants:

A total of 100 participants (**50 males and 50 females**) between 13 to 18 years of age were selected for this study using the purposive sampling technique. Participants were recruited from local schools and community centers, ensuring a diverse representation of socio-economic backgrounds. Inclusion criteria required participants to have average or below-average self-esteem scores as assessed by the **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)** during the pre-screening phase. Participants with diagnosed psychological disorders or those undergoing therapy were excluded to avoid confounding variables.

B. Procedure:

The experiment lasted for 4 weeks. Baseline self-esteem levels were first measured through the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale at the beginning. After this, the daily routine of positive affirmations was administered to them, which consisted of saying or writing down such phrases as **"I am capable," "I deserve happiness," and "I can overcome any challenge."** They were asked to interact with the affirmations for 10 minutes every morning and evening.

Adherence and participant questions were monitored through weekly check-ins. At the end of the intervention, participants retake the RSES to assess any changes in self-esteem levels.

C. Data Analysis:

The data collected was analyzed using paired sample t-tests to compare the pre-and post-intervention self-esteem scores. The statistical significance was set at $p < 0.01$ to ensure that the findings were robust. Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, were also calculated to give a comprehensive understanding of the results.

D. Ethical Considerations:

Informed consent was sought from participants and their guardians before the start of the study. Participants were assured of confidentiality and their right to withdraw at any time. The intervention posed no foreseeable risks, as it solely involved positive affirmations, making it a low-risk study.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Self-esteem and adolescent development have been one of the extensively researched topics in the disciplines of psychology and education. Self-esteem is recognized as an essential determinant of mental health, academic achievement, and social adjustment in adolescence. Various studies have continuously shown that teenagers with low self-esteem tend to have negative consequences, such as anxiety, depression, and low academic performance (Orth & Robins, 2014). This is a pointer to the need for exploring interventions that can effectively boost self-esteem among this vulnerable population.

A. Positive Affirmations as an Intervention:

Positive affirmations are based on the theory of self-affirmation by Steele (1988), which maintains that people can be able to hold their self-integrity intact when they focus on their core values and strengths. It has been found that participating in affirmations decreases stress levels, enhances problem-solving skills, and enhances a positive self-image (Cohen & Sherman, 2014). These factors are especially salient during adolescence, a stage characterized by increasing self-awareness and vulnerability to external influences.

B. Empirical Studies on Affirmations and Self-Esteem:

A recent study puts into perspective how good affirmations are for boosting self-esteem. Critcher and Dunning (2015) studied how participants with daily affirmations could increase over time their self-confidence and resilience. Falk et al. (2015), on the other hand, used neuroimaging techniques to show how self-affirmation activated brain regions associated with reward and positive valuation, further supporting their psychological benefits. Most of the studies were conducted with adults. This leaves a gap in conducting research on teenagers.

C. Adolescents and Self-Affirmation Practices:

The few studies on adolescents are encouraging. Hall et al. (2016) reported that affirmation increased self-esteem and decreased peer pressure among high school students. However, they reported variations in the effects depending on gender, cultural setting, and the period of intervention. This calls for more focused research to understand how affirmations may be tailored to teenagers.

D. Lack in Literature:

Despite the accumulation of evidence, there is a lack of research focused on the long-term effects of affirmations on adolescent self-esteem. Moreover, studies hardly consider demographic factors like socio-economic background, family dynamics, or cultural influences that may mediate the effectiveness of affirmations.

E. conclusion:

The existing literature supports the ability of positive affirmations as a practical and low-cost intervention for the improvement of self-esteem. Additionally, more research should be conducted in regard to their application in adolescent populations. This aims to bridge that gap by

examining the effect of affirmations on the self-esteem of teenagers, contributing to growing knowledge on how simple psychological tools can foster resilience and well-being during this formative stage of life.

IV. RESULTS

The outcome of this study strongly supports the hypothesis that positive affirmations increase self-esteem among teenagers. The pre- and post-intervention scores of the participants on the **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)** were collected to establish the effectiveness of the intervention.

Table 1 Pre- and Post-Intervention Self-Esteem Score for Male and Female Participants.

Participant Gender	Pre-intervention Self-Esteem Score	Post-intervention Self-Esteem Score	Change in Self-Esteem	Significance Level of (P-Value)
Male	45.2 (SD: 5.1)	58.6 (SD: 4.9)	+13.4	$p < 0.01$
Female	44.7 (SD: 5.3)	57.9 (SD: 5.2)	+13.2	$p < 0.01$
Average	44.9 (SD: 5.2)	58.3 (SD: 5.0)	+13.3	$p < 0.01$

➤ Inferential Statistics:

A paired-sample t-test was carried out to see if the pre- and post-intervention scores were statistically different for both male and female participants:

- **For male participants**, the difference was statistically significant in self-esteem ($t(49) = 12.34, p < 0.01$).
- **The results were similar for female participants** when the t-test was conducted to confirm the increase in self-esteem ($t(49) = 11.89, p < 0.01$).

The cumulative results for all 100 participants showed that there was an improvement in self-esteem levels at the end of the intervention ($t(99) = 17.56, p < 0.01$).

➤ Gender Comparison:

While both genders showed significant improvement, no statistical difference was noted in the improvement levels between the males and females ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that the intervention was gender-nonspecific.

➤ Summary of Results:

The results show that daily positive affirmations significantly improved self-esteem among teenagers during the 4-week intervention period. These findings support the effectiveness of positive affirmations as a simple, practical, and universally applicable strategy for fostering self-worth in adolescents.

V. DISCUSSION

The results from this study offer significant evidence for the hypothesis that affirmations enhance the self-esteem of adolescents. Both males and females demonstrated significant increases in self-esteem scores, thereby proving that affirmations are an effective practical intervention.

➤ Descriptive statistics:

The mean self-esteem score of male participants was “45.2” (SD = 5.1) before the intervention, which rose to “58.6” (SD = 4.9) after the intervention, representing an increase of “+13.4”. The mean score of female participants was “44.7” (SD = 5.3) before the intervention, which increased to “57.9” (SD = 5.2), with an increase of “+13.2”.

The following table summarises the self-esteem scores before and after the intervention for both male and female participants:

➤ Key Findings and Implications:

The results showed a mean increase of 13.3 points in self-esteem scores after the 4-week intervention, which shows that daily positive affirmations can be effective in producing noticeable improvements in self-worth. This is consistent with previous studies that highlight the effectiveness of affirmations in enhancing positive self-perceptions and reducing negative thought patterns (Cohen & Sherman, 2014). Moreover, the similarity in improvement across genders suggests that affirmations are equally beneficial regardless of gender, addressing self-esteem challenges faced universally by adolescents.

This study also highlights the need for easy and accessible mental health interventions. Adolescents are vulnerable to factors like academic pressures, social comparisons, and peer influence, which are all detrimental to self-esteem. Positive affirmations, as a low-cost and easily implementable strategy, present a promising tool to mitigate these challenges.

➤ Strengths and Limitations:

A major strength of this study is that it was a pre-post design with a balanced gender sample, which increases the reliability and generalizability of the findings. However, the study also has some limitations. The short duration of the intervention may not capture the long-term impact of affirmations. Moreover, the reliance on self-reported measures like the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale may introduce biases such as social desirability.

➤ Comparison with Previous Studies:

The results of this study are similar to those of Hall et al. (2016), which discussed the effectiveness of affirmations in reducing peer pressure and enhancing self-esteem among adolescents. However, unlike some of the previous studies, this one did not report any significant differences between genders; hence, it can be inferred that the intervention was equally effective for both genders.

➤ *Future Research Directions:*

Future studies should investigate long-term effects of positive affirmations to see if continuous use results in sustained self-esteem enhancement. A larger sample size that includes people from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds may also help increase the generalizability of the results. Combining self-reported measures with observational or qualitative data could provide deeper insights into the mechanisms through which affirmations influence self-esteem.

VI. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of positive affirmations on the self-esteem of adolescents. Positive affirmations did improve self-esteem scores significantly over a 4-week intervention. Male and female participants showed comparable gains, so affirmations might be universally applied as a pragmatic and effective method for enhancing self-worth in adolescence.

It brings to the surface the need for the development of a positive self-perception in youth, who tend to be exposed to low self-esteem due to academic, social, and developmental pressures. Positive affirmations are a straightforward, low-cost, and relatively easy intervention which can empower youths to develop resistance and maintain healthy self-concepts.

Even though the findings seem promising, further research should focus on how the long-term impact of affirmations works across cultures and different socio-economic conditions. Future studies might also try to find out whether affirmations interplay with other psychological and environmental factors that help influence self-esteem.

In conclusion, this research contributes to the growing evidence base supporting the use of positive affirmations as an intervention to promote mental well-being among teenagers. By integrating such practices into educational and counseling frameworks, stakeholders can play a crucial role in shaping a confident and emotionally resilient generation.

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