
BELIEVE IN YOUR INFINITE POTENTIAL: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS FOR GROUP INTERVENTION

Imran Ahmed Khilji

Ph.D. Scholar,
Department of Professional Psychology, Bahria University Islamabad,
Islamabad, Pakistan.
Email: imranpsy@gmail.com

Rizwana Amin

Associate Professor,
Department of Professional Psychology, Bahria University,
Islamabad, Pakistan.
Email: rizwana.buic@bahria.edu.pk

Farhat Jokhio

Assistant Professor,
Department of Psychology, University of Sindh,
Sindh, Pakistan.
Email: farhat.jokhio@unisindh.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

Self-esteem is an important aspect of an individual's personality and contribute in achieving one's goal. Poor self-esteem has devastating effect and impairs over all mental wellbeing. OBJECTIVES: To see the effectiveness of the Mruk's Self-esteem model in college students. The study engrossed insight in participants about self-esteem quandary and make them learn systematic approaches to thrive the issues of worthiness and competence. METHODS: Present study employs quasi-experiment design using ABA research design and employed Mruk's self-esteem improvement intervention is 5-week standardized group therapy program. In this regard, 11 boys age ranged of 20 to 22 years were approached and participant's Self-esteem was assessed in group setting by using Multidimensional Self- Esteem Inventory MSEI (O'Brien & Epstein, 1988). Whereas 9 participants completed the course of intervention. In the course of intervention participants share their experiences in connection to self-esteem and maintain a journal for enhancing self-esteem. After 5 weeks, participants' self-esteem was reassessed. RESULTS: Significant difference in mean scores of MSEI and its subscales in pre and post intervention. CONCLUSION: Mruk's group intervention is an effective therapy for self-esteem enhancement for male college students.

KEYWORDS

Mruk's Self-esteem Model, Group Intervention, MSEI

INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem is one of the prominent topics in the field of psychology. Researcher reveals that self-esteem connects with substantial life consequences, such as academic portrayals, approval from others, and somatic condition. It is understandable now that the self-esteem has a link with persons over all well-being. (Bhattacharya et al., 2023). Self-esteem has two features: own appraisal (i.e., assessment about self-concept) and assessment of personal capacity (which is realistic efficacy to carry out any task which required skills (Supervía et al., 2023). Life experience would affect development of self-esteem as people around us responded differently on failures and success. People who feel worthless think that they lack the resource to carry out various tasks, the reason behind it they rate themselves low so unable to understand their strength resulting in keeping oneself away to participate in constructive tasks. People tend to rate themselves on the basis overall judgment given to people in a society. People rate themselves low on the basis of professions such as white color and blue color jobs. According to Butler & Constantine (2005) there was a correlation between burnout and self-esteem, counsellor working for a longer period of time in school having more collective self-esteem experiences less burnout and those working in urban area and working for twenty years experiences more burnout.

According to Johnson (1995), there is a link between competence and self-esteem, competence strengthen a sense of good self but contribute little when self-esteem is absent. People with elevated self-esteem undeniably think to have likeable personality characteristic in comparison to usual persons. They display themselves more striking, assertive, socially skilled, and outgoing and emotionally stable and morally sound (Vohs & Nelson, 2021). There are is a link between self-esteem and self-handicapping behaviour. Those involved in self handicapping behaviour intend to protect their self-esteem in relation to failure and accept it with shame (Bae, 2022). Social evaluation is also important for the self-concept in relation to academic institutions, in one of the study conducted in China enrollment in elite university linked to higher self-esteem when compared with students who are not the part of elite universities (Zhang et al; 2022). Students of health sciences once improved in self-esteem their academic performance in short course like English, it provide help in motivating in long term career as well as confidence (Abdulghani,.et al 2020). There are students who rate themselves low because of selective attention they give to their failures which is mostly distorted cognition about that particular event. This happens to be those who are average in their intellectual resources and consider oneself possessing inadequate intellectual resources.

Studies reveals that self-esteem is a risk factor for number of psychopathologies: anxiety, depression, eating disorder and gaming disorder (Kavanagh & Brignell, 2023; Bhattacharya et al., 2023). Degree of self-esteem have a strong correlation in development of major depressive disorder (Choi et al., 2019). Paranoid ideation is related to low self-esteem at subclinical level. Self-esteem is also interconnected to mistrust, doubt, suspiciousness and even bizarre thinking except persecution ideation (Warman et al., 2010). A significant feature of high self-esteem is the shield it provides against the detrimental outcome of experiences of failure. Those who possess high self-esteem deals the negative experience using better coping strategies in contrast to those having low self-esteem and even they withdraw themselves from putting effort (Zeigler-Hill et al., 2013).

In Pakistan substantial research has been done on the topic of self-esteem and other variables such as self-efficacy and career decision difficulties. In one of such research Javed and Tariq, (2016) found a difference between career decision making difficulties in male and female, where no difference found across gender in self-esteem. In another work Ishaq, Malik and Asif (2018) investigated self-esteem, loneliness and psychological wellbeing in female and male students who are living in dormitory, made an inference that loneliness affect wellbeing with moderating effect of self-esteem with male having higher self-esteem and well-being score. Pakistan is one of the populous country in the world with diversification in culture, languages and religion. Researcher compared the self-esteem of those who in minority in Pakistan in comparison to the majority population and found that the adolescents belonged to minority group score lower on Rosenberg self-esteem scale (Iqbal et al., 2013). Rizwan and Ahmed (2015) conducted study on self-esteem and compared it with non-clinical population and found that the patient diagnosed with schizophrenia, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and drug dependence disorder have significant differences in self-esteem when compare to normal population. A research done on secondary school students was done in Punjab Province by using Rosenberg scale which was first translated in native language. Punjab is a large province and its population lived in both urban and rural area. The sample was collected from both urban and rural areas and further categorization was done on the basis of gender and subject selections. Students from rural background when compared with urban showed less score lower in self-esteem and humanities students less in comparisons to science students (Farid & Aktar., 2013). There is another scale to assess self-esteem of student SSES that was used in Nigeria to investigate differences in public and private institution students. The students of private institution score higher on SSES for both male and female and those from public educational institutions showed low score (Eremie & Chikweru.,2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are number of standardized techniques to overcome issues of self-esteem problems, including individual as well as group therapy. The literature depicts numerous interventions for developing self-esteem or improving positive self-awareness. CBT is one of the frequently used interventions to target the issue of self-esteem. In CBT therapist try to gain access to internal organization of persons' mind, it provides opportunity to clients interpret their experiences in present and past from more logical perspective. In addition to CBT, support group therapy, art therapy and principles of positive psychology when used as an arbitration will have moderate effect on improving self-esteem (Niveau *et al.*, 2021).

A number of experts like Edward Craighead, Susan McHale, and Alice Pope used the basic concept of learning to deal with issues of self-esteem for children and adolescence. This program initially assesses problems by using interview and slandered psychometric test and then develop age-appropriate skills which help in increasing self-esteem (Mruck; 2006). Bender used both cognitive and humanistic approach to resolve the issues of self-esteem in both clinical and non-clinical population (Dehart & Ten; 2013). Developmental approach is used by Harter which target worthiness and competence and have evidence for theory, practice and research (Harter; 1993). Intervention considered reliable for population having anxiety and depression comprising of ten session and has origin in cognitive approach, one of the techniques is Ten days of self-esteem (Mruk; 2006). Mruk developed the same program used in group with slight changes in duration, in group setting minimum duration is 2 hours with structured activities whereas individual therapy for the same issue consist of one hour session every week. This therapy fulfils the criteria of brief therapy. There are some factors which would determine the effectiveness of any therapeutic intervention including rapport building and ability to communicate effectively with clients.

Youth program are used for the enhancement of self-efficacy and self-esteem. Youth empowerment program engaged young people in decision making and facilitate participants involvement in group one of such program is developed by Morton & Montgomery (2011).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To see the effectiveness of Mruk's model for improving self-esteem in college students

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. There would be a significant difference in MSEI score before and after intervention
 2. Global self-esteem score will significantly increase after intervention
-

3. Competence and worthiness score would change after intervention
4. Defensiveness score would significantly decrease after intervention

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Procedure of the study was approved by ethical committee board of university before the start of study. Participants responded to the advertisement which was placed on college display board specifying aim, duration, initiation date, time and location. Eleven male participants (20-22) years reached the well-being center for this study and nine participants complete the whole study. Participants were enrolled in BS Program in Male colleges within capital territory. Participants were not diagnosed with any psychiatric problems which was assessed by semi-structured interview before initiation of group therapy sessions.

Study was comprising of five standardized two-hour group therapy session each week; based upon Mruk's model. In first session "Focusing phase" complete plane of weekly activities shared with the participants along with group guidelines. They were given brief overview of self-esteem which was assessed at the end of the first week by Multidimensional self-esteem inventory. The (MSEI) (O'Brien & Epstein, 1988) is a 116 items self-report inventory each item consist of five points scale. The MSEI measures: "Global self-esteem", "Competence" (Personal power, Self-control, Body functioning), "Worthiness" (Lovability, Likeability, Moral self-approval, Body appearance), "Identity integration" and "Defensive self-enhancement". MSEI is one of the instruments assessed for psychometric properties and compared with the existing tools to measure similar constructs like Rosenberg self-esteem scale and Eagly self-esteem scale showed a high correlation with these scales.

The second session is "Awareness phase", MSEI administered in previous session already scored by therapist which gave objective scores of components of self-esteem. On the basis of each participant scores on MSEI their self-esteem issues were identified. The group therapy session used techniques of humanistic and cognitive behaviour therapy during session. Participants were asked to describe their personal experiences and sources of self-esteem and they were facilitated by therapist with examples so that they could share their experiences. Session three is "Enhancing phase" participant was given insight about "cognitive restructuring". Participants did practice in handouts for identification of distortion in their thoughts and learned how to replace them. This session focused on increasing "worthiness". Session four is also "Enhancing phase", it focused on enhancing "competence".

The last group session in that sequence is "Management phase" which focused on whatever they have acquired during program would help them dealing and understanding issues pertaining to self-esteem. Participants maintain their journal at

home and share it with the group aloud, where alternative cognition provided by other group members if needed keeping group guidelines shared at the start of group therapy. Once the session was completed MSEI was administered again. Paired sample t-test was performed in SPSS-23. The objective of this study is to investigate if Mruk's group therapy would increase self-esteem of male college students. Hypothesis of the study were: group intervention would significantly increase the score on MSEI before intervention score. Group intervention would increase significantly competence score on MSEI. Group therapy would increase significantly worthiness score on MSEI. Identity integration score increase significantly after group therapy. Defensiveness Self-enhancement score will decrease after group therapy intervention.

FINDINGS

To test the propositions that pre-group-therapy ($M=301.333$, $SD=23.489$) and post group therapy mean for total MSEI score ($M=417.00$, $SD= 159.49$) which indicates that there is a significant difference in pre and post intervention score. Mean score of each subscale include: global self-esteem, worthiness, competence, identity integration and defensiveness self-enhancement. Pre-treatment mean score of GSE ($M=26.222$, $SD= 2.4381$) and post treatment mean score ($M=38.89$, $SD= 15.136$). Similarly, pre scores for worthiness, competence and identity integration are ($M=98.556$, $SD= 7.0553$), ($M= 100.889$, $SD= 8.3732$), ($M= 27.444$, $SD= 3.0867$) and post treatment scores ($M= 156.67$, $SD= 59.818$), ($M= 155.67$, $SD= 59.791$), ($M= 39.56$, $SD= 15.167$) correspondingly.

Defensive self-enhancement scale which is different from rest of subscales shows decrease in scores from pre-therapy to post therapy indicating validity as higher scores in DEF indicates more issues in self-esteem and lower score indicates improvement. Slandered errors in each scale are mention in table along with t- vale. Paired sample statistics showed significance for MSEI= .041, GSE =.040, worthiness =.014, CMP=.051, IDN=.036 and DEF=.000 level. Details of each subscales and MSEI total are mentioned in table one to table six.

Table 1: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 1	Pre MSEI- Total	301.333	23.4894	7.8298	-2.434	.041
	Post- MSEI Total	417.00	159.491	53.164		

Table 2: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 2	Pre- GSE- Total	26.222	2.4381	.8127	-2.445	.040
	Post- GSE Total	38.89	15.136	5.045		

Table 3: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 3	Pre-Worthiness	98.556	7.0553	2.3518	-3.145	.014
	Post Worthiness	156.67	59.818	19.939		

Table 4: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 4	Pre- CMP- Total	100.889	8.3732	2.7911	-3.089	.015
	Post CMP Total	155.67	59.791	19.930		

Table 5: Paired Samples Statistics

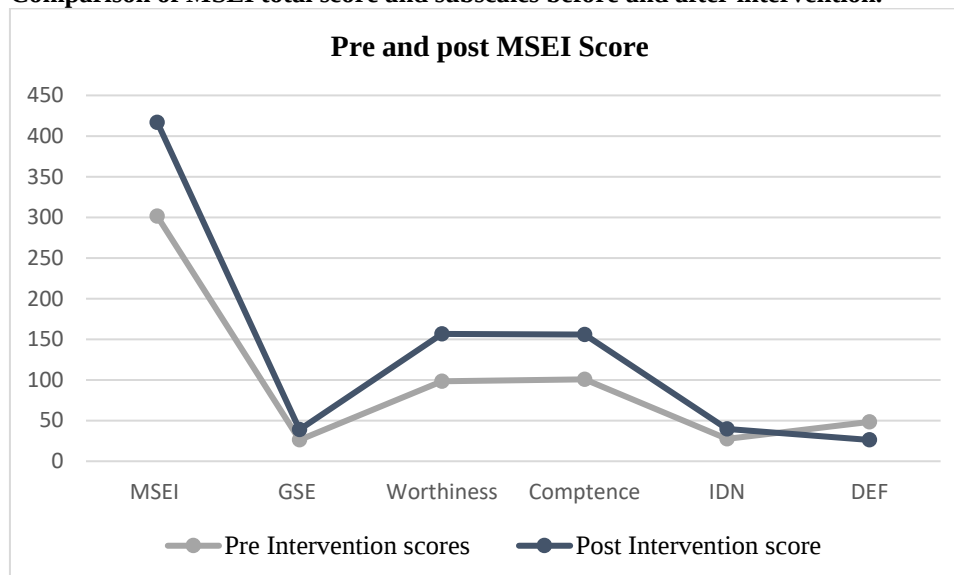
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 5	Pre- IDN-Total	27.444	3.0867	1.0289	-2.520	.036
	Post IDN Total	39.56	15.167	5.056		

Table 6: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 6	Pre-- DEF - Total	48.222	7.9652	2.6551	9.219	Pair 6

Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
------	----------------	-----------------	---	-----------------

Comparison of MSEI total score and subscales before and after intervention.



DISCUSSION

A number of interventions target to improve self-esteem in adults, efficiency of the therapy depends upon factors such as type of format used by therapist, population and contacts with subjects (Ciarochi et al., 2022). Individual therapy used for those who were diagnosed with psychiatric problems along with issues of self-esteem, whereas group intervention would be much more effective with non-clinical population. Pace of the participants matter in a group as variety of the participants differs in their responsiveness during group activity which may hindered with the outcome of overall program. Group intervention used with women having low self-esteem and their spouses suffering from substance dependence disorder showed increase in self-esteem when compared with pre-intervention (Salehyan,2011). Much similar phenomenon is found in majority of people in culture of Pakistan, if any person in a family involved in some activities like substance issues they first try to conceal it from others and even keep themselves away from getting expert advices because they consider it one of the factor tarnishing their self-image in the eyes of others. Techniques in group would give them insight that the issues they are facing is not just faced by them alone, a number of community members might face the similar issues and these wouldn't be able to

resolve until problem focused strategy adopted. Students having lack of spontaneity, intuitive, communication problems and issues with assertiveness may be handled better in group intervention. Psych educational program in group settings also showed effectiveness for Iranian students for managing issues with emotional intelligence and alexithymia (Hatamzadeh, 2012). Informal techniques used by teacher within class room settings where they acknowledging strengths of the students before the rest of classmate may pave the way for students to achieve their targets and would make them understand how to be a competent in particular area.

Self-esteem management intervention used in group considered a better strategy as this format required participation from each group member and providing opportunity to take initiatives which takes them on way to improvement. During activities participants have to maintain journal with exercises of identifying cognitive traps and give constructive cognition to the existing errors about self. Worthiness is one of the components of self-esteem which is identified by giving task like self-esteem experiences where they would share life experiences based on explicit memory. However, competence required not only change in cognition; it requires actions as well and required a long term follow up. The group who has attended the program were inquired, whether they incorporated those skills learned earlier in five week program, majority of the participants showed improvement in those areas where they need to flourish their competence. Participants even small in number showed multiple reasons which tarnished their self; including profession, education of parents, appearances, natural conditions such as being orphaned, and the area where they are residing. A number of participants doing part time jobs to maintain their expenses which include blue collar jobs. Overall, the methodology adopted for the group format to tackle self-esteem quandary is better in enhancing self-esteem among normal population and helped in saving time and resources as well.

The program could be effectively used in different educational institutions which would facilitate the students to overcome problems which does not falls in diagnostic criteria. As mentioned in introduction section that students having self-esteem issue use self-handicapping, once the example discussed in group would give them better understanding. It is important that the group should be at least from similar age and even better if selected from similar institutes as the group here comprising of male college and group dynamics of universities vary which might be a confounding factor during the program. Apart from time resources and effectiveness American psychological association highlighted some more benefits of group intervention: diversity. Participant vary in their cultural, economic and social background making it easier for group member to understand new perspective which illuminate the participants own perspective (American Psychological association, 2029). Assessment is the key to decide whether certain intervention would be suitable for individual or

not the technique used may not be effective for those who have narcissistic features in their personality as the program make the participants learn they are good in realistic ways and these people consider themselves best and special so using this technique is not suitable with them.

Mruk's group therapy intervention is one of effective group therapy to inculcate changes in individual for improving self-esteem. The participant of this study are male only so the findings may be generalizable to only those students enrolled in colleges at BS level. The study need to be replicated at university level and women colleges. Self-esteem issues are common in adolescence so intervention needed to carry out at intermediate and matriculation level students. The data just comprising of students so making the study less representative. It need to be applied to the population who are doing different jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Sample of the study comprised of non-clinical population.

This intervention may use with participants from clinical population as well.

REFERENCES

- Abdulghani, A. H., Almelhem, M., Basmaih, G., Alhumud, A., Alotaibi, R., Wali, A., & Abdulghani, H. M. (2020). Does self-esteem lead to high achievement of the science college's students? A study from the six health science colleges. *Saudi journal of biological sciences*, 27(2), 636-642.
- American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the american psychological association*, (2020) (p. 428). American Psychological Association.
- Bae, J., Yoo, H. S., & Lee, J. (2022). Identifying latent classes of self-esteem level, self-esteem stability, and internalized shame among Korean college students: Relations to self-handicapping behaviors. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 194, 111634.
- Bhattacharya, S., Kennedy, M., Miguel, C., Tröger, A., Hofmann, S. G., & Cuijpers, P. (2023). Effect of psychotherapy for adult depression on self-esteem: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Affective Disorders*.
- Butler, S. K., & Constantine, M. G. (2005). Collective Self-Esteem and Burnout in Professional School Counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X0500900107>
- Choi, Y., Choi, S. H., Yun, J. Y., Lim, J. A., Kwon, Y., Lee, H. Y., & Jang, J. H. (2019). The relationship between levels of self-esteem and the development of depression in young adults with mild depressive symptoms. *Medicine*, 98(42).
- Ciarrochi, J., Sahdra, B., Hofmann, S. G., & Hayes, S. C. (2022). Developing an item pool to assess processes of change in psychological interventions: The Process-Based Assessment Tool (PBAT). *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science*, 23, 200-213.
- Dehart, T., & Ten Nen, H. O. W. A. R. D. (2013). Self-esteem in therapeutic settings and

-
- emotional disorders. *Self-Esteem Issues and Answers: A Sourcebook of Current Perspectives*, 316.
- Eremie, M. D., & Chikweru, A. E. (2015). Self esteem among private and public secondary schools students in rivers state: implications for counselling. *Kuwait Chapter of the \ Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 4(11), 1.
- Farid, M. F., & Akhtar, M. (2013). Self-esteem of secondary school students in Pakistan. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 14(10), 1325-1330.
- Harter, S. (1993). Causes and consequences of low self-esteem in children and adolescents. *Self-esteem: The puzzle of low self-regard*, 87-116.
- Hatamzadeh, A., Molaie, A., & Shahidi, S. (2012). Effectiveness of group psycho educational training of emotional intelligence on alexithymia and general health in Iranian students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 968-972.
- Iqbal, S., Ahmad, R., & Ayub, N. (2013). Self-esteem: a comparative study of adolescents from mainstream and minority religious groups in Pakistan. *Journal of immigrant and minority health*, 15, 49-56.
- Ishaq, G., Malik, N. I., & Asif, M. (2018). Relationship of loneliness and psychological well-being among university hostels students: Moderating role of self-esteem. *Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 6(2), 242-255.
- Javed, Z., & Tariq, O. (2016). Career-decisions, self-efficacy and self-esteem among students of private and government academic institutions. *Pakistan Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 14(2), 42.
- Johnson, M., & Forsman, L. (1995). Competence strivings and self-esteem: An experimental study. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 19(4), 417-430.
- Kavanagh, M., Brett, C., & Brignell, C. (2023). What is the reported relationship between self-esteem and gaming disorder? A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 107776.
- Morton, M., & Montgomery, P. (2011). Youth empowerment programs for improving self-efficacy and self-esteem of adolescents. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 7(1), 1-80.
- Mruk, C. J. (2006). *Self-esteem research, theory, and practice: Toward a positive psychology of self-esteem*. Springer Publishing Company
- Niveau, N. New, B. oris, and Beaudoin, M.(2021). Self-esteem interventions in adults-a systematic review and meta-analysis. *J. Res. Pers*, 94(104131), 10-1016
- O'Brien, E. J., & Epstein, S. (1988). *MSEI: The multidimensional self-esteem inventory: Professional manual*. Psychological Assessment Resources, Incorporated.
- Rizwan, M., & Ahmad, R. (2015). Self-esteem deficits among psychiatric patients. *Sage Open*, 5(2), 2158244015581649.
- Salehyan, M., & Aghabeiki, A. (2011). The effectiveness of cognitive-behavioural group therapy on the enhancement of the self-esteem of women with husbands affected by substance dependency disorder. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 30, 1698-1702.
- Supervía, P. U., Bordás, C. S., Robres, A. Q., Blasco, R. L., & Cosculluela, C. L. (2023). Empathy, self-esteem and satisfaction with life in adolescent. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 144, 106755.
- Vohs, K. D., & Nelson, N. M. (2021). CHAPTER EIGHT SELF-ESTEEM AND LIKEABILITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF THREAT IN INTERPERSONAL
-

INCLUSION. *Researching the Self: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 153.

- Warman, D. M., Lysaker, P. H., Luedtke, B., & Martin, J. M. (2010). Self-esteem and delusion proneness. *The Journal of nervous and mental disease*, 198(6), 455-457.
- Zeigler-Hill, V., Li, H., Masri, J., Smith, A., Vonk, J., Madson, M. B., & Zhang, Q. (2013). Self-esteem instability and academic outcomes in American and Chinese college students. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 47(5), 455-463.
- Zhang, R., Qiu, Z., Li, Y., Liu, L., & Zhi, S. (2021). Teacher support, peer support, and externalizing problems among left-behind children in rural China: Sequential mediation by self-esteem and self-control. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 121, 105824.
- Zhang, W., Gao, W., & Liu, X. (2022). Does attending elite colleges matter in the relationship between self-esteem and general self-efficacy of students in China?. *Heliyon*, 8(6), e09723.