

## Effects of Self Efficacy and Risk Taking Behavior on Personal Growth Initiative of University Students

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### Abstract

*This study is undertaken to investigate the combined effect of self efficacy and risk taking behavior on person growth initiative of university students. Data was collected from the students of Mohammad Ali Jinnah University Islamabad (N=273, Male=140, Female=133, Graduate=59, Undergraduate=214). Regression analysis was carried out to know the effects of self efficacy and risk taking behavior on personal growth initiative of university students. Correlation analyses reveal that all variables are positively integrated. The regression analyses indicate that 18% positive variations are explained by self efficacy and risk taking behavior in personal growth initiative. Based on results it is suggested that there should be motivational programs regarding self efficacy and risk taking. This will further leads to enhance the personal growth initiative level of university students.*

**Keywords:** Self efficacy, risk raking behavior, personal growth initiative.

### 1. Introduction

Personal growth initiative is defined as “the active and intentional engagement in the process of personal growth” (Robitschek, 1998). Personal growth initiative (PGI) has emerged to be a construct that contributes to the personal development of a person. It is an intentional decision making by an individual to enhance his growth in a particular direction. The individuals with high growth initiatives desires are considered to have a high desire for their personal growth than individuals with low growth initiatives desires (Ogunyemi and Mabekoje, 2007). Robitschek (1997) said that personal growth initiative plays an important role in the self development of an individual. He has concluded that the desire of personal growth compels individuals to take challenges and taking steps that can lead to achieve many goals. PGI is a skillset that is used by an individual for personal improvement. Sharma and Rani (2013) described four components of PGI:

- Readiness for Change. It is an ability of a person to assess his preparedness for the personal growth processes.
- Planfulness. It is an ability of a person to be strategic in self changing efforts.
- Using Resources. It is an ability of an individual to efficiently identify and use resources.
- Intentional Behaviour. It is an ability of an individual to have actual and self made plans and behaviours.

Personal growth initiative is found associated with family functioning, career exploration, risk taking behavior, self efficacy etc. This study incorporates two of it; risk taking behavior and self efficacy with PGI. Personal growth initiative is found to be one of the main aspects of career building among the university students, because personal development initiative is an important hallmark of making brighter future. This characteristic will lead to a higher career success in the future life.

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Self efficacy as defined by Bandura (1997) “it is the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of actions required to produce given attainments”. The term self efficacy is sometimes used in terms of one’s personal confidence. Therefore self efficacy may be considered in terms of the confidence level of an individual. However the word confidence and self efficacy have some differences. An individual may be sometime confident there will be failure in certain conditions. But the word self efficacy is always taken in positive aspects. But however confidence may be looked as one of the positive component of self efficacy (Marra and Bogue, 2006). The individual with high self efficacy level is considered to take more challenging tasks. The challenging tasks may lead to enhance the self development of an individual. This will further became the road path for achievements of many goals. Self efficacy is considered to be one of aspect which is very important for the university students, because self belief is important for making the future brighter in further career development (Sharma and Rani, 2013). For students self efficacy acts like ladder in the career achievements. Student with higher self efficacy earn higher grades and set higher goals and have greater efforts regarding achievements in their career (Niehaus et al, 2012). Another study of Dimopoulou (2012) stressed on the self efficacy of teacher in the career development of students. He argued that teachers with high self efficacy contribute highly to the development of the students. However low self efficacy of teacher may leads to low motivation of the student. The study of Fan and Williams (2010) explores the parental involvement on the students self efficacy and motivations. They said that parents involvements leads to positives aspects on the student motivation level. They finally conclude that parents advices have positive effects on the students self efficacy.

A very few studies is available on the risk taking behavior as leading to personal growth initiatives. This area is not been exploited yet by many researchers. Nichols (2002) concluded that risk taking leads to high level growth on individual. Ogunyemi and Mabekoje (2007) have studied university undergraduate students. They found that personal growth is positively associated with personal growth initiative. This lead to conclude that risk taking behavior can be used as one of the aspects in the career development. Generally speaking risk taking is one of the aspects that is considered to be taking challenging tasks. So if the students are innovative and they are taking new initiatives; so this can lead to career success. So this study also incorporates risk taking behavior as to one of the positive aspects of personal growth development.

This study is aimed to explore the combine effects of self efficacy and risk taking behavior on personal growth initiatives. This study is similar to Ogunyemi and Mabekoje (2007). The study is undertaken to study university graduate and undergraduate students. This study will be important because it will explore one of the aspects of the personal growth initiatives of the students, because personal growth initiative is considered to be important for the career development of students.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

1) Whether self efficacy and risk taking behavior contributes positively to personal growth initiative?

### **1.2 Research Objective**

1) To explore the combine effect of self efficacy and risk taking behavior on personal growth initiative.

### **1.3 Hypothesis**

H1: Self efficacy and risk taking behavior have significant impact on personal growth initiative.

H0: Self efficacy and risk taking behavior have no significant impact on personal growth initiative.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Population

The study is based on sample of 273 students from Muhammad Ali Jinnah University Islamabad Pakistan. In the sample of 273 students 140 were male students and 133 were female students. In this study both undergraduate and graduate students were undertaken to study. In the respected sample 59 students were graduate students while 214 were undergraduate students.

### 2.2 Design

Following Ogunyemi and Mabekoje (2007) and Sharma and Rani (2013), this study uses expo-facto design.

### 2.3 Instruments

This study incorporates three reliable scales for collecting the data for the three respective variables. The description of the various instruments is given below.

1) Personal Growth initiative (PGI). The personal growth initiative is measured by using the scale developed by Robitschek (1998) named as Personal Growth initiative Scale (PGIS). The PGIS is a 6 point likert scale with 9 items ranging from 1 (definitely disagreed) to 6 (definitely agreed). The score ranges from 9 to 54. The high score points to the presence of high level of personal growth initiative. The internal consistency of PGIS ranges from .78 to .90.

2) Self Efficacy: The scale used for measuring self efficacy in this study is the scale developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) named as General Perceived self efficacy scale (GPSS). The GPSS is a four point Likert scale of 1 (not at all true) to 4 (exactly true). It consists of 10 item scale that measure self efficacy in terms of personality disposition. The internal consistency of GPSS scale ranges from .75 to .90. This is a reliable scale because it is found positively correlated with optimism and self esteem while negatively associated with depression and anxiety. The high score on the scale indicates high level of self efficacy.

3) Risk Taking Behavior: Risk taking behavior is measured by using the international personality item pool scale developed for risk taking by Goldberg (1999). This scale is similar to the scale of Jackson personality inventory (JPI-R). This instrument is a 5 point Likert scale with 10 items with options 1 (very inaccurate) to 5 (very accurate). The internal consistency of scale reported by Goldberg (1999) was .78.

### 2.4 Analyses procedure

Questionnaires were distributed among students of different departments. They were told about the objective and aims of the study. Proper guidelines were provided for filling the instruments. The instruments were then collected back. The reliability of the instruments is checked. The various analyses includes; descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analyses. Descriptive statistics is undertaken to examine the behavior of data. The relationship of variables is examined by using Pearson correlation coefficient. The effect of self efficacy and risk taking behavior on personal growth initiative is explored by using regression analyses.

## 3. Empirical Results

### 3.1 Descriptive statistics and correlation Test

The analyses of descriptive statistic are represented in Table (1). The results reveals that on the six point likert scale of PGI, the average score of the respondents is (4.644) with the standard deviation of (.351). The mean value of risk taking behavior on five point likert scale of the respondents is (3.067) with standard deviation of (.431). The mean value of Self efficacy on four point likert scale is (3.123) with standard deviation of (.279). This reveals that most of the students are found to have higher self confidence level.

The analyses of Pearson correlation coefficient are presented in Table (1). The results reveal significant positive relationship of self efficacy and risk taking behavior with personal growth initiatives. The personal growth initiative is found positively integrated with risk taking behavior ( $r = .356^{**}$ ;  $p < .01$ ) and with self efficacy ( $r = .286^{**}$ ;  $p < .01$ ). However the degree of correlation of risk taking behavior is higher than self efficacy with PGI. The self efficacy and risk taking behavior are also correlated with each other ( $r = .145^*$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

**Table (1) Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix**

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Stdv.	Correlation		
PGI	3.89	5.22	4.644	.351	1		
Risk taking	2.00	3.80	3.067	.431	.356**	1	
Self efficacy	2.10	3.60	3.123	.279	.286**	.145*	1

\*\* and \* indicates  $P < 0.01$  and  $< 0.05$

### 3.2 Empirical Analysis

The regression analyses are represented in Table (2). The results reveal that the  $f$  statistics is significant (30.226,  $p < .01$ ) which points that the model is fit. This indicates that both the variables are good predictors of personal growth initiatives. The analyses shows that the risk taking behavior and self efficacy together causes 18% of variation in the personal growth initiatives of university undergraduate and graduate students.

The  $t$  values and  $\beta$  values are presented in Table (3). The analyses reveals that both self efficacy and risk taking behavior are both significant at .01 level and brings positive changes in the personal growth initiatives of university graduate and undergraduate students. The results indicates that self efficacy ( $\beta = .300$ ;  $t = 5.789$ ;  $p < .01$ ) is found to be better predictor of personal growth initiative than risk taking behavior ( $\beta = .262$ ;  $t = 4.298$ ;  $p < .01$ ). These results are consistent with Ogunyemi and Mabekoje (2007), who found both variables as predictor of personal growth initiative. The significant value of constant ( $\beta = 2.904$ ;  $t = 12.011$ ;  $p < .01$ ) shows that there are also other variable that are contributing to personal growth initiative.

**Table (2) ANOVA and Model summary**

Model	Anova					Model summary			
	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	P	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj R <sup>2</sup>	Std. error
Reg	6.134	2	3.067	30.226	.00	.428	.183	.177	.318
Resid	27.396	270	.101						
Total	33.530	272							

**Table (3) Regression Analyses**

		$\beta$	Std. Error	T value	p
1	(Constant)	2.904	.242	12.011	.000
	Risk taking	.262	.045	5.789	.000
	Self efficacy	.300	.070	4.298	.000

## 4. Discussions

This study was undertaken to study the combine effect of self efficacy and risk taking behavior on personal growth initiative of university graduate and undergraduate students. The descriptive analyses reveal that mostly students have responded higher level of score

regarding self efficacy and personal growth initiative. However the response regarding risk taking behavior reveals low score. The analysis of correlation reveals positive correlation of self efficacy and risk taking behavior with criterion variable (personal growth initiative). The regression analyses confirm that 18% variations in personal growth initiative is caused by both risk taking behavior and self efficacy. The analyses reveal that self efficacy ( $\beta = .300$ ;  $t = 5.789$ ;  $p < .01$ ) is found to be better predictor of personal growth initiative than risk taking behavior ( $\beta = .262$ ;  $t = 4.298$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Similar results have been concluded by Ogunyemi and Mabekoje (2007). Nicholas (2002) also concluded that risk taking behavior contributes to personal growth of an individual.

## 5. Recommendations

Based on results it is suggested that students are considered to contribute in the economic development and growth of a country. The personal growth initiative of students is a positive step toward economic development. This study reveals that both self efficacy and risk taking behavior contributes positively to personal growth of a student. The self efficacy is found to have a larger impact on personal growth. It is suggested that there should be motivation programs for students. It is noteworthy that both teacher and parent involvement increase self efficacy of the students. Studies like; Dimopoulou (2012) stressed on teacher self efficacy while Fan and Williams (2010) focused on the parental involvement on the career development of the students. It is also suggested that to motivate students by taking new initiatives. Risk taking behavior also leads positively to career development of students. However there are also other aspects that should be considered as that will contribute positively to personal growth initiative.

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