

EMPOWER GUIDANCE ON EVALUATION OF RESULTS

Self-esteem and self-confidence/self-efficacy

Improved self-esteem or self-confidence/self-efficacy is one of EMpower’s Core Elements of Youth Development, because research on youth development provides clear evidence that knowledge alone is not sufficient to enable young people to achieve their goals. Self-esteem and self-efficacy play an essential role in enabling young people to translate new knowledge – whether in education, livelihoods, or health – into action. Since this objective is challenging to measure reliably, we offer definitions, some options for measurement, and a guide to other resources and literature on the subject.

Definitions¹

Self-esteem: The most frequently used definition of self-esteem is a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self (Rosenberg, 1965). A more specific definition is: “the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself” (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991).

Self-confidence: This guidance defines **self-confidence** – a non-scientific but well-known term – as synonymous with the psychological concept of “**self-efficacy**” to mean a person's confidence in their ability to effectively perform a behavior or plan of action promoted by your program. Youth development research highlights the importance of self-efficacy; for example, research on health behavior change has shown the importance of self-efficacy in a person’s ability to achieve specific health goals. Whereas self-esteem is a general view of one’s own value, self-efficacy varies from one situation to another, and EMpower grantees would measure youth’s self-efficacy in relation to the specific focus and objectives of the youth program. For instance, a youth might feel confident when competing in a particular sport but not to speak in front of a group. A young woman might feel capable in school in science or math, but not feel capable of negotiating condom use with a sexual partner.

Methods to evaluate increases in self-esteem and self-efficacy

It is essential to assess increases in self-esteem and self-efficacy systematically, because they are based in youths’ self-perceptions, and the subjective impressions of program staff are not reliable. Increases in self-esteem and self-efficacy are challenging to measure reliably, so it is recommended to use more than one evaluation method. The following methods are appropriate ways to measure this objective:

1. Pre- and post-tests: questionnaires and surveys.
 - A widely used instrument to evaluate self-esteem is annexed to this guidance.
 - Self-efficacy instruments depend on the focus of the program. For example, many questionnaires have been developed that focus on attitudes and self-efficacy with regard to sexual and reproductive health. One of the guides listed under Resources in this note has numerous examples of self-efficacy evaluation instruments.
2. Teacher/mentor observation using a checklist tool to assess changes due to the program

¹ This section is mainly based on a summary prepared for the MacArthur Research Network on SES and Health by N. Adler and J. Stewart, with the Psychosocial Working Group (March 2004).
<http://www.macses.ucsf.edu/research/psychosocial/selfesteem.php#bibliography>

- Observation checklists enable behavior change to be observed systematically, and are widely used in education and teacher training. Observations could be conducted pre- and post to assess behavioral changes among youth.
 - Observable behaviors indicating low self-esteem vary among cultures, and would need to be discussed to determine whether use of this method is possible. In some cultures, such behaviors could include never speaking up in the group, hiding the face, hunched posture, or never looking at peers or adults directly.
 - What could program staff observe that would indicate increased self-esteem and/or self-efficacy of youth participants? Two examples:
 - For self-esteem, once staff/teachers have identified behavioral signals of low or high self-esteem, they could use a culturally appropriate observation checklist for youth participation in a group discussion.
 - Sexual and reproductive health education programs could use an observation checklist for role-plays to gauge girls' level of confidence in negotiating condom use.
 - If more than one person is using the checklist, all those using it should conduct at least two observations as a group, then meet afterwards to compare notes. When differences in scoring appear, the group comes to an agreement to ensure that everyone is scoring in the same way.
3. Spoken or written reflections by youth on changes due to the program.
- End-of-program reflection exercises, whether one-on-one with adult mentors/teachers, or in the youth group could include topics of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Systematic analysis of youth's statements after the interview or meeting is important.
 - When the exercises are oral, assign a note-taker who is not a participant.

Guide to resources and literature

Information on Self-Efficacy: A Community of Scholars has a page on "Information on Self-Efficacy Measures" <http://www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Pajares/self-efficacy.html#instruments> This has numerous guides and resources on self-efficacy, beginning with the work of Albert Bandura. Although most topics are not relevant to the focus of most EMpower-supported programs, the examples give a good idea of how to frame questions.

- Bandura, Albert, 2006 " Guide to Constructing Self-efficacy Scales", Chapter 14 in *Adolescence and Education, Volume V, Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Adolescents*, Edited by Frank Pajares and Tim Urdan <https://www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Bandura/BanduraGuide2006.pdf>
 - This chapter has numerous examples of self-efficacy evaluation instruments in its Appendices (from page 14 (or 320) of the document on). We suggest converting these examples from the 1-100 scales to a simpler 1-5 scale (Strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree)

Jamaica Youth Survey: Page three has another self-esteem questionnaire. Note which items need to be reverse scored. <http://sites.udel.edu/paclab/files/2013/07/Jamaica-Youth-Survey.pdf>

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale²

This scale has been widely validated, is still in use, and has been translated into many languages.³ There are other well-validated scales, but this is the simplest to administer and score before the program begins and again at the end.

Instructions

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. At times I think I am no good at all.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. I am able to do things as well as most people.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I certainly feel useless at times.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Scoring:

Items 1,3,4,7, and 10 indicate high self-esteem and are scored as follows: "Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4 points. Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 indicate low self-

² Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

³ "The RSES has been translated and adapted to various languages, such as Persian,[3] French,[4] Chinese,[5]Italian,[6] German,[7] Portuguese,[8] and Spanish.[9] The scale is extensively used in cross-cultural studies in up to 53 different nations.[10]" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosenberg_self-esteem_scale

Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

esteem and are reverse scored, so “strongly agree” would get 1 point instead of 4, and so on. Sum scores for all ten items. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.