

## Original Research Article

# A Study on relationship between Self-Confidence and Risk-Taking Ability among the Doctoral Students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

### ABSTRACT

Student life is a most important phase in a person's life to learn many things and to do different tasks. Students pursuing their education overcome a lot of obstacles created under many circumstances. Many adversities are faced by the students during their studies. Many psychological attributes affects the life of students, among them the present study deals with self-confidence and risk-taking ability of the students. Self-confidence means recognizing your abilities, self-interest, and being aware of your feelings. Risk-taking ability is one of the personality traits that may be affected by confidence.

**Aim:** The aim of this study is to study the relation between self-confidence and risk-taking among the doctoral Students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore (Main campus).

**Study design:** This study was conducted using ex-post facto research design.

**Place and Duration of Study:** Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore (Main campus).

**Methodology:** A total of 111 students pursue their third-year doctoral programme on the main campus and from them, 90 students were randomly selected for the study. The data was collected using a well-structured pre-tested interview schedule.

**Results:** Study revealed that the respondents had medium-level of self-confidence (77.78%) and risk-taking ability (74.45%). The two psychological concepts were also found to have significant relationship with each other and are also positively correlated.

**Conclusion:** This proves that the students are adequately confident with whatever they do and are taking risks in most needed situations. The study also projected that students didn't hesitate to take a risk because they trusted themselves in the career/academic process.

**Keywords:** Adversities, Doctoral students, Psychological concepts, Self-confidence, Risk-taking ability

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an integral part and a basic right of every person. Students pursuing their education overcome a lot of obstacles created under many circumstances and when it comes to doctoral students the sphere of situation spins differently. They have anxiety, stress and depression to a greater extent than normal students. They also have to consider their family well-being along with their studies and every student has to have a balance between these two. According to a study in a science journal called "Nature", 36% of 6,300 respondents worldwide had sought help for anxiety or depression related to their PhD, confirming the extent of the problem, rates of depression and anxiety are six times higher in Ph. D students than those in the general public.

Many adversities are faced by the students during their studies. Various psychological concepts are involved when one is studying behavioural aspects of students.

**Comment [S1]:** It will be best if the abstract flows without any headings breaking it, The headings like aim, study design and so on is best removed

These include self-confidence, decision making ability, achievement motivation and aspiration level, parental guidance and support, risk-taking ability, perceived commitments, peer circle influence, problem-solving ability etc. Among all these concepts, this study particularly deals with the self-confidence and risk-taking ability of the students.

Self-confidence means recognizing your abilities, self-interest, and being aware of your feelings. Self-confidence influences virtually every aspect of an individual's life, from the individual's ability to think optimistically, perseverance through difficulties to completion of activities (Lundberg, 2008). Tripathy&Srivastava (2012) believe that self-confidence is an attitude and students with self-confidence believe in their abilities, they are goal-directed, and they believe that they will reach their goals and expectations. As Norman & Hyland (2003) state confidence is a factor in learning which can have effects on students' participation and progress. It can also be termed as "self-confidence," "self-efficacy," "self-esteem," "self-assuredness," "self-trust," "satisfaction," and "self-comfort".

The risk taking behavior is described as a behavior which has no precision about its results (Rosenbloom, 2003). Risk-taking ability is the readiness to face any kind of adverse situation and to challenge the circumstances and their consequences. Despite the differences in definitions, risk-taking behavior involves not fearing to make mistakes, asking questions and taking initiative as a result of the willingness to learn (Karademir, C. A. &Akgul, A., 2019). Self-confidence and risk-taking ability can be considered two sides of the same coin since they are highly interrelated even though they are evaluated separately in different situations. Self-confidence is what drives a person to face any risky situation, which in turn improves one's skills and abilities to a greater extent.

This study is requisite, since studies related to students especially those who are pursuing a doctoral degree are comparatively less. Sociological studies are now booming areas of research since mental well-being is now the talk of the hour and has recently been considered highly important. Studying students' self-confidence and risk-taking ability will project the quality of the students studying in an institution and it reflects their mental health and their self-trust. This study aims to measure the psychological concepts of self-confidence and risk-taking ability of doctoral students and the main objective is to analyse their self-confidence level and risk-taking ability and the relation between these two concepts.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study was conducted at TNAU, Coimbatore Main campus. TNAU offers doctoral programmes in Coimbatore, Madurai andTrichy campuses and in research stations like Periyankulam, Yethapur, Paiyur, Vridhachalam, Aduthurai, Ambasamudram, Athiyandal, Kumulur, Mettupalayam and Thanjavur. Students pursuing their third-year Ph. D programmes under all departments of faculty of agriculture in the main campus (Coimbatore) were taken as the population for this study since the main campus have more number of student population than other campuses and research stations. A total of 111 students pursue their third-year doctoral programme on the main campus and from them, 90 students were randomly selected for the study. The data was collected using a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule.

The scales used for this study are the self-confidence scale developed by Sheela 2000, (modified and adopted by Sundarapandiyan 2006) and the risk-taking ability scale developed by Lydia de Haan, 2011. The self-confidence scale consists of eight statements (both positive and negative statements) with scores given in 5 categories strongly agree (7), agree (5), undecided (4), disagree (3) and strongly disagree (1) for positive statements-1, 2, 5. Reverse scoring is given for negative statements-3, 4, 6, 7, 8. The risk-taking ability scale

**Comment [S2]:** Remove initials from citation

**Comment [S3]:** This is already conclusive of the intended study. The use of probabilistic words like 'maybe or could be' is more ideal except when an authority is cited

**Comment [S4]:** TNAU, write in full for the first time and indicate the region and country of these mentioned locations.

**Comment [S5]:** It will be ideal if the sampling technique used in random selection is stated. E.g if it was simple random, stratified, convenient or purposeful etc used

was slightly modified for the study with 7 statements with risk-taking situations that are given scores of 1 for yes and 0 for no. These two variables were tested for correlation using SPSS software by Pearson correlation analysis to find out whether they have significant or non-significant relationship and also to find the type of correlation between them. The statistical tools used to analyse the data comprises of frequency analysis, percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation and Pearson correlation.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 SELF-CONFIDENCE:

**Table 1. Self-confidence scale statements with categorical scores (n= 90)**

Statements	Categories					Total
	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	
I feel nothing can stop me from achieving my goal	23	43	10	12	2	90
I am confident of my ability	40	36	4	10	0	90
I am bothered with inferiority that may not be able to compete with others	2	25	19	34	10	90
I am not interested to do things on my own initiatives	0	25	13	26	26	90
I usually work out things for myself rather than to get someone else to show me	22	47	10	6	5	90
I am proof to easy discouragement	2	12	22	31	23	90
Most of the time I feel strain	5	31	26	17	11	90
I very often worry on some things one way or other	22	24	19	16	9	90

(SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, UD-Uncertain, DA-Disagree, SDA-Strongly Disagree)

**Table 2. Self-confidence scale statements with mean scores (n= 90)**

Statements	Mean
I feel nothing can stop me from achieving my goal	5.04
I am confident of my ability	5.62
I am bothered with inferiority that may not be able to compete with others	4.37
I am not interested to do things on my own initiatives	4.88
I usually work out things for myself rather than to get someone else to show me	5.02
I am proof to easy discouragement	4.91
Most of the time I feel strain	4.04

**Comment [S6]:** Restructure to include feeling of inferiority to be more meaningful, items 4,6, and 8 needs restructuring

The above table 2, revealed that the second statement has got the highest mean score (5.62) followed by the first statement (5.04) and the fifth statement (5.02). This shows that the majority of the respondents strongly agree with the positive statements (1, 2 and 5). They are confident about themselves and their abilities without any doubts. It's found that students determination towards their goals and their interest in experimentation to do something new and as well as their works.

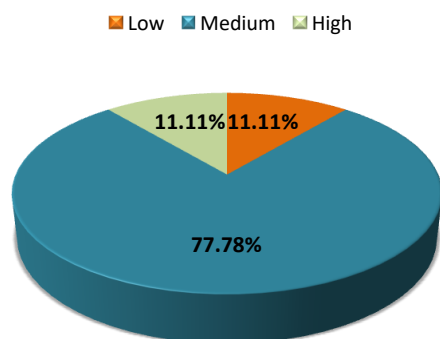
The statement which received least score was 8 (3.48), followed by 7 (4.04), 3 (4.37), 4 (4.88) and 6 (4.91). This confirms that the respondents do not worry often on some things one way or other, do not feel strain, do not bothered with inferiority complex, not interested in waiting for someone to do before them and do not get discouraged easily.

**Table 3. Distribution of the respondents according to their level of Self-confidence**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	10	11.11
Medium	70	77.78
High	10	11.11
Total	90	100.00

The table 3 corroborates that, 70 respondents out of 90 were medium in their level of self-confidence. This category comprises of about 77.78% of the respondents. This may be because they might not want to be over-confident about themselves and end things in a different way that will not be suitable for them. Exactly 10 respondents were in the category of low and high. These comprise about 11.11% of the respondents. This shows that there are students who are not confident enough about themselves and also students who are extremely confident in themselves when it comes to achieving their goals.

### Distribution of respondents according to their Self-confidence level



**Comment [S7]:** The ideal practice is to compare these item mean with a criterion mean of usually 2.5 which is the average mean of the Likert Scale responses of SD, D, A SA. So any item that has a mean greater than 2.5 is accepted as a description of the study sample.

**Comment [S8]:** It would be good if a short explanation is given on how these low, medium and high categorization was arrived at in methodology section

**Fig. 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their Self-confidence level**

**3.2 Risk-taking Ability:**

**Table 4. Risk-taking Ability scale statements with categorical scores (n= 90)**

Statements	Categories		Total
	Yes	No	
I usually think carefully before doing anything.	85	05	90
I mostly speak before thinking things out.	72	18	90
I enjoy taking risks.	55	35	90
I often try new things just for fun or thrills, even if most people think it is a waste of time.	50	40	90
I usually think about all the facts in detail before I make a decision.	70	20	90
I often follow my instincts, hunches, or intuition without thinking through all the details.	49	41	90
I enjoy getting into new situations where you can't predict how things will turn out.	62	28	90

**Table 5. Risk-taking Ability scale statements with mean scores (n= 90)**

Statements	Mean
I usually think carefully before doing anything.	0.94
I mostly speak before thinking things out.	0.80
I enjoy taking risks.	0.61
I often try new things just for fun or thrills, even if most people think it is a waste of time.	0.56
I usually think about all the facts in detail before I make a decision.	0.78
I often follow my instincts, hunches, or intuition without thinking through all the details.	0.54
I enjoy getting into new situations where you can't predict how things will turn out.	0.70

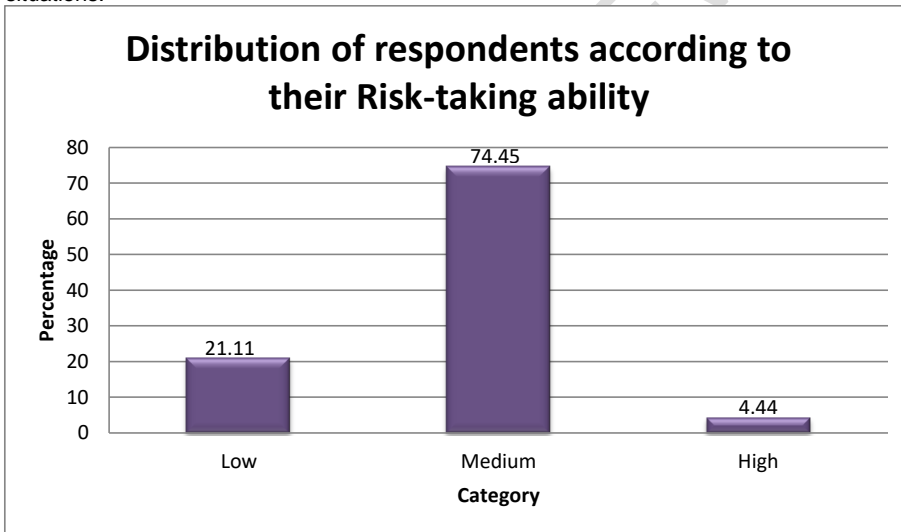
The table 5 shows that the first statement has the highest mean score (0.94) followed by the second statement (0.80) and the fifth statement (0.78). This indicated that they usually think carefully and analyse every possible situation before doing anything. They are also cautious of the words they use. It also indicates that they are very factual when they are about to make any decision and very much considered about its outcomes.

**Table 6. Distribution of the respondents according to their Risk-taking Ability (n=90)**

S. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	19	21.11
2.	Medium	67	74.45
3.	High	4	4.44
	Total	90	100.00

**Comment [S9]:** It would be good if a short explanation is given on how these low, medium and high categorization was arrived at in methodology section

This table 6 stated that around 75% of the respondents were medium-level risk-takers followed by low (21.11%) and high level (4.44%). This might be because they are slightly reserved when handling risky situations and they are quite concerned about the consequences that might reflect upon their risky decisions. They are also concerned about their choice of words while speaking to avoid any kind of problem, and while making any decision they consider all possible outcomes and analyse everything to make that decision as the best course of action available. There are only a few high risk-takers among the respondents who project their curiosity and their mind of exploration to new situations. Some low-level risk-takers are not at all ready for taking any risky decisions and facing any risky situations.



**Fig. 2. Distribution of the respondents according to their risk-taking ability**

### 3.2 Relation between Self-confidence and Risk-taking Ability:

Pearson correlation analysis for Self-confidence and risk-taking ability of the respondents has been done and the value obtained is **0.223\*** which denotes positive correlation at 5% level of significance.

This validates that increase in self-confidence will increase in risk-taking ability of the respondents and the other way round. Self-confidence contributes to risk-taking ability in a positive manner and vice versa.

**Comment [S10]:** The table should be included so that the r and p value obtained can be seen, this the core of this work



**Fig. 3. Positive and Significant relation between Self-confidence and Risk-taking Ability of the respondents**

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

It is concluded that students are careful and confident enough to handle their situations along with their studies. This statement was chosen right since they turned out to behaving moderate self-confidence and risk-taking ability. In addition to this, the variables were positively correlating and showed a significant relationship with one another. This proves that the students are adequately confident with whatever they do and are taking risks in most needed situations. The study also projected that students didn't hesitate to take a risk because they trusted themselves in the career/academic process. The TNAU institution thus has students with stuff and resilience to give its best possible outcome of creating productive students with desirable qualities.

**Comment [S11]:** Remove, not a formal language

#### **CONSENT**

As per international standard or university standard, respondent's written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

#### **ETHICAL APPROVAL**

This is an original research study conducted by the author and all the results obtained are verified, approved and true to the author(s) knowledge.

#### **REFERENCES**

Dehaan et al. The RT-18: a new screening tool to assess young adult risk-taking behavior. *International Journal of General Medicine*.2011;4:575–584.

Karademir CA, Akgul A. Students' social studies-oriented academic risk-taking behaviors and autonomous learning skills. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*. 2019;14(1):056–068.

Lundberg KM. Promoting self-confidence in clinical nursing students. *Nurse Educator*. 2008;33(2):86–89.

Norman M, Hyland T. The role of confidence in lifelong learning. *Educational studies*. 2003;29(2-3):261-272.

Rosenbloom T. Risk evaluation and risky behavior of high and low sensation seekers. *Social Behavior and Personality*. 2003;31:375–386.

Tripathy M, Srivastava SK. To Study the Effect of Academic Achievement on the Level of Self–confidence. *International Journal of Yoga and Allied Sciences*. 2012;1(1):33-45.

Anonymous. Nature: A cry for help- Without systemic change to research cultures, graduate-student mental health could worsen. *The international journal of science*. 2019;575:257-258.

UNDER PEER REVIEW