

Salutogenic Approach by Differently Abled Tutors to Promote Positive Body Image and Growth Mindset among Adolescent Students: An Explorative Study

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ABSTRACT

The salutogenic approach emphasizes the wellness of adolescents. The study applied salutogenic approach by engaging differently-abled persons for training sessions to enhance adolescents' growth mindset and body positivity; aiming to promote positive body image and growth mindset among adolescents. The sample constituted 35 adolescent students. The growth Mindset Scale and the Body image satisfaction questionnaire are the tools used to collect data. The study adopted a pre-test: post-test single group design to examine the effectiveness of the training program. It is revealed that the salutogenic approach is effective in developing positive body image and the desirable growth mindset of adolescents. There is a high positive correlation between the dependent and independent variables. The study is supportive of generalizing that adolescents should be trained to focus on their strengths and utilize their resources to have a life with purpose and meaning. Differently abled persons are deputed to the intervention with the expectation that they will be more effective in imparting the traits of growth mindset and positive body image to adolescents than persons who are not disabled.

KEYWORDS : Salutogenic approach, differently-abled facilitators, growth mindset, positive body image, body positivity, adolescents.

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a unique and formative time in an individual's life. India places the top population of adolescents in the world (Report-UNICEF, 2012). Far from being the healthiest time of life, adolescence has become a period of maximum risks and vulnerability and procured the image of a 'troubled generation'. Moreover, the technological, social and cultural environment in which today's adolescence unfolds, further the difficulties and turbulence common to this phase. Adolescence is considered to be a crucial period for developing social and emotional habits important for mental health. Such habits could be developed by making use of the individual strengths and resources which already exist within the self.

Rather than focusing on psychopathology and negative outcomes, in general, there is a paradigm shift in the way problems and possibilities are addressed by researchers and mental health professionals. The present study adopts a salutogenic approach, which emphasized wellness rather than illness, to its intervention programme to examine if there is any significant improvement in the sense of body positivity and growth mindset of adolescents. The salutogenic approach was applied in the intervention programme by engaging differently abled persons for training sessions to enhance adolescents' growth mindset and body positivity. Differently abled persons were incorporated into the study to impart the message that 'failure is not permanent' and to provide an opportunity for the children to interact and learn from their experiences of survival.

Research on positive psychology has leaped into conceiving concepts and ideas for psychological interventions (Demerouti et al., 2011; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009; Wood et al., 2010). A growth mindset, as conceived by Dweck (2006), is the belief that intelligence and abilities can grow and improve with practice.

Undoubtedly, the mindset has a critical role in what individuals can achieve. For example, if a student who has a growth mindset received a poor score on an exam, she/he is likely to put additional effort into studying due to the belief that they can learn, grow and perform better. Having a growth mindset in adolescents is pivotal to living in today's world which poses numerous challenges and uncertainties. Nowadays increased rates of suicides and substance use among adolescents have become a common news report. According to World Health Organization (WHO), suicide is the fourth leading cause of death in older adolescents. Acquiring formal education is not a sufficient index of development; rather efforts to use individual positive resources and build resilience along with formal schooling are central to deterring unfortunate incidences. It is also suggested by WHO that mental health promotion and prevention interventions should aim to strengthen an individual's capacity to regulate emotions, enhance alternatives to risk-taking behaviours, and build resilience for managing difficult situations and adversities.

2. Objectives

The research is framed upon the following objectives:

- i) To find out the effectiveness of the salutogenic approach on promoting positive body image among adolescents
- ii) To find out the effectiveness of the salutogenic approach on promoting a growth mindset among adolescents
- iii) To examine the correlation between positive body image and the growth mindset of adolescents

3. Scope and Methodology

Salutogenic approach is an active approach that can intrude on the mental processes of adolescents. Here researchers utilized the implementation of the salutogenic approach through the specially engaged facilitators. The facilitators are differently-abled individuals. The intervention is training by utilizing a salutogenic approach. The research intended to estimate the effect of the salutogenic approach on two major variables that determine the individuality of adolescents: positive body image and growth mindset. The research assumption is that the salutogenic approach can effectively develop positive body image and growth mindset among adolescents.

Salutogenic approach is the way of perceiving positive aspects in life especially on people's resources and assets so as to contribute to have a better understanding of development and maintenance of overall wellbeing and health. This is opposite to pathogenesis model which focuses on diseases. Cash and Pruzinsky (2004) explains that positive body image is a positive self-attitude towards one's body with respect to size, shape, structure and aesthetics. Positive body image is influenced by several factors. Media, culture, gender, family and peers are some of the factors that influence the development of body image. The positive body image facilitates individual's social confidence and comfort, peace of mind, and social cohesiveness. It is observed that negative body image leads to social inhibition and anxiety (Jackson, 2004). The term body image covers weight satisfaction, size perception accuracy, body satisfaction, appearance satisfaction, appearance evaluation, appearance orientation, body esteem, body concern, body image disturbance, and body image disorder. Growth mindset stands for effort, exertion and time to build personality traits. An individual who hold a **growth mindset** believe that she or he can be better by dedication of time, effort and energy (Carol, 2007) In Carol's words "growth mindset is influenced by how we think about our talents and abilities".

Sample

The study is followed quasi experimental design. Adolescents in the age group of 13 to 16 years were selected for the conduct of experiment. The final sample for this purpose is formed with randomly selected 35 participants. Primarily, 200 adolescents were identified to choose the sample group. Screening was done based on the scores they obtained in the growth mindset and positive body image scales. Those who are found to have body image and growth mindset below to the satisfactory levels were included in the sample group for the conduct of experiment or intervention session. And they were fixed as the members of the final sample group. On this ground, the strength of final sample was 35. The sampling procedure is briefed in the figure.1

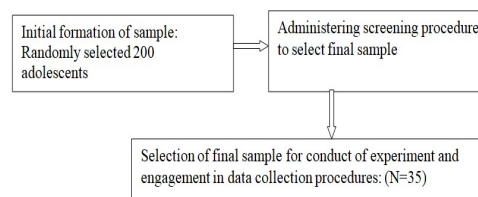


Figure1: The procedure of sample selection for the study

Methods and Materials

Standardized tools are used to assess positive body image and growth mindset. Growth Mindset Scale created by famous psychologist Carol Dweck is adopted to measure the variable in this study (Dweck, 2006). The growth Mindset Scale by Dweck (2006) consists of 8 items, with responses ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The statements in the scale are developed upon carefully assorted dimensions of growth mindset. Each item carries score 0 to 4 depending the response. The range of scores on this scale is 0-32. Scores between 0-16 indicate a fixed mindset, while scores between 17-32 indicates a mature growth mindset.

To construct a tool to measure body image satisfaction of adolescents, researchers followed comprehensive review of available tools. Some of them are the Body Image Concern Inventory (Rosen & Reiter, 1996), Body Dissatisfaction Analyser (Grogan, 1999), and Body Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (Garbett et al., 2022). All these devices are intended to measure the variants of body image concepts. The Body Esteem Scale is utilized as a model for developing a tool for the present study. The scale consists of seven items. While account the responses to the items in the tool, higher scores indicate greater body esteem. Example item: 'I think I have a good-looking body' (1 = never – 5 = always). Based on this conceptual framework, the Body Image Satisfaction Questionnaire is developed for the present investigation.

The Body image satisfaction questionnaire (Paleeri and Lima-2023), is used to determine the positive body image satisfaction of adolescents. The tool is standardized properly before administration. After item analysis, the final questionnaire consists of 34 questions. The Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire is found with an overall internal consistency of 0.87. The questions in the tool are framed giving due representation to the dimensions namely Appearance Evaluation (7 questions), Appearance Orientation (12 questions), Body Area Satisfaction (9 questions), Overweight Preoccupation (4 questions), and Self-Classified Weight (2 questions). The score of the tool ranged from 34 to 136. The minimum score for an item is 01 and the maximum is 04 in the tool. Based on the scores, the adolescents are categorized into (a) adolescents with high positive body image, (b) adolescents with average positive body image, and (c) adolescents with low positive body image. This categorization followed the description in the table-1.

Table 1.

Measurement levels of positive body image among adolescents

(Source: the table is developed by the authors)

Score ranges	Levels
108-136	High positive body image
68-107	Average positive body image
34-67	Low positive body image

The study adopted pre-test-post-test single group design to examine the effectiveness of the training programme led by differently abled individuals.

Design and Implementation

As mentioned above, an initial screening was conducted among 200 adolescents. Based on the scores obtained on the variables, 35 adolescents were selected randomly from the sufficient score obtained from adolescents to include in the intervention group. As mentioned above, the study adopted a pre-test-post-test single group design to examine the effectiveness of the training programme led by differently abled individuals. The training was given for three months (3 sessions per month) Post assessment was conducted using the same tools on the same variables namely the growth mindset scale and body image satisfaction questionnaire. In this study, the researchers paid attention to research ethics namely informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and justice and beneficence.

The Intervention and Procedure of Data Analyses

The intervention is conducted for the predesigned period as mentioned above. The differently abled persons as facilitators engaged with the training programme framed in a salutogenic approach. The data on body image and growth mindset were collected before and after the intervention. The pre-intervention data with the post-intervention data are utilized for comparative analysis. The objectives are realized on the comparison of pre and post-test data.

4. Literature Review

The growing interest in growth mindset has yielded several interesting studies in recent years. Tao et al., (2022) suggested that individuals with a growth mindset are less prone to mental health problems than individuals with a fixed mindset. Schroder (2020) reported that a growth mindset encourages healthy and adaptive ways of facing and tolerating anxiety, frustration, and disappointment, which in turn promotes resilience. With the growing understanding that a growth mindset may make individuals more resilient and

persistent in the face of challenges or difficulties, as they are more likely to adopt effort-oriented strategies in their efforts to achieve their goals (Zhao et. al., 2021), promoting growth mindset attitude in the younger age would certainly support their ability to withstand adversities and failures. The link between growth mindset and academic performance had been explored by several researchers. Better academic output and lower levels of stress were associated with the growth mindset of elementary and secondary school children (Rattan et al., 2012; Dweck & Yeager, 2019), and growth mindset is reported to be positively correlated with learning engagement and negatively correlated with perceived event intensity and stress related to COVID- 19. Researchers have continued investigating different methods to develop a growth mindset through 'mindset interventions'. However, studies examining the effectiveness of interventions yielded mixed results. Some studies pointed out that such interventions have improved the grades of students and persistence in STEM (e.g. Yeager et al., 2019; Yeager & Walton, 2011) whereas some researchers find it less effective in shifting a person's mindset (e.g. Sisk, Burgoyne, Sun, Butler, & Macnamara, 2018). The success of intervention programmes largely depends on the extent to which they can persuade the participants to shift their mindset more positively. A review of the literature yields a strong proliferation of studies conducted on various correlates of growth mindset, however, ways to enhance growth mindset with empirical validation are unexplored and hardly reported.

Adolescents are actively engaged in the process of creating an identity for themselves and understanding their changing bodies. Body image is considered one of the significant components of a person's self-concept that helps to attain a more healthy physical and mental state. Disturbances in ideal body perceptions lead to body image concerns or negative body image (Gorgan, 2006). The propensity of adolescents who are unhappy with their body image has been studied in several types of research and found that problem with body image can threaten their health and well-being (Shanger, et. al., 2017). Studies on psychological disorders of adolescents have shown the association between body image concerns and psychopathologic conditions such as anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal (TerBogt, et.al, 2006; Patalay & Hardman, 2019). Despite growing concern about body image during adolescence, there is a paucity of studies related to positive body image and ways to improve it. Therefore targeted activities to promote body image perception and a growth mindset are crucial and the present study may draw special attention to adopting an innovative intervention approach.

In an integrative view, the literature indicates that both a growth mindset and positive body image are significant in a person's life to deal with today's challenges and succeed. The present study aimed to examine the effectiveness of training led by differently abled persons in enhancing the body image sense and growth mindset of adolescents. The modules for pieces of training were primarily based on assets and resources an individual possesses and taught them to have a positive outlook towards life. It is hoped that the lived survival experiences of differently abled persons would be an inspiration which in turn can influence the way children think about their body, and capabilities and model a growth mindset

5. Result and Discussion

The responses obtained from the adolescents of the experimental group is properly tabulated and administered for appropriate statistical analysis. Normality of distribution is assured before the process of analysis. The Jamovi is used for analytical processes. Details are given under appropriate titles.

To find out the effect of the salutogenic approach on promoting positive body image, the pre and post-intervention data on positive body image is administered for Mean comparison with paired sample t-test. The students' scores are distributed at different levels on the body image satisfaction questionnaire. The scores obtained for the 34 questions from the 35 respondents are listed in Table 2.

Table 2.

Score distribution in the body image satisfaction questionnaire at the pre-experimental stage

	Pre experimental stage	Post experimental stage
Levels	N	N
High positive body image	00	11
Average positive body image	16	19
Low positive body image	19	05

	35	35
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To find out the effect of the salutogenic approach on developing positive body image among adolescents, the pre-test and post-test scores on body image satisfaction are administered for mean comparison. The paired sample t-test is made used to compare the Mean scores. The details of the comparison and descriptive values of the scores are given in table 3.

Table3.

Descriptive values and Mean comparison of the scores of positive body image among adolescents

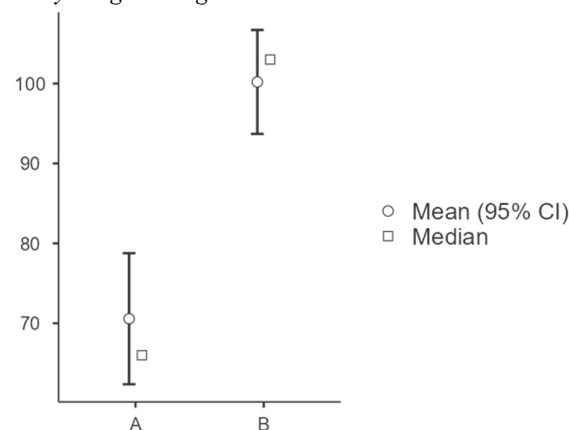
Test level	N	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	t-value
Pre test	35	70.6	24.7	66	98	14.1*
Post-test		100.2	19.6	103	104	

*significant at 0.01 levels

As per the table, the mean score of the pre-test is 70.6 and the post-test is 100.2. The obtained t-value for the mean comparison of the pre and post-test scores on positive body image is 14.1. The t-value is significant at 0.01 levels. The obtained measures of central tendencies are very high at the post-test stage. The median value is 66 on the pre-test and 103 on the post-test. The most repeated score in the distributions is 98 on the pre-test and 104 on the post-test. This can be further read in Figure 2.

Figure 2.

Descriptive plots of positive body image among adolescents



Note: A- Pre-experimental test; B- Post-experimental test

All the high values of descriptive analysis at the post-test level and the significant t-value of the mean comparison between pre and post-test scores are supporting to declare that the salutogenic approach is effective to develop the positive body image of adolescents. It means that salutogenic approach by engaging differently abled facilitators is highly effective to develop the positive body image of adolescents.

Effect of Salutogenic Approach on Growth Mindset of Adolescents

The students were segregated into two types according to the scores obtained on the growth mindset scale (Dweck, 2006). The scale has 08 items and five options to respond to each item. The growth mindset scores ranged from 00 to 32. Those who scored between '00' to '16' are placed as 'Adolescents with Fixed Mind Set' and those who scored in between 17 to 32 are placed as 'Adolescents with high Growth Mindset'. Details of adolescents based on the scores on the growth mindset scale are given in table 4.

Table 4

Adolescent types on growth mindset based on scores
 (Source: the table is developed by the authors)

	Pre experimental stage	Post experimental stage
Adolescent types on mindset	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Fixed Mindset	27	13
Mature growth mindset	08	22
	35	35

The effect of the salutogenic approach on promoting a growth mindset is proved by the procedure of the mean comparison of pre and post-test data. The scores of the students on the growth mindset scale were tabulated and administered for paired sample t-test. The details of the comparison and descriptive values of the scores on growth mindset are given in table 5.

Table 5:

Descriptive values and Mean comparison of the scores of growth mindset among adolescents
 (Source: the table is developed by the authors)

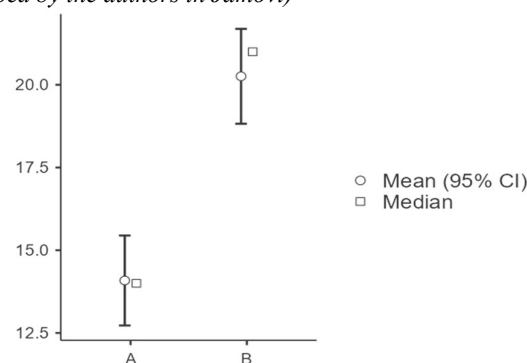
Test level	N	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	t-value
Pre test	35	14.1	4.1	14	14	28.2*
Post test	35	20.3	4.3	21	16	
-test			3			

*significant at 0.01 levels

As per table 5, the mean score obtained for the pre-test is 14.1 and the post-test 20.3. The Mean comparison of the pre and post-test scores on growth mindset resulted in a t-value of 28.3 and the value is significant at 0.01 levels. The descriptive analyses of the pre and post-test scores proved the higher scores of students at the post-test level. The median value is 14 on the pre-test and 21 on the post-test. The most repeated value at the post-test level, i.e., 16, is a higher value than that of the pre-test, but comparatively not so high. All these high values at the post-test level and the significant t-value of the mean comparison between pre and post-test scores on growth mindset prove that the salutogenic approach is effective to promote the growth mindset of adolescents. In other words, the salutogenic approach effectively promotes the desirable growth mindset of adolescents. The difference in values observed in the pre and post-test scores are further explained in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Descriptive plots of growth mindset

(Source: the figure is developed by the authors in Jamovi)



Note: A-Pre experimental test; B- Post-experimental test

Correlation between Positive Body Image and Growth Mindset of Adolescents

Positive Body image is, theoretically, a precursor of the mature expression of the mindset of adolescents. The variables are to be positively correlated as compound psychological qualities of individuals.

The scores of students on positive body image and growth mindset are administered for correlation analysis. Pearson's 'r' is found to estimate the relationship between the variables. Details are given in table 6.

Table 6:

Correlation Matrix: Pearson's 'r'

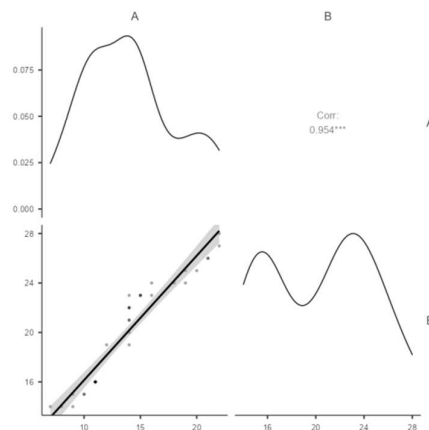
(Source: the table is developed by the authors)

Variable	Mean	SD	r	p-value
Positive body image	100.2	19.6	0.96*	<.001
Growth mindset	20.3	4.33		

* Significant positive correlation

As per table 6, it is evident that there exists a high positive correlation between the variables positive body image and growth mindset among adolescents. The value of 'r' is predicting almost perfect correlation between the variables. The salutogenic approach by engaging differently abled facilitators has a high correlative effect on the variables of positive body image and growth mindset of adolescents. The reciprocity between the variables proved with a high positive coefficient of correlation. The graphical representation of the correlation is illustrated in figure 4.

Figure 4: Correlation density of variables



Note: A-positive body image: B-Growth mindset

(Source: the figure is developed by the authors in Jamovi)

Discussion

A healthy body image in childhood can lay the foundations for good physical and mental health in later life. Due to the physical changes occurred during puberty, adolescents develop heightened consciousness towards their body (Valutis et al., 2009). As there is an identity exploration, which is unique to this period, adolescents are likely to engage in the social comparison process. Each adolescent is unique, however, due to growth spurts; their body is going through several changes. Developing body image is influenced by many factors such as family environment, peer group, social media, advertisements, etc., and having poor body image can have a long-lasting influence. Learning to maintain a positive body image is crucial and initiatives to address body image issues are a key to build self-confidence and optimism in children.

The growth mindset of adolescents is another important area that is gaining attention among researchers and teaching professionals. It may be considered an important quality or trait to be developed in every child. It is observed that the majority of adolescents today get easily distressed by simple failures and show poor resilience while confronted with personal and academic issues. The finding is congruent with the observation that body image, including perception of overall physical appearance, is probably the most important component of adolescent's self-esteem (Davison, 2005). Therefore, the real essence of education would serve its purpose only if the children are molded in such a way as to face life positively and meaningfully. Adolescents should be trained to focus on their strengths and utilize their resources to have a life with purpose and meaning (Sharma, 2017). The present study aimed to attempt to develop a positive body image and growth mindset by engaging differently abled persons as trainers.

Differently abled persons are incorporated in the study for performing interventions with the

expectation that they will be more effective in imparting the traits of growth mindset and positive body image to adolescents than persons who are not disabled. The results indicated that the intervention sessions handled by differently persons were effective and significant improvement in growth mindset and sense of positive body image was found. Engaging differently abled persons have substantially influenced and improved the level of study variables obtained in the post-test as compared to the pre-test condition. Therefore, differently abled persons could be considered an ideal group for imparting training in the domain of positive psychological interventions which in turn enhances their self-confidence too. The results of the analysis recommend the use of empirical benchmarks, not from laboratory studies, but from the field research on factors affecting the behaviour modification of the adolescent learners (Kraft, 2018).

6. Findings

The most significant finding of the study is the realization of the effect of salutogenic approach on the behaviour modification and attitude of adolescent students. The approach has significant role in enhancing positive body image and desirable growth mind set. The major findings of the study can be summarised as below.

- Adolescents who follow the salutogenic method are more likely to have favourable body images. Adolescents' positive body image will be greatly enhanced if the salutogenic method is delivered by facilitators with disabilities.
- The salutogenic method works well to encourage teenagers to have a growth mentality. Adolescents' desired growth mentality is efficiently promoted when the salutogenic approach is used as a method by tutors or facilitators with diverse abilities.

Teenagers' growth attitude and positive body image are strongly correlated with the salutogenic approach, which involves using facilitators with disabilities. The variables' reciprocity was demonstrated by a strong positive coefficient of correlation.

7. Limitations and Research Gaps

The review of researches on the selected variables proved that notable research gap exists in the area and it is needed to be intensively studied to address the gap. The salutogenic approach as a training device is rarely administered. Review revealed that the salutogenesis is studied in India mostly in medical field. In the present research, the approach is used to promote the social and personal behaviour of adolescents and it is intervened in school atmosphere.

The study is highly significant in the education scenario because it addresses major issues that adolescent learners confront in the school premises. Negative body image and fixed mind set are common issues among school children in India. These are some of the behavioural issues dealing by teachers regularly in adolescent classroom (Sharma, 2017). The present research will scaffold the teachers' efforts to deal with such adolescent issues.

No Specific studies identified during the review process that utilizing the salutogenic approach by endorsing differently abled facilitators to modify adolescent behaviour. This research is an attempt to place the salutogenic approach as a significant training device for promoting adolescents' desirable behaviour. Positive body image is an outstanding quality that is to be developed in youngsters. But, the variables are rarely studied on their personal and social perspective, and this research contributes significantly to overwhelm this shortcoming. The growth mindset is studied mainly on psychiatric and medical field in the Indian academic research circle; studies on the area with educational perspective are very rare. The review exemplified the high need for research on the selected variables with educational and psychological views. This signifies the relevance of pursuing this research.

This study chose salutogenesis based training as an intervention strategy to promote the positive body image and growth mindset among adolescents. As explained above, the positive body image of an individual is beyond the perception of others. It is one's own positive thinking about the body and social factors affect that imaging. Thus, it is very relevant to utilize the expert of differently abled persons as facilitators to train the adolescents by using salutogenic approach. The training can promote positive thinking among the participants. This adopted method highlights the significance of the research interventions.

8. Conclusion

Embracing positivity by focusing on the assets and resources of individuals has considered as a paradigm shift in the perspective of understanding health and wellbeing in researches. Therefore, an intervention study which emphasizes promoting positivity and mobilizing the strengths of individuals has drawn considerable attention nowadays. The present study is oriented towards bringing positive changes in participants by providing training that specifically focuses on positive aspects of life. The major objective of attaining high levels of growth mindset and positive body image among the participants was accomplished through the training sessions conducted by differently abled persons. Hence the study is significant for its theoretical and practical

implications. The findings of the study clearly indicate the powerful impact of differently abled persons facilitated interventions meant for adolescents. This is a new insight that differently abled persons could be incorporated as facilitators in school training programmes designed for adolescents. It may help adolescents to gain a better understanding about various positive aspects of human experience from the life of differently abled persons. Moreover, it opens various job opportunities for differently abled persons to associate with school programmes.

The findings of the present study are highly relevant in intervention researches conducted in the area of positive psychology. Developing positive body attitude towards one's body is an essential quality to be promoted among adolescents as it allows one to learn to be happy with what they have, reduces stress levels and boost self-esteem. Differently abled facilitated interventions can be generalized as an effective method to promote positivity and wellbeing among adolescents. Developing a strong sense of growth mindset among children is another important goal, along with acquiring formal education. Children should learn that failure is not permanent and through persistent efforts they can meet the challenges and setbacks in a more positive way. By interacting with the 'differently abled individuals' who serve as great models of survival, adolescents get trained to focus on their strengths and utilize their resources to have a life with purpose and meaning.

In the light of the results and discussions of this study, it is imperative to note that schools as well as other social institutions play an important role in shaping positive body image and growth mindset among adolescents (Sharma, 2017). Schools must recognize that adolescent students need guidance and supports from appropriate and competent adults other than from the teachers. Issues like body image turbulence and fixed mindset can have a significant impact on the mental health of youngsters. Such behavioural disorders may even affect their self confidence, efficacy and social cohesion. Schools need to make interventions through different training programmes to specifically address positive body image building and growth mindset in adolescent students. Taking the service of deviated personalities like differently abled trainers to the schools is essential as a supportive measure of effective training. Students should be made aware of the impact of body experiences of different personalities by this approach. Personal, cultural, and social experiences and training programmes are also required to students for developing their positive attitude towards body image and mindset.

The study suggests necessity of further research on this area. The social, personal, pedagogical, and technological experiences that students get from school atmosphere are changing day-by-day (UNICEF, 2022). The institutional provisions to utilize such changes for the development of students' positive attitude on body image and growth mindset are needed to be studied. As Thapan (1995) observed about the influence of external sources on adolescent behaviours, the role of media strategies, social media, social networks, and others agencies to construct false body image and mindset have to be analyzed. Taking into account the above finding that the training programme with differently abled facilitators are effective to develop positive body image and growth mindset among youngsters, some intercessions need to be included in school programmes with special reference to body image and mindset issues of students.

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