

A Study on the Self-Concept of Adolescents

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Abstract: *This Study was conducted to study the self-concept adolescents. Self-concept scale of Saraswat (1984) was used to analyze the self-concept of 40 adolescents of twin cities of Hyderabad, Telangana State. The findings of the study revealed that higher percentage of adolescents had above average levels of self-concept in dimension of temperamental (85), intellectual (77.5), physical (60) and social (52.5). About 47.5 percent of adolescents equally had high and above average self-concept in education. And 57.5 percent of adolescents had high moral self-concept. Adolescents overall Self-concept was found as 27.5 percent in high and 72.5 per cent have above average. Hence, the study may help the teachers and parents to maintain the optimum level of self-concept of adolescents.*

Keywords: Self-concept, Adolescent, Dimensions of Self-concept

1. Introduction

Adolescence is the developmental period of transition between childhood and adulthood; it involves biological, cognitive and socio-emotional changes. These changes transform the young person's vision of the self into more complex, well-organized and consistent picture. Self-conception of adolescents changes in structure. As well as content; structurally it becomes more differentiated and organized. Adolescents are more likely to employ complex, abstract and psychological self-characterization. Self-esteem, the evaluative side of self-concept is also modified during these years. Adolescent's well organized self-description and expanded sense of self-esteem provide the cognitive foundation for constructing an identity.

Adolescence is the period of heightened sensitivity for rapid learning and of critical acquisitions which determine the general style of adult life. Adolescents with high self-concept are considered to achieve high academic achievements which will provide their identity in the society, get good career opportunities, get acceptance from peer, parents and teachers, develop leadership qualities, and enhance their life skills etc.

The term self-concept is a general term used to refer to how someone thinks about, evaluates or perceives themselves. To be aware of oneself is to have a concept of oneself. According to Baumeister (1999) self-concept is "The individual's belief about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is".

According to Rogers, one's self-concept influences how one regards both oneself and one's environment. The self-concept of a mentally healthy person is consistent with his or her thoughts, experiences, and behavior.

Self-concept is defined as the value that an individual places on his or her own characteristics, qualities, abilities, and actions (Woolfolk 2001). Self-concept is not innate, but is developed or constructed by the individual through interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction. This aspect of self-concept is important because it indicates that it can be modified or changed (Franken,

1994). The way an individual views himself accounts to a large extent for his success.

An adolescent who has an adequate self-concept is likely to follow the problem solving approach and tends to be spontaneous, creative, original and have high self-esteem. He trusts himself and has good academic achievement motivation and is free to accept others without any negative feelings. Negative self-concept in adolescence has been associated with various maladaptive behavioral and emotional problems. Problems and difficulties can lower self-concept; but low self-concept can also cause problems and they may lose motivation in learning. Building confidence in adolescents is one of the most important steps educators and parents can take to ensure an atmosphere for learning.

Hence, the present study was taken up to find out self-concept of adolescents in twin cities of Hyderabad, Telangana state.

1.1 Significance of the Study

- 1) This investigation is aimed at identifying the self-concept of adolescents in twin cities of Hyderabad, Telangana State.
- 2) The study may help the teachers and parents to maintain the optimum level of self-concept of adolescents.
- 3) This study may help the adolescents to realize the importance of self-concept and change their self-perceptions and to have high self-esteem.

1.2 Objective

To study the self-concept of adolescents in twin cities of Hyderabad, Telangana State.

1.3 Methodology

Selection of Sample

The total sample for the study comprised of 40 adolescent girls selected from the twin cities of Hyderabad, Telangana state.

Tool

- 1) General information schedule is used to collect background information about the adolescent and their parents.
- 2) Self-concept scale of Saraswat (1984) was used to know the level of self-concept of adolescents in twin cities of Hyderabad, Telengana State.

Data Collection

Adolescents were selected personally and the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents. The general information of the adolescents, their parents and Self-concept of adolescents were collected by using Self-concept scale of Saraswat (1984) for the purpose of the study.

2. Results and Discussion

Table1: Distribution of self-concept of adolescents (Area-Wise) N=40

Dimensions of Self-concept	Distribution of self-concept of Adolescents(Area-Wise)					
	High		Above Average		Below Average	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Physical	11	27.5	24	60	5	12.5
Social	18	45	21	52.5	1	2.5
Temporal	6	15	34	85	0	0
Education	19	47.5	19	47.5	2	2.5
Moral	23	57.5	17	42.5	0	0
Intellectual	0	0	31	77.5	9	22.5

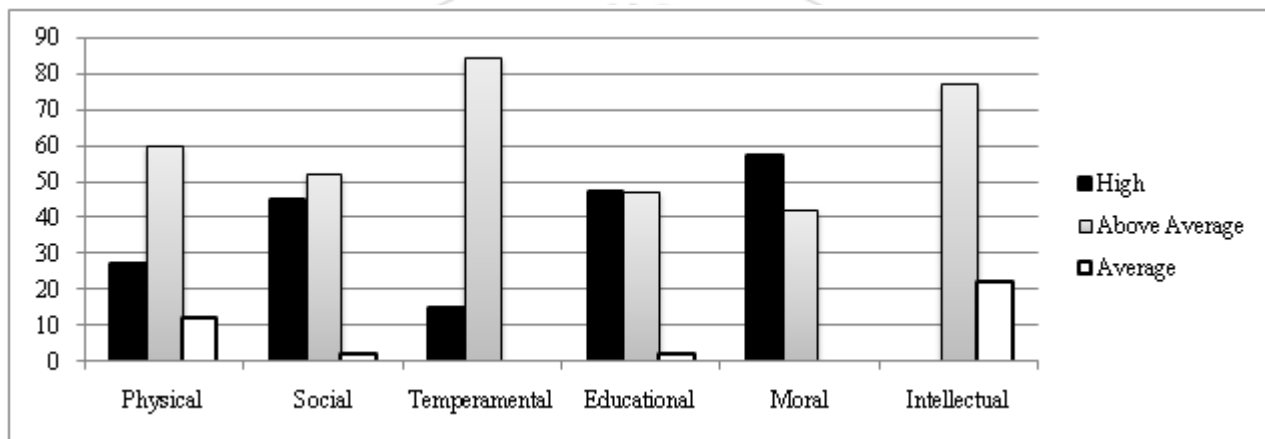


Figure 1: Distribution of self-concept of Adolescents (Area-Wise)

The result of the study (Table1) revealed that higher percentage of adolescents had above average self-concept in different dimensions temperamental (85%), intellectual (77.5%), physical (60%) and social (52.5%). About 47.5 percent adolescents equally had high and above average self concept in education. And 57.5 percent of adolescents had high moral self concept. This may be attributed to the fact that adolescents have better perception regarding their temperamental self. Hilgard (1962) explains that temperament is that aspect of personality which is revealed in the tendency to experience moods or mood changes in characteristic way. The outstanding quality of temperament is that it tends to be persistent and, as such, discloses the emotions which play a dominant role in the person's life. Emotions, whether fleeting or persisting, colour the individual's perception of himself and his environment and affect his behaviour. By determining what his characteristic pattern of adjustment to life will be, they affect his personality. Not only do emotionally toned experiences affect the person's self-concept at the time they occur but memories of experiences continue to leave their mark.

About 77.5 percent of adolescents had above average self concept in intellectual area. As Landreth (1967) has explained that "brightness at one period represents behavior, potentials and this is predictive of future performance. How

well the individual's like come up to social expectations, will have a marked effect on his self-concept. The person's awareness of his adjustive ability is also likely to influence his self-concept. Bayley (1968) and Dye (1968) wrote that for adolescence, the pattern of intellectual growth is fairly consistent. Bayley (1968) writes: "How a person uses his inherited intellectual capacities determines the quality of his adjustments. The quality of his adjustment effects his self-concept, the attitudes of others towards him, and thus his personality Maturation provides for the development of all inherent traits, including intellectual traits, but making use of them is the person's own responsibility". Adolescents are generally motivated to use their intellectual capacities by going to college – which may be regarded as a status symbol or as a way of having fun or of furthering vocational and social goals.

Sixty percent of adolescents had above average self concept in Physical dimension. It is supported with study of Shivani Agarwal and Payal Bhalla et al.(2013) and Dunton et al., (2003); Ecklund & Bianco,(2000). Given the central role that body appearance plays in adolescent females' self-concept Physical appearance is a powerful contributor to self-esteem in adolescent girls (Harter, 2006). In Harter's research, physical appearance consistently correlated with global self-esteem. In our society, physical attractiveness is

considered a more appropriate criterion for assessing girls. In adolescent girls, looking attractive is considered more feminine than doing well in academic field. Physically attractive girls receive more favourable treatment and help from others and they are more positively evaluated at work. Presumably, less attractive girls are more likely to be lonely, which means they are more likely to be stigmatized. This means that self-esteem is closely related to acceptance and satisfaction with a physical self (Padin, Lerner and Spiro, 1981; Pomerantz, 1979). And a recent review of intervention studies among children and adolescents have shown that increasing Physical self yields a short-term improvement in their overall self-concept among adolescents (Asci, Kosar, & Isler, (2001); Nigg, Norman, Rossi, & Benisovich, (2001); Crocker, Sabiston, Forrester, Kowalski, & McDonough,(2003); Ekeland et al.,(2004);Spence, McGannon, & Poon, (2005);Raustorp, Stahle, Gudasic, Kinnunen, & Mattsson, (2005);Dishman, Hales, Pfeiffer, Felton, Saunders *et al.*, (2006). Jourard (1955) points out that the degree of satisfaction a person feels about herself is related to some important aspects of her body. A person who is satisfied with his body, his positive attitudes is expressed in self-confidence, self-assurance, and a generally wholesome self-concept. Sion (1965) reports that the security one has in one's body is related to the security with which one faces one's self and the world. Jourard (1963) point out that girls tend to have more unrealistic concepts of what they want to look like when they grow up.

Lucas (1963) found that the college students with acne score significantly higher on the neuroticism scale than those who are free from this skin blemish. Hellersberg (1957) and Faust (1960) have pointed out that irregularities in the growth and functioning of different parts of the body also affect the self-concept and life adjustment. Above half (52.5%) of adolescents had above average self-concept in social dimension. According to Kinch (1968), the social self-concept is based on the way the individual believes, others perceive him. It is usually referred to as a 'mirror image'. Staffieri (1967) points out that the role of an individual's body configuration in social interactions and the effects of these interactions on self-concept is an important part of the total process of personality development. Social judgments serve as the basis for self-evaluation. In this way the social group influences the self-concept of the individual. The effect of the social self-concept on the behaviour of the individual will depend largely on how, important the opinions of others are to him at that time, and person or persons who are most influential in his life at that time.

About 47.5 percent of adolescents equally had high and above average self concept in education. There is a circular

reaction between the adolescent's personality and their college; their personality determines their adjustment to college and this influences their self-concept. The adolescent's attitude towards their college affects both their academic and non-academic adjustments. His academic achievement and his adjustment to the Extra-curricular activities of school or college influence the judgments his teachers, classmates, and parents make of him. These judgments affect their treatment of him, and the way he is treated shapes his judgment of himself. Students who have favourable attitudes towards education usually work up to their capacities and make good adjustment to college. Those who have unfavourable attitudes, tend to become underachievers. Findings of Smart, J.C. & Pascarella, E.T. demonstrated a positive relationship between the educational degree attainment levels of students and their formation of a more healthy self-concept.

Breckenridge (1965) pointed out that once formed; attitudes towards schools are difficult to change. If a child thinks of himself as a "poor reader" he cannot be motivated to improve his reading until he can be persuaded to change his self concept .A person's attitudes towards education affect the kind of adjustment he makes to school. His adjustment is expressed in behaviour patterns which both he and others use in evaluating him. The relationship that exists between teacher and student and the way the student perceives that relationship have a direct effect on the student's self-concept. . If he sees himself as a "good" person, as he believes his teacher sees him that will have an ego - inflating effect on his self -concept.

Nearly sixty (57.5%) of adolescents had high moral self concept. Jan E. Stets, Michael J. Carter,2011found that individuals' moral identity guides their behavior Moral or immoral behaviour has no effect on personality until the person is intellectually mature enough to understand the attitude of the social group toward his behaviour. Wiggam (1941) explains:"Intelligent individuals know that right conduct is simply intelligent conduct the conduct that gets the best results. Hemming (1957) writes:"Moral development is the process by which the child acquires the values esteemed by his community, how he acquires a sense of right and wrong in terms of those values, and how he learns to regulate his personal desires and compulsions so that, when a situational conflict arises, he does what he ought to do rather than what he wants to do. In brief to look at if the other way round, moral development is the process by which a community seeks to transfer the egocentricity of the baby into the social behaviour of the mature adult."

Table 2: Overall Self-concept of Adolescents N=40

Overall Self-concept	High		Above Average		Below Average	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	11	27.5	29	72.5	---	---

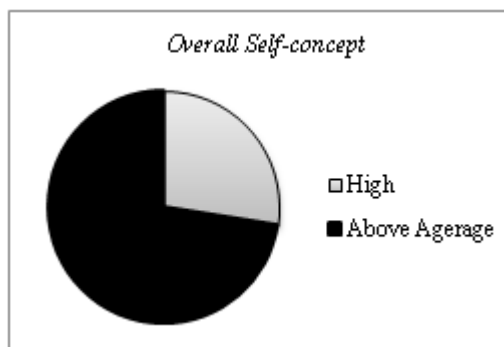


Figure 2: Overall Self-concept of Adolescents

The result of the study (Table 2) revealed that about 27.5 per cent of adolescents had overall high self-concept and 72.5 per cent had above average in their overall self-concept. A high self-concept is regarded as important for good mental health, improving academic achievement (Chapman, Tunmer, Prochnow, 2000; Guay, Marsh, Boivin, 2003), protecting against becoming a victim of bullying (Marsh, Parada, Craven, Finger, 2004), and is seen as a key aim of education. The multidimensional, hierarchical model advocated by leading researchers (e.g., Byrne, 1988c; Harter, 1988; Marsh, 1987b, 1993; Marsh & Shavelson, 1985; Song & Hatie, 1984; Yeung, Chui, Lau, McInerney, & Russell-Bowie, 2000) suggests that overall, global self-concept governs self-concept evaluations in a variety of domains such as social, academic, physical, and occupational. In turn, the domain level constructs are superordinate to numerous sub facets or sub domains that represent the organization of self-descriptive and self-evaluative statements concerning competencies in these more specific contexts.

Ishak and others (2010) examined the students' self-concept among 16- and 17- year- old adolescents in Malaysian secondary schools. A total of 1,168 students participated in the survey. This study utilized the CoPs (UM) instrument to measure self-concept. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) revealed three factors: academic self-concept, physical self-concept and social self-concept. This study confirmed that students perceived certain internal context factors, and revealed that external context factor also have an impact on their self-concept.

Enhancing self-concept is a vital goal in and of itself and that self-concept is an important mediating variable that causally impacts on a variety of desirable outcomes including academic achievement, to leading their life successfully (Marsh and Craven, 1997).

3. Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that higher percentage of adolescents had above average level of self-concept in dimension of temperamental (85%), intellectual (77.5%), physical (60%) and social (52.5%). About 47.5 percent of adolescents equally had high and above average self-concept in education. And 57.5 percent of adolescents had high moral self-concept. Adolescents overall Self-concept was found as 27.5 percent in high and 72.5 per cent above average.

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