

# Assessment of Self Esteem among School Children

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**Abstract:** *Self-esteem is an essential human need that is vital for survival and normal healthy development. It arises automatically from within based upon a person's beliefs and consciousness and occurs in conjunction with a person's thoughts, behaviors, feelings, and actions. The main objective of the study was to assess and compare the development of self-esteem among male and female children with respect to viz: personal, social, emotional, academic, intellectual and moral aspects. A questionnaire was developed by the group of investigators for the purpose of studying development of self esteem among school children. The sample comprised of 300 school children out of which 150 were boys and 150 were girls, between the age range of 10-14 years who were studying in 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> standard. The statistical analysis was carried out by applying percentages, mean, standard deviation, Chi square and 't' test. The results revealed that, majority of male respondents between the age range of 10 to 14 years showed medium level of self esteem. There is a significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to social, intellectual and moral aspects. Further, the study revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to personal, emotional and academic aspects. There is no significant association between age and self esteem among male and female respondents.*

**Keywords:** Self Esteem, Development, School children.

## 1. Introduction

Self-esteem is the sum of attitudes which depend on perceptions, thoughts, evaluations, feelings and behavioral tendencies aimed toward ourselves, the way we are and behave, and our body's and character's features. In short, it's one self's evaluative perception. The importance of self-esteem lies in the fact that it concerns to ourselves, the way we are and the sense of our personal value. Thus, it affects the way we are and act in the world. Children with high self-esteem are proud of themselves, assume responsibility for their own actions and deal with frustration well. Helping children in the classroom with low self-esteem to develop feelings of self-worth and self-respect not only benefits them individually.

School can influence children self-esteem through the attitudes they foster towards competitions, diversity and their recognition of achievement in academics, sports, and the arts. By middle childhood, friendships have assumed a pivotal role in a child's life. Studies have shown that school age children spend more time with their friends than they spend doing homework, watching television, or playing alone. In addition, the amount of time in which they interact with their parents is greatly reduced from when they were young. At this stage, social acceptance by a child's peer group plays a major role in developing and maintaining self-esteem.

School plays an important role in developing the self esteem in children as they spend a substantial amount of time. They compare themselves with their peers and the school contributes a lot by way of providing experiences in curricular and co-curricular activities. The opportunities provided to students in the school and also demands placed on them will affect self-esteem. It also developed by one's attitude towards peers and members of family. The parental expectation influences to a great extent. The physical state of

the individual in relation to their maturation matters in the formation of self- concept. The socio-economic background of the family and the impact of media shape the self- esteem.

As children grow, the areas where they build relationships expand to their neighborhood and school. Once they reach the age of schooling, children begin to evaluate themselves on the basis of mutual relationships with teachers' friends from academic, social, emotional, and physical aspects. Achievement and accomplishment in these increases children's self-esteem and simultaneously helps them for further development.

Children with high self-esteem show grater initiative, but this can produce positive or negative outcomes (Baumeister and others, 2003). High self -esteem children are prone to both pro-social and antisocial actions. For example, they are more likely than children with low self-esteem to defend victims against bullies, but they are also more likely to be bullies. By encouraging children to work to the best of their ability and by being genuinely interested in their progress, teachers can enhance the self-esteem, regardless of their talent. Parents can do the same by encouraging their children to participate in extracurricular activities that match their talents and further promote towards positive self-esteem.

In the light of the above discussion an attempt was made to assess the self esteem among school children.

## 2. Methodology

### Objectives:

1. To study the development of self esteem among school children.
2. To assess and compare the development of self esteem among boys and girls with regard to six domains;
  - a. Personal
  - b. Social

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- c. Emotional
  - d. Academic
  - e. Intellectual
  - f. Moral
3. To study the association between age and self esteem among male and female children.

**Hypothesis**

1. School children have low self esteem.
2. There exist a significant difference in self esteem between boys and girls in the six domains;
  - a. Personal
  - b. Social
  - c. Emotional
  - d. Academic
  - e. Intellectual
  - f. Moral
3. There exists an association between age and self esteem among male and female children.

**Selection of sample and sampling technique:**

- Random sampling technique was adopted. A total number of 300 children of which 150 were males and 150 were females constituted the sample.
- The children 10-14years studying in 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> standard were selected for the study.

The samples were drawn from the three government schools at Doddaballapura, Rural Bangalore District:

- Sri. Kongadiyappa Primary School.
- Sri. Davala maharishi Vidyanikethana.
- Niveditha English School.

**Tool:**

A questionnaire was developed by the group of investigators for the purpose of assessing the self esteem with respect to six dimensions; personal, social, emotional, academic, intellectual and moral among school children.

The questionnaire consisted of Part-A and Part-B i.e. demographic data and specific data. Part- A consisted of basic data with regard age, sex, ordinal position, religion, type of family, educational qualification of parents, occupation of parents, type of family and family income. The specific data contains seventy eight statements both positive and negative statements with 5 point rating scale. The scoring procedure of this scale is as follows; strongly agree-04, agree-03, neither agree nor disagree-02, disagree-01 and strongly disagree-0. The tool is also translated into regional language Kannada by the investigators.

**Procedure**

The purpose of the study was explained to the administrators of the school and the official permission was taken to collect the data from the children for research work. Rapport was built with the respondents and then the questionnaire was administered to the respondents with a request to answer. The dully filled questionnaire was collected.

**3. Results And Discussion**

The data collected from the respondents were tabulated and statistically analyzed by applying percentage, mean, standard deviation, chi square and „f“ test.

**Table 1:** Age distribution of Boys and Girls

Age Range (in Yrs)	Boys		Girls	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
10	14	09	16	11
11	45	30	48	32
12	40	27	48	32
13	43	29	33	22
14	08	05	05	03
Total	150	100	150	100
Mean ± SD	11.90 ± 1.08		11.76 ± 1.00	

Table- 1 reveals the age distribution of boys and girls. Out of the total 300 sample, 150 were male and 150 were female. Thirty per cent of male children belong to the age of 11yrs 29 per cent were under 13yrs category followed by 27 percent of them belongs to 12 yrs of age. Whereas less percent age of them 9% and 5% belongs to 10 and 14 yrs of age group.

In case of female respondents equal percentage of them (32%) belong to 11 and 12 years of age group, 22 per cent of them in the age range of 13 yrs followed by 11 percent and 3 percent of female children belong to 10 and 14 years of age group. Majority of male and female respondents were from between the age group of 11 to 13 years of age group.

**Table 2:** Ordinal position of Boys and Girls

Ordinal position	Boys		Girls	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1 <sup>st</sup> born	75	50	74	49
2 <sup>nd</sup> born	56	37	63	42
3 <sup>rd</sup> born	15	10	13	09
4 <sup>th</sup> born	04	03	-	-
Total	150	100	150	100

Table- 2 shows the Ordinal position of Boys and Girls. Out of total 150 male respondents 50 percent were 1<sup>st</sup> borns while 37 per cent of them second born, 10 percent of them were third born and only 3 percent of the respondents were consecutive born. With regard to female respondents“ majority of them (49%) were 1<sup>st</sup> borns followed by 42 percent of them second borns and less percentage of respondents (9%) were third borns. None of them were fourth borns in the family. Majority of both male and female respondents were first and second born children in the family.

**Table 3:** Influence of Age on Self Esteem of Boys

Age (In Yrs)	Level of Self Esteem								Significance of Chi square test
	Low		Medium		High		Total		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
10	04	03	10	07	-	-	14	09	9.5223 <sup>NS</sup>
11	10	07	28	19	07	05	45	30	
12	05	03	23	15	12	08	40	27	
13	07	05	32	21	04	03	43	29	
14	01	01	06	04	01	01	08	05	
Total	27	18	99	66	24	16	150	100	

Not Significant NS

Table- 3 depicts the Influence of age on self esteem of boys. With regard to the age of the respondents 7 percent of 11 years of children have low level of self-esteem where as equal percentage (3%) of 10 and 12 years of them have low self esteem followed by 5 percent of 13 years children have low self esteem and only one percent of 14 years old children have low level of self esteem.

Majority of 13 years old children (21%) had medium level of self esteem. Whereas 19 percent of 11 year old have medium level of self esteem, 15 percent of 12 year old had medium level of self esteem and only (7% and 4%) of 10 years and 14 years respondents had medium level of self esteem.

In the context of high self esteem 8 percent of 12 years old respondents reported high self esteem, 5 percent of 11 years old had high self esteem where as only (3% and 1%) of 13 years and 14 years old respondents had high self esteem. None of the 10 years old respondents had high self esteem among boys. Hence, chi square indicates non significant association with age on self esteem of boys.

Majority of male respondents between the age range of 10 to 14 years showed medium level of self esteem. However, there is no significant association between the age range and level of self esteem among male respondents thereby rejecting the hypothesis set for the study.

**Table 4: Influence of Age on Self Esteem of Girls**

Age (In Yrs)	Level of Self Esteem								Significance of Chi square test
	Low		Medium		High		Total		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
10	01	01	14	09	01	01	16	11	5.6330 <sup>NS</sup>
11	06	04	30	20	12	08	48	32	
12	09	06	28	19	11	07	48	32	
13	06	04	21	14	06	04	33	22	
14	01	01	03	02	01	01	05	03	
Total	23	15	96	64	31	21	150	100	

**NS Not Significant**

Table- 4 shows the influence of age on self esteem of female respondents. When comparison was made between age on self esteem among girls, the result showed that 6 percent of 12 years old had low level of self esteem, where as equal percentage (4%) of 11 years and 13 years old had low self esteem and only (1%) of 10 years and 14 years old had reported low level of self esteem.

About 20 percent of 11 years old had medium level of self esteem, 19 percent of 12 years old had medium level of self esteem, where as 14 per cent of 13 years old reported medium level of self esteem followed by 9 percent and 2 percent of 10 years old had medium level of self esteem.

With respect to high level of self esteem 8 percent of 11 years old have high level of self esteem followed by 7 percent of 12 years old had high level of self esteem, 4 percent of 13 years old had high level of self esteem and equal percentage (1%) of 10 years and 14 years old had high self esteem. On statistical analysis it is seen that age is not associated with self esteem.

Majority of the female respondents between the age range of 10 to 14 years classified for the study showed medium level of self esteem. However, there is no significant association between age and self esteem of female respondents thereby rejecting the hypothesis set for the study.

**Table 5: Comparison between the mean scores of various Dimensions of Self Esteem among Boys and Girls**

Dimensions of Self Esteem	Boys (n = 150)		Girls (n = 150)		Significance of t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Personal	34.58	4.26	34.38	4.69	0.3871 <sup>NS</sup>
Social	29.26	4.17	32.5	4.67	6.3467 <sup>**</sup>
Emotional	37.14	6.24	38.07	5.48	1.3733 <sup>NS</sup>
Academic	28.96	4.78	29.62	4.04	1.2933 <sup>NS</sup>
Intellectual	36.92	6.90	27.62	4.59	13.7614 <sup>**</sup>
Moral	32.61	5.25	29.48	5.20	5.1950 <sup>**</sup>
Overall	199.48	20.30	191.68	16.94	3.6178 <sup>**</sup>

**\*\* Significant at 1% level**

**NS Not Significant**

**Table 5** shows the dimension wise mean scores of male and female respondents on self esteem.

The mean score of male respondents (34.58) found to be slightly higher when compared to female respondents (34.38) in the area of personal category. The personal aspect did not show significant association between genders among the respondents.

There is positive and significant association found between genders among the respondents in the area of social dimension. The female respondents showed higher mean score (32.5) as compared to male respondents (29.26). The t-test value found to be 6.3467 which is significant at 1% level.

A higher mean score obtained by the female respondents (38.07) as compared to male respondents (37.14) in the emotional category. However, emotional dimension was not associated with gender among the respondents (with t-value being 1.3733<sup>NS</sup>).

Female respondents showed higher mean score (29.62) towards academic aspects compared to male respondents (28.96). On statistical analysis it was found that academic aspect did not have significant relationship, with the t-value being (t-1.2933<sup>NS</sup>).

In the area of intellectual category, male respondents showed higher mean score (36.92) as compared to female respondents (27.62). Hence, t-value being 13.7614 found to be highly significant at 1% level.

In the area of moral category the mean score obtained by male respondents (32.61) was slightly higher as compared to female respondents (29.48). This could be attributed to the fact that, the moral aspects among male and female respondents found to be positive and significant association with the t – value being (t-5.1950) at 1% level. Both male and female respondents responded that, moral aspect has influenced on their self esteem.

The overall mean score of self esteem obtained by male respondents (199.48) is higher than the mean score obtained by female respondents (191.68) which shows the significant results with „t“ value being 3.6178 at 1% level.

With regard to the personal aspect the results revealed that, majority of male and female respondents strongly agreed by responding that they always believe in themselves. It was also observed that both male and female respondents responded that they are happy the way they are and they feel good about themselves by doing so many good things. Both male and female respondents responded that they take care of themselves and also others. They agreed to the statement that they have a good sense of humor. Female respondents responded that they do not feel comfortable asking for help whereas male respondents accept both compliments and negative feedbacks equally. Male respondents agreed to both the statement that they do not take responsibility for their actions.

With reference to social aspects female respondents strongly agreed to the statement that they feel good about the trusting friendship which they develop, in case of male respondents they disagree to the statement. They were of the opinion that they get along well with other people irrespective of genders. Most of the female respondents agreed to the statement that they create positive relationship with others whereas male respondents disagree to it. Most of the male respondents agreed to the statement that sometimes they are withdrawing from everyone in case of female they disagreed to the statements. Both male and female respondents strongly agreed to the statement that they face difficulty in saying “no” to others. Most of male and female respondents agreed that they share their happiness with others. Most of the female respondents agreed to the statement that they invite others to play or do things with them where as male respondents disagreed to it and they like to go out and explore themselves. Most of the male respondents agreed to the statement that they feel bad when someone criticize them. Both male and female respondents disagreed to the statement that there is no point in respecting the feeling of others. They were of the opinion that they withdraw and sit alone when there are many people around and sometimes they are not comfortable being surrounded by unknown people.

In case of emotional dimension both male and female respondents strongly agreed to the statement that they are strong enough to control their emotions. Female respondents responded that they are afraid of doing many things without anybody's assistance whereas male respondents disagree to it. Many of the female respondents had an opinion that nobody loves them in case of male respondents they disagree to the statement. Female respondents responded that they often feel not worthy because of some circumstances but male respondents responded that bad and sad things happen but they find the strength to overcome with it. Most of male respondents responded that they keep trying when they did not get success in first attempt where as female respondents agreed to the statement that they often avoid taking chances or risks due to fear of failure. Most of the male respondents responded that they have difficulty in identifying positive things about themselves but female

respondents disagreed to the statement and they also feel that they have so many good things about themselves. Both the respondents have opined that they have confident of their abilities and also have the confidence to deal with the most of the situations they face.

With regard to academic dimension both male and female respondents sets goal to achieve what they want in their class work. Most of female respondents agreed to the statement that they complete class work which they have planned earlier and male respondents disagreed to the statements. Both male and female respondents agreed to the statements that they are good at their school work. Most of female respondents agreed to the statement that they hesitate to ask questions in class whereas in case of male respondents they don't clear their doubts with the teachers. Both the respondents responded that they set different goals to do well in their studies. Majority of both male and female respondents responded that they get little upset or get angry for small things during examination due to exam fear.

With reference to intellectual dimension of self esteem majority of both male and female respondents agreed to the statement that they expand their unique talents with practice and also they feel confident in taking chances by involving themselves in any task. Both male and female respondents responded that they never stop looking for a challenge. Most of male and female respondents agreed to the statement that they move confidently in the direction of their dream. Majority of female respondents responded that they give up easily when things get difficult for them where as in case of male respondents they disagreed to the statement saying that they are capable of facing the difficulties and overcome with it.

In case of moral dimension most of the male and female respondents responded that they respect the values by strongly agreeing to the statement. Majority of female respondents feel that they are not valuable person for others whereas in case of male respondents they disagreed to the statement. Both male and female respondents agreed to the statement that they follow the advice of people whom they love and respect. Majority of male respondents responded that sometimes they are engaging in risky behaviors whereas female respondents disagreed to the statement. Both male and female respondents disagreed to the statements that they seek advice of elders as they do not understand them.

It was hypothesized that there is significance difference between male and female respondents in six dimensions of self esteem.

There is not much variation with the mean score obtained by male and female respondents in the dimensions of personal, emotional and academic. On statistical analysis the „t“ value found to be non-significant in these 3 areas of self esteem by rejecting the hypothesis set for the study.

However, the differences in the other dimensions were apparent when compared with male and female respondents.

The calculated “t” value is greater than the table value in the categorized areas of social, intellectual and moral

dimensions of self esteem among male and female respondents and the test found to be positive and highly significant at 1% level by accepting the hypothesis set for the study in these three dimensions of self esteem.

#### 4. Conclusion

Self-esteem is a positive or negative orientation toward oneself. An overall evaluation of one's worth or value. People who are motivated will have high esteem, and having it indicates positive self-regard, not egotism. In general, the more positive their self-esteem, the more successful they will be at dealing with life. There are a number of things which causes lack of self esteem too. Negative self-esteem is related to low self-confidence, insecurity, underachievement, anxiety, depression, acting out behavior, sleep problem and being alone. It is important for all teachers and parents to understand how their children's self-esteem is created and maintained as well as how it can be diminished. The development of self esteem plays an important role in helping individuals to make adjustment about their self-worth and competence. The primary contributor to self esteem changes according to the stages they are in. Whatever the ability of the child is, the parents or the teachers must know ways to communicate and thereby build the self-esteem in the child. To steer the thoughts of the children in the right direction teachers have to train them to respect individuals and not be influenced by peers' pressure or the masses.

The study revealed that, majority of male respondents between the age range of 10 to 14 years showed medium level of self esteem. There is a positive and significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to social, intellectual and moral aspects. Whereas, in the other areas personal, emotional and academic there is no significant difference found between male and female respondents. Thus the finding highlights the need for intervention program to overcome some of negative self esteem among school children.

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