



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Relationship between Self-concept and Self-esteem in adolescents

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Abstract

she is subjected to many different challenges, stressors, and opportunities. An important factor in handling these challenges is a positive self-concept and high self-esteem. The objective of the study is to see the relationship between academic self-concept, and self-esteem of urban and rural boys and girls in high and low facility school. It was hypothesized that academic self-concept and self-esteem of urban and rural boys and girls in both high and low facility schools were positively correlated. The population for the study was consisted of 400 students comprising 200 boys and 200 girls. Age range of the respondents was 12 to 14 years. To measure academic self-concept, Indian adaptation of Marsh Academic Self -Description Questionnaire II (ASDQ) was used. Similarly to measure self-esteem, Indian adaption of the Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire by Srivastava & Joshi (2007) was used. The result of the study revealed that there are positive correlation between academic self-concept and self-esteem of urban and rural boys and girls in both high and low facility schools.

As a child goes
through adolescence, he or

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Introduction

Self-concept and self-esteem are two crucial components of our lives. These components can shape how we develop during childhood and affect who we become as adults. During childhood and adolescence, self-concept and self-esteem begin to develop. As such, it is important for adolescents to develop a positive self-concept and high self-esteem in order to better their chances for a happy and satisfying adulthood.

Self-Concept

Self-concept can be defined as “a person’s sense of self shaped through interaction with the environment and other people” [Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton, 1976]. A positive 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. Although originally it used to be considered as a unidimensional construct. Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton [1976] theorized that self-concept was multidimensional and hierarchically organized, with a global general self-concept at the apex and then split into two broader domains: academic self-concept [e.g. verbal, science] and non-academic [e.g. social, emotional]. Marsh and Shavelson [1985] further developed this model by splitting the academic portion into two specific domains: verbal self concept and mathematics self-concept. Research has since documented the multidimensional nature and the domain specificity of self-concept in academic [Marsh, Yeung, 1997; Byrne, Gavin, 1996], art [Vispoel, 1995], and sport [Marsh, Hey, Roche, Perry, 1997] settings.

Academic self-concept refers to an individual’s knowledge and perception of his or her level of competence or ability within the academic realm [Bong, Shaalvik, 2003]. Research has shown that one’s level of academic self-concept can influence factors such as course selection, long-term educational aspirations, educational attainment,

academic attainment, and academic achievement [Marsh & Hau 2003, Guay, Marsh, & Boivin 2003, Marsh, & Craven, 2006]. For example, Phillips [1984] showed that among equally able students, those with a low academic self-concept were portrayed by their teachers as lacking in persistence. In addition Marsh [1991] showed that the higher a student's academic self-concept, the more likely it was that the student intended to attend university. Furthermore, in a ten-year study, Guay, Larose and Boivin [2004] studied that a positive academic self-concept was associated with better educational outcomes. Interestingly, Marsh and colleagues [1995, 2004] have demonstrated that when highly successful students leave their regular academic settings and enter high ability settings, their self concept declines.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem continues to be one of the most commonly research concepts in social psychology (Baumeister, 1993; Wells & Marwell, 1976; Wylie, 1979). Teachers, administrators and parents are commonly concerned about student's self-esteem. Its significance is often exaggerated to the extent that low self-esteem is viewed as the cause of all evil and high self-esteem as the cause of all good (Manning, Bear & Minke, 2006). Self-esteem is associated with depression, anxiety, motivation and general satisfaction with one's life (Harter, 1986; Rosenberg, 1986). Given these associations, children and adolescents who lack self-esteem may be more dependent on their parents and have lower academic and vocational goals. Moreover the belief is widespread that raising an individual's self-esteem (especially that of a child or adolescent) would be beneficial for both the individual and society as a whole.

There is no shortage of ways to define self-esteem. Perhaps the simplest one is found in Webster's dictionary, which says that "self-esteem is satisfaction with oneself". The term self-esteem comes from Greek word meaning "reverence for self". The self part of self-esteem pertains to the values, beliefs and attitudes that we hold about ourselves. The esteem part of self-esteem describes the value and worth that one gives oneself. Simplistically self-esteem is the acceptance of us for whom and what we are at any given time in our lives.

Self-esteem is generally conceptualized as an assessment of one's own worth. According to Shaalvik (1990), self-esteem was defined as the individual's general feeling of doing well in school and his or her satisfaction with his or her achievement. Self-esteem can be defined as "an individual's attitude about him or herself, involving self- evaluation along a positive- negative dimension (Baron & Byrne, 1991). Most generally self-esteem refers to an individual overall positive evaluation to the self (Gecas, 1982; Rosenberg, 1990, Rosenberg et al., 1995). It is composed of two distinct dimensions, competence and worth. The competence dimension (efficacy based self-esteem) refers to the degree to which people see themselves as capable and efficacious. Self-competence as defined by Tafarodi and Swan (1995) "as generalized sense of one's own efficacy or power". The worth dimensions (worth based self-esteem) refers to the degree to which individuals feel they are persons to value. Self- worth is essentially accepting oneself unconditionally and having the feeling that one is worthy of living and attaining happiness. As stated by Nathaniel Branden (1992), if either self-competence or self-worth is absent, self-esteem is impaired. In the words of Nathaniel Branden, (1992) self-esteem is "the disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and as worthy of happiness. Similarly, Mc Devitt and Ormrod (2004) refer self-esteem to "feelings people have about their capability and worth". Reasoner (2005), defines self-esteem as "the experience of being capable of meeting life challenges and being worthy of happiness".

Self-esteem is divided into two types' viz., global self-esteem and specific self-esteem. Global self-esteem refers to an overall evaluation set with wide- ranging implication for self experience (Epstien, 1980). Specific self-esteem refers to self evaluation in narrowly defined domains (Rosenberg, 1979). Each of these levels of self-esteem can lead to useful predications. Global self-esteem scores may predict behavior across a wide range of situations, particularly when behavior is aggregated across many situations (Epstein, 1980, Epstein and O'Brien, in press). On the other hand, specific self-esteem scores may allow strong predication to be made in highly delimited behavioral domains (Cray, 1969; Bandura, 1982).

Studies related to academic self-concept and self-esteem

The bulk of researches related to self-esteem found that both self-concept and self-esteem are correlated. Franken (1994) suggested that self-concept is related to self-esteem and people who have good self-esteem have a clearly differentiated self-concept. Thus the one way of thinking about self-esteem is as evaluative function of the self-concepts.

Studies related to self-concept show that people with low self-concept have more poorly defined self-esteem. Evidence suggested that positive self-concept is closely associated with positive self-esteem (Farmer, 2001);

People who believe that they are good at a lot of things tend to feel better about them overall. Studies clearly mentioned that self-esteem and self-concept are deeply related so, many authors used these terms interchangeably. Although the terms self-concept & self-esteem are often used interchangeably but there is a wide difference between them. On the one hand self-concept refers to student perceptions of competence or adequacy in academic & non-academic domains and on the other hand self-esteem is student's overall evaluations of him or herself including feelings of general happiness and satisfaction (Manning, Maureen A, 2007; Harter, 1999). According to Hattie (1992), Self-concept or self-knowledge contains effective, descriptive components and answer the question who am I. Self-esteem or self-evaluation contains effective, evaluative components and answer the question how do I feel about who I am (Brinthaupt & Lipka, 1992; Campbell & Lavellee, 1993). Self-esteem therefore could be understood as a concept referring to self-respect, own worth or self-regard (Plug et al., 1989).

Bean and Lipka (1986) have reported the importance of values as a basis of beliefs about the self. Coppersmith (1967) and even James (1983) originally in 1980 stated that self-evaluation compares against an ideal self of potential capabilities. Erickson (1950) described the ideal self as containing the standards and expectations taken into the self-concept. These studies suggest an internal kind of criteria for the individual in the self-concept. Self-esteem on the other hand is the individual's opinion evaluation of how the individual's measures up, or compares of that ideal self or internal criteria. It is described as a sense of self-worth, implying both a feeling as well as an evaluation. The word evaluation here suggests a cognitive consideration; it is resulting feeling of worth that contributes to an individual's level of self-esteem. This feeling of worth also reinforces the fact that self-esteem is affective in nature as well as evaluative in quality. The evaluation that takes place confirms the notion that self-concept of cognitive in nature in addition to having a criterion quality as well.

Mwamwenda (1995) added to the definition when he says that self-concept is a person's way of perceiving himself/herself, which may be either positive or negative as a result of self-evaluation. According to Dembo (1994) as well as Biehler and Snowman (1997) self-esteem is the value or judgment individual place on their behavior. The academic self-concept is how I see myself, while self-esteem is how I feel about myself. The two terms are inseparable since self-esteem is based on the self-concept and explains how one feels about oneself. Consequently the terms are often used interchangeably in educational literature. Self-concept or self-esteem is achieved by comparing oneself with peers or with admired others or from a history of success or failure.

It can be concluded that self-concept is a broad construct that includes cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects. On the other hand self-esteem is a comparatively limited construct that includes evaluative aspects. Self-esteem is regarded as a confidence and satisfaction in oneself. It is considered to be the overall value that one places on oneself as a person, whereas self-concept is viewed as the body of self-knowledge that individuals possess about themselves. Hence self-esteem is an evaluative term and self-concept is a descriptive term. Thus self-concept and self-esteem are distinct constructs of the self that are at the same time theoretically related.

METHODOLOGY

Simple descriptive survey method has been employed to study and compare the variables under the study.

POPULATION (UNIVERSE)

The urban and rural adolescents studying in class VIII, IX and X in various secondary schools/inter colleges aged 12 to 14 years of Varanasi city. A total of sixteen schools affiliated to C.B.S.E. board were obtained from the periphery of the Varanasi district. Eight schools were categorized as high facility and eight schools were categorized as low facility schools.

SAMPLE

The sample of present study consisted of four hundred urban and rural adolescents studying in different types of schools, employing 2 (area) x 2 (area) x 2 (sex) factorial design. For each area (rural and urban), an equal number of adolescents from high and low facility of schools were drawn. There were two hundred subjects in each area equally divided into fifty subjects in each category of schools. To ensure the representativeness of schools, equal number of boys and girls in each group were sampled from high and low facility schools. This resulted in a 2 (area) x 2 (school) x 2 (sex) distribution of the sample in a factorial design. Schools were categorized as high facility and low facility on the basis of sixteen indices of physical and educational opportunities available in them (Shukla & Mishra, 1993). The categories were given 'two' or 'one' points on each index and a median split on the index (i, e., 24) was

used as criterion for distinguishing between high and low facility schools. These indices were- location of school (open area-congested area), building (good-poor), space (sufficient-insufficient), furniture (good-ordinary), physical amenities such as electricity and running water (adequate-inadequate), teaching aids (sufficient-insufficient), facility for games and sports (adequate-inadequate), staff (permanent-temporary), teachers training (mostly trained-untrained), method of instructions (active-passive), teacher-student interaction (good-poor), discipline (good-poor), extracurricular activities (sufficient-insufficient), school uniform (proper-improper), health facility (sufficient-insufficient), and conveyance facility (sufficient-insufficient). Thus schools which contained good building, had a proper space and physical amenities, provided adequate visual aids, facilities for games and sports, recreational and extracurricular activities, conveyance and health facilities and trained personnel etc. were put in the category of high facility schools. On the other hand, the schools which were lacking in or were not equipped with the above facilities were regarded as low facility schools.

Area was categorized as urban and rural. The area which comes under municipal's undertaking was considered known as urban area. Rural area had been defined as the area which is situated 15 km. away from the centre of the city and included under Gram Panchayat. The occupation of the people in rural area was mainly agriculture based. In this area conveyance facility was not easily available and the people usually follow traditional way of life. Another feature of rural area was the absence of civic amenities such as absence of clear water supply, transportation facility, and sanitation etc.

Table-1 Sample Distribution (N=400)

Area	High Facility school		Low facility school	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Urban	50	50	50	50
Rural	50	50	50	50

Interview Schedule

A semi - structured interview schedule was prepared by the researcher to gain information about the schools. For this purpose, nine different set of informations were obtained viz., (a) location of school (b) mode of transport of coming to school (c) student's residence (d) distance of school from cantt station (e) number of adolescents belong to remote areas (f) whether school comes under gram panchyat or nagar nigam (g) parents' occupation (h) whether conveyance facilities are easily available or not in the area (i) status of civic amenities in that area.

The Academic self-description questionnaire II (ASDQ II)

Academic self-description Questionnaire:

To measure academic self-concept, Indian adaptation of Marsh academic self- description questionnaire II (ASDQ II), was developed during the present investigation was used. The scale consisted of ten dimensions or subscale viz., English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Mathematics, History, Geography, Computer, Science, Arts and overall school subjects. The total number of items in this questionnaire were 60 which have to be rated on six point scale ranging false to true. Item- total correlation of each scale was calculated which ranges from 0.84 to 0.86.

The Rosenberg self-esteem Questionnaire:

To measure self-esteem, Indian adaptation of Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire developed by Prashant & Arora (1988) was used. The scale consisted of 10 items in which half of items are positively worded and half are negatively worded. The items were scored on a four point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The reliability of the Indian version of the scale was 0.80.

Objectives:

To study the relationship between academic self-concept and self-esteem of urban and rural boys and girls in high and low facility school.

Hypothesis :

Academic self-concept and self-esteem of urban and rural boys and girls in high and low facility schools would be positively correlated.

Analysis:

The correlation coefficient is utilized to examine the relationship between academic self-concept and self-esteem. Results are presented in Table2.

Table-2 Correlation between academic self-concept and self-esteem of urban and rural boys and girls in high and low facility schools

Variable	High and Low facility school	Urban and Rural area	Boy and Girls	Total
Self-esteem	.197** (.092)	.136 (.195**)	.136 (.236**)	.168**

**P<.01

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate the correlation between academic self-concept and self-esteem in low facility school, rural area and girls.

The result reveals that academic self-concept was found to be significantly positively correlated with self-esteem scores only in high facility school ($r = .197, p < 0.05$), rural area ($r = .195, p < 0.01$) in girls ($r = .236, p < 0.05$) and for total sample ($r = .168, p < 0.01$). No such correlation was found in low facility school, urban area, and boys (Table 2).

Further, the correlation co-efficient was also performed for each subgroup. No such correlation was found in urban boys with high facility schools ($r = .079$), rural boys with high facility schools ($r = .265$), urban boys with low facility schools ($r = .075$), urban boys with low facility schools ($r = .031$), urban girls with high facility schools ($r = .114$), rural girls with high facility schools ($r = .076$), urban girls with low facility schools ($r = .237$) and urban girls with low facility schools ($r = .029$).

An overall result indicated that academic self-concept was significantly positively correlated with academic achievement. It implies that adolescents having high academic self-concept would have high self-esteem. The hypothesis that academic self-concept and self-esteem of urban and rural boys and girls in both high and low facility schools would be positively correlated has been partially supported by the results.

The present result is confirmed by the past researches related to self-esteem that both self-concept and self-esteem is correlated. Franken (1994) suggested that self-concept is related to self-esteem and people who have good self-esteem have a clearly differentiated self-concept. Studies related to self-concept show that people with low self-concept have more poorly defined self-esteem. Evidence suggested that positive self-concept is closely associated with positive self-esteem (Farmer, 2001). Yu Wei Chu (2002) reported that self-esteem scores were positively correlated with domain specific self-concept (academic self-concept) scores. People who believe that they are good at a lot of things tend to feel better about them overall. Ashtiani, Ejei, Khodapanahi and Hamid Tarkhoran (2007), indicated that self-concept is correlated with self-esteem and these two have positive impacts on augment of academic achievement.

The result of this study signified that self-concept and self-esteem are relevant; it means that any increase in self-concept will amplify self-esteem and these results are correspondent with the researches results of Kaplan *et al.* (1995) and Dishman *et al.* (2006). These two components have a momentous role in personality. Thus in terms of these survey's result people with high self-concept and self-esteem respect and themselves, have high adaptability, are capable in initiating good motive relations with others, take part in creational works have an active role social groups and are endowed with high self confidence.

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