

## Influences Gender on Self-esteem among adolescents

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**Abstract:** In the present study an attempt is made to see whether male and female adolescents studying in standard 9 differ in their level self-esteem. A total of 100 adolescent students studying in Yasouj city were randomly selected. They were administered Self-esteem inventory developed by Cooper and Smith (1987), which measured self-esteem of an individual in 5 areas-general self, social self, home parents, lie scale and school academic. Independent samples 't' test was applied to see the differences between male and female students. Results revealed that male students found to have higher levels of self-esteem compared to female students.

[Armin Mahmoudi. Influences Gender on Self-esteem among adolescents. Researcher. 2011;3(6):88-91]. (ISSN: 1553-9865). <http://www.sciencepub.net>.

Key words: Self-Esteem, Adolescence, Gender, *standard 9<sup>th</sup>*, *male and female*

### Introduction

Adolescence is the Physiological learning period and the Physical adaptation which varies from person to the other (Alan, 2000). Adolescence will start with puberty and end with growth and general development termination. Both periods of adolescence and puberty start at the same periods; however, adolescence lasts 8 years and includes pubescence changes in the body along with mental, drive, tendency, interaction, emotional development, job satisfactory and moral and religious purification. The adolescence period lasts about 7 to 8 years and ranges from 12 to 20 years old (Weissman, 1975).

Self-esteem is assumed constantly as one of aspects in personality in close interaction with the others. Since the family environment plays a significant role in malign personality' it can pave the way for self-evaluation. This' self-esteem is considered constantly as one of the aspects in personality close interaction with others. Possessing the feeling of self esteem is as a vital asset which can engender talent and flourish initiative. (Douglas, 1968) low self esteem is as an Index in diagnosing the children's abnormalities. Despite the fact that it is not clear whether low self-esteem is the chief cause of every abnormality, the study conducted by Shamlou(2005) revealed that it is obvious that low self esteem children face unsurmounted and numerous challenges . In other words, cognitive process, affection impetus, imitative and decision making are affected by self-valuation. It is as the kernel of characteristics in interaction with the rest.

In recent years there has been increasing interest in gender-related influences on adolescence adjustment and academic achievement. There is growing appreciation that a better understanding of concerns in these areas will be necessary not only for

promoting optimal individual development, but also for meeting the nation's social and economic needs (Brown & Finkelhor, 1986). Contemporary theory and research reflects a shift from studying gender as static, relatively isolated indicator to examining their mutual implications for adolescence adjustment within more process-oriented, integrative frameworks. (Chandy & Blum, 1996). Using this approach. Contextual and psychological experience of group members can be considered in relation to normative processes of adaptation within specific periods or stage of development. Several factors point to early adolescence as a period of particular importance for issue pertaining to gender (Cohen & etc, 1996). These include increased exposure to others of differing backgrounds at this age stage-specific concerns such as puberty and dating and the emerging salience of group identity in processes of self-understanding (Cohen & Willis, 1985).

Therefore, the adolescence with the same age group who are present at school can feel the tangibility of Pedagogical changes. Since school is a social environment, it is fundamental that every single individual keeps in touch with his/ her peer groups Besides, the adjustment conflict can be posited in terms of the manner of adjustment to the school atmosphere, principals, teachers and subject matters is incorrect behaviors and will be pessimist to the future ( Douglas, 1968).

Like social support, the benefits of high self esteem and the risks of low self-esteem have been extensively studied. One of the most highly researched connections is between self-esteem and stress. Youngs, Rathge, Mullis & Mullis (1990) investigated the relationship between stress and self-esteem in a sample of high school students and found that as the students' stress levels increased, their self-esteem decreased. Youngs and colleagues found

negative-life-event stress was more strongly related to self-esteem than levels of overall stress, indicating that events adolescents perceive to be negative may have an extremely detrimental effect on self-esteem. Other researchers have suggested that self-esteem may buffer against stress (Rector & Roger, 1997). Additionally, low self-esteem has also been linked to anxiety (Many & Many, 1975; Patten, 1983; Rosenberg, 1962), depression (Battle, 1980, 1987; Workman & Beer, 1989), and substance abuse (Gossop, 1976; Turner, 1995).

Previous research on self-esteem in school-age children suggests that self-esteem varies as a function of both age and gender. As students approach adolescence, their self-esteem tends to decrease. For instance, Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling and Potter (2002) investigated the self-esteem of over 326,000 individuals aged 9 to 90 years and found that self-esteem was high in childhood and decreased during adolescence.

Similarly, Watkins, Dong, and Xia (1997) reported that self-esteem decreased through high school in their sample of Chinese students. With respect to gender differences in self-esteem, females typically report lower self-esteem than males during adolescence and at other ages (McMullin & Cairney, 2004). In a sample of males and females ranging in age from 11 to 15 years, females reported lower self-esteem and greater unhappiness than their male counterparts. Similarly, using a sample of over 48,000 individuals, Kling, Hyde, Showers, and Buswell (1999) also reported that females had lower self-esteem than males.

Based on self-esteem theories, it is also possible to hypothesize how covert forms of aggression may affect children's self-esteem differently based on their gender. For instance, Rosenberg's theory suggests that the more importance a person places on a specific facet of self-esteem, the greater impact this facet will have on his or her global self-esteem. Therefore, because peer relationships are predictive of self-esteem for females but not males (Walker & Greene, 1986), females may be more likely to suffer detrimental effects to their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth as a result of indirect victimization than males. Previous research supporting this hypothesis indicates that the use of relational or indirect aggression does appear to be more socially and personally detrimental for females than it is for males. For instance, Rys and Bear (1997) reported that among third and sixth graders, negative peer nominations (i.e., peer rejection) for males were most closely linked to the use of overt aggression while peer rejection for females was most closely linked to relational aggression. Similarly, Crick (1996) reported that relational aggression was predictive of

peer rejection for females but not males over the course of an academic year. Females also report significantly higher levels of emotional distress resulting from relational provocations than their male counterparts (Crick et al., 2002). Although these investigations did not specifically examine the effects of indirect aggression on self-esteem, the results do provide a reasonable basis for predicting gender differences in self-esteem associated with indirect aggression.

Harter's theory also suggests that the importance one places on a specific facet of his or her competence affects the impact that facet has on self-esteem. Similar to Rosenberg's theory, extrapolations from Harter's theory might also suggest gender differences in self-esteem related to indirect aggression. Since previous research indicates that adolescent females have consistently lower self-esteem than adolescent males (Kling et al., 1999), they may be initially more at risk for developing low self-esteem. Coupled with their lower self-esteem than males, females' self-esteem is more closely connected to important individuals in their lives than males (Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992), suggesting that a betrayal by a friend would be more detrimental to female's self-esteem.

## Objectives

### The purpose of the present study is to investigate

- 1) To find whether there is a significant differences between the Self-Esteem of Standard (IX) boys and girls.

## Methodology

### Population and Sample

Population: The population of the study consisted of the entire Standard (IX) student in Yasouj city. The present study was conducted on the random sample of 100 Standard (IX) students ( $N = 100$ ), male ( $N_1 = 50$ ) and female ( $N_2 = 50$ ) of secondary schools of Yasouj city. The age of the subjects of class (IX) ranged between 14 and 15 years.

## TOOLS

1. Self – Esteem Inventory for adolescent Students developed by Cooper smith(1987).The Inventory comprises of 58 items in relation to five areas of Self-esteem.(General self 25, Social self 8, Home parents 8, Lie scale 8, School Academic 8). The alpha coefficient for the total self esteem scale was .88 and .79 for the Anglo-Indian and Vietnamese-Australian samples respectively. The validity of the scale was ascertained by Convergent and discriminate validity using EPQ (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire), where negative and

significant correlations were obtained for neuroticism scale and positive and significant correlations were obtained for extroversion dimension.

### Procedure

The Tools were administered on the sample of 100 selected adolescent subjects. The items in the answer sheet were scored according to of scoring keys for five different areas. (General, Social, Parents, Academic, Lie).The data thus obtained was analyzed & interpreted using various statistical techniques.

The obtained scores were recorded on master sheet and later fed to the computer using SPSS for Windows software (version 16.0). Depending on the scores the subjects were classified into two levels of self-esteem-low and High. Using Independent samples 't' test, influence of self esteem was verified on Gender scores, taking Gender as independent variable (varied at 2 levels-low and high) and Self-esteem scores as dependent variables.

### Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 1: Mean self esteem scores (on various areas) of male and female students with the results of Independent samples 't' test.

Self esteem	Gender	Mean	S.D	't' value	P value
General	Male	16.70	2.70	5.581	.000
	Female	13.68	2.71		
Social self	Male	6.90	1.43	6.962	.000
	Female	4.92	1.41		
Home parents	Male	7.18	1.52	6.574	.000
	Female	5.18	1.52		
School academic	Male	3.54	1.45	0.841	.912
	Female	3.54	1.45		
Total	Male	35.92	4.322	8.100	.000
	Female	28.90	4.343		

In all the components of self-esteem significant differences were observed between male and female students except in school academic self esteem. In the case of general self esteem ('t'=5.581; P=.000), social self ('t'=6.962; P=.000), Home, parents ('t'=6.574; P=.000) and in total self esteem scores ('t'=8.10; P=.000), where male students had higher self esteem scores than female students. In the case of school academic self esteem male and female students (means 3.54 and 3.54 respectively) had similar self esteem scores and t test revealed a non-significant difference between them ('t'=.841; P=.912). The male students seem to have higher self esteem (with respect to total self esteem, general, social self, home-parents) than female students may be because of our patriarchal culture wherein boys are always being made to feel they are superior compared to girls. Since girls are hardworking as seen on annual results and they are more studious, may lead to scoring more than boys.

### Main findings

1. Male students found to have higher levels of self esteem compared to female students.

2. Male students had higher self esteem than female students in the cases of general self -esteem, social- self esteem & home self- esteem.
3. Only in academic self- esteem male and female students had similar scores.

The relationship among gender identity, sex typing, and Self-esteem has attracted the attention of social and developmental psychologists for many years. However, they have explored this issue with different assumptions and different approaches. Generally the approaches differ regarding whether sex typing is considered adaptive versus maladaptive, measured as an individual or normative difference, and whether gender identity is regarded as a unit-dimensional or multidimensional construct. In this context, Lurye, Zosuls, & Ruble (2008) consider both perspectives and suggest that the developmental timing and degree of sex typing, as well as the multidimensionality of gender identity, be considered when examining their relationship to Self-esteem.

Our self- esteem reflects a variety of beliefs that begin to develop in early childhood. The experiences that we have, the basic ideas we formed about

ourselves, and the messages we heard growing up, help form our self-concept and influence our self-esteem. Gender Socialization creates expectations for the way women and men behave, think and feel about themselves. Girls entering adolescence struggle with many issues such as body image, which can lead to eating disorders, fears of rejection and mixed messages from society. These cultural messages have tremendous impact on the self-esteem of women. Boys and men also live by social pressures to behave in the prescribed roles that define manhood. Boys and men are also subject to inauthentic feelings of self if they do not fulfill the definition of being "male." In research and policy design, gender issues need to be addressed more explicitly, rather than as a sub-category of the poor. Modeling and planning tools, such as Social Accounting Matrices should incorporate gender disaggregated data where available.

To conclude, adolescent age is being considered as stress and storm full age, where there will be rapid transition both psychologically and physically among adolescents. This may lower the self-esteem of the adolescents which is more pronounced in female adolescents.

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5/29/2011