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A comparative study of self-concept among children according to their socio-economic characteristics

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Abstract

Self-concept among children according to socio-economic characteristics were assessed. This study was conducted in Mathura district on the 300 children (150 from urban and 150 from rural areas) of both sexes, studying in II-V classes and aged 8-10 years which were selected through multistage stratified random sampling technique. Significant differences regarding self-concept were observed between the children according to rural and urban areas, studying classes, caste, type of family, members in their family and family monthly income separately ($p < 0.05$) while no significant differences regarding self-concept was observed between male and female children ($p > 0.05$). Significantly, self-concept were more among the children in urban areas, studying in IV-V classes, general caste, belonging to joint families, six members and above and family monthly income Rs. 15000 and above as compared to their counterparts. However, insignificant and more self-concept was recorded among female as compared to male children in the present study.

Keywords: adolescent, rural, urban, habits, attitudes, education

Introduction

Self-concept is an important concept of any child's development. As children develop a sense of self and interact with and gain experience in the world, their self concept is affected. Self concept is defined as the value that an individual places on his or her own characteristics, qualities, abilities, and actions.

The self-concept is not a finished product at birth, but is something which develops and how it develops, what its constituent attitudes are depending upon the family in which the individual is brought up with all the social norms of the group to which the family belongs and the education and experiences of each individual". Parents of children with high concept were more accepting more affectionate and more positive towards their children. A person with positive self-concept may prove to be an asset for the society and nation at large, the person having negative self concept not only becomes a burden but also could be harmful for the society.

Objective

To study the self-concept among children according to socio-economic characteristics.

Methodology

The study was conducted on three hundred children (150 from urban and 150 from rural areas) of both sexes, studying in II - V classes and aged 8-10 years from Mathura district which were selected through multistage stratified random sampling technique.

Tools of the Study

A standardized tool "Self-concept Scale for Children developed by H.M. Singh and Mrs. S. Singh" was used to assess the self-concept of children in the present study.

Results and Discussion

The collected data were analysed, discussed and presented in the following tables:

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Table 1: Mean scores of self-concept among children according to area

Area	Children			Statistical Values	
	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
Urban	150	84.11	10.66	2.220	<0.05
Rural	150	81.35	10.87		

It is seen from the above table that a significant difference in mean scores of self concept between urban (84.11) and rural (81.35) children was found and t-value (2.220) is also significant at 0.05 level of significance. Similar findings were reported by Sridevi and Spoorthy (2010) [11] as they observed a significant difference regarding self-concept between urban and rural children and urban children had better self-concept as compared to rural children.

Table 2: Mean scores of self-concept among children according to sex

Sex	Children			Statistical Values	
	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
Male	184	81.82	10.79	1.844	>0.05
Female	116	84.18	10.80		

From the analysis it is found that mean score of self-concept among male and female children were 81.82 and 84.18 respectively. Which was not found significant even at 0.05 levels. Similar findings were reported by King *et al.* (1993) [6], Anitha, (1999) [1] and Madhumathi, (1999) [8] in their study that the sex of the children influenced their self-concept. found that girls had lower level of self-concept than the boys while Koberg (1985) [7] found non-significant differences in self-confidences of boys and girls. Hussain (2006) [5] stated that the level of self-concept among the girls was found significantly lower than the boys. Sridevi and Spoorthy (2010) [11] found that boys had high self-concept as compared to girls and noted an insignificant difference regarding self-concept between boys and girls.

Table 3: Mean scores of self-concept among children according to studying class

Class of Study	Children			Statistical Values	
	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
2 and 3	145	81.49	11.08	1.970	<0.05
4 and 5	155	83.96	10.63		

The mean score of self-concept was found to be more among the children studying 4 - 5 classes (83.96) as compared to children studying 2 - 3 classes (81.49) and the significant difference was observed regarding the mean score of self-concept among children studying in different classes ($p < 0.05$). Pujar and Gaonkar (2000) [10] and King *et al.* (1993) [6] reported the influence of children's study classes on self-concept.

Table 4: Mean scores of self-concept among children according to their caste

Caste	Children			Statistical Values	
	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
General	196	83.63	10.67	1.972	<0.05
Others	104	81.05	10.99		

The mean score of self-concept was found to be more among the children belonging to general caste (83.63) as compared to children of other caste (81.05). Significant difference was observed regarding the mean scores of self-concept of

children belonging to general and other caste ($p < 0.05$). The study conducted by Anitha (1999) [1] and Madhumathi (1999) [8] supported the finding of the present study as they reported the influence of caste on self-concept of children.

Table 5: Mean scores of self-concept among children according to type of family

Type of Family	Children			Statistical Values	
	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
Nuclear	219	80.42	10.72	2.950	<0.05
Joint	81	84.58	11.17		

From the analysis of data in the above table, it is found that mean scores of self-concept among children belonging to joint families (84.58) were found more and significant as compared to nuclear families (80.42). The study conducted by Pujar and Gaonkar (2000) [10] and observed the contrary finding that type of family did not significantly influence the self-concept.

Table 6: Mean scores of self-concept among children according to members in their family

Members in the Family	Children			Statistical Values	
	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
1 - 5	169	81.37	10.45	2.250	<0.05
6 and above	131	84.21	11.33		

The mean score of self concept was found more among the children belonging to families having 6 members (84.21) and above as compared to children belonging to families having 1 - 5 members (81.37). The significant difference regarding self-concept was observed between the children with regard to members in the family. Anitha, (1999) [1] and Madhumathi, (1999) [8] also reported the influence of family members on self-concept of children.

Table 7: Mean scores of self-concept among children according to family monthly income

Family Monthly Income in Rs.	Children			Statistical Values	
	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
Upto 15000	146	80.74	10.68	3.182	<0.05
15000 & Above	154	84.73	11.02		

The mean score of self-concept (84.73) was found to be more among the children belonging to families having monthly income of Rs. 15000 and above as compared to children (80.74) belonging to families having monthly income upto Rs. 15000. Significant difference regarding mean scores of self-concept was observed between the children according to their family monthly income. Thus, the self-concept among the children increased with the increased family monthly income in the present study. Oliva *et al.* (2002) [9] stated that the significant changes in people's social and economic climate usually bring about new developments in ideology and in religious practices. All this may influence the self-concept of adolescents.

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