

The Role of Socio-Economic Status on Self-Concept of School Students in Delhi

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Abstract

The present research is conceived and formulated on a very wide canvas of adolescents in India in context of their socio-economic status and its relation with self-concept of adolescent students. The investigator undertook the study in government as well as private schools located in Delhi. Descriptive survey method upon 450 samples from class XI was utilized to gather the data. 'Self-concept Scale (SCS) and 'Socio-economic Status Scale' (SESS) was used for data analysis using Mean, SD, one way ANOVA, t-test and Correlation techniques. The finding of the study reveals that there is no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescent students. Further, no significant difference is perceived in self-concept of adolescents having different socio economic status. Positive negligible correlation is found in self-concept and socio-economic status of adolescent student.

Keywords: Adolescents, Gender, Self-concept, Socio-economic status.

Introduction

Life is a challenge from dawn to dusk and birth to death. In addition to happy things, problems, stress, difficulties, dishonor comes in the way of our life. Adolescence, the period of transition from childhood to adulthood, is a critical time for the development of lifelong perceptions, beliefs, values and practices. Actually behaviour of adolescent students depends largely on his self-concept and it plays a significant role in an adolescent life. During the process of growth and development, every individual acquires the awareness of 'self'. This includes 'ones identity' in the sense that the impressions one has about one's physical appearance and other tangible properties. It further includes the conception of oneself about one's traits, abilities, roles, attitudes, beliefs, values and the possibilities of future. Referring to School subject choice Marsh and Young (1997) [10] says that self-concept in specific school subject are significantly related to subsequent coursework selection between the choice of the subject students want to study and the choices of what they actually pursue. Thus, in the modern era, 'self-concept' is recognized as a potent means for making a deep study of personality as it helps in understanding human behaviour. It is believed that 'self' is a principal controlling agent, which shapes human destiny. In reality, 'self' is viewed by the majority of psychologists as the nucleus of human being. The development of self-concept involves a slow process of differentiation, in which the child gradually emerges into focus out of his total world of awareness. Further, it progressively and clearly leads a child to understand who and what he/she is, and also, what his/her position in relation to his environment is. The development of self-concept, thus, constitutes a person's assets and liabilities in relation to his environment. The effectiveness and adequacy of the development of self-concept depends, to a large extent, on early parent-child relationship, learning experiences a child gains, and, on his/her social environment. All these cumulatively become the basis for the formation of concept among students in the process of their growing up. Actually, socio-economic status plays an

important role in determining the level of self-concept in an individual. It is the first important thing in determining, what a student is and what he is going to be in future and what he feels about himself and others. In some homes, the parents who are well educated and possess good social background and wholesome personality, they nurture their children according to the changing lifestyle, fashion and psychological principles. So, as a result of this changing pattern of behavior among adults, their children (adolescents) also develop positive thinking about others and themselves. The social economic and educational statuses of his family, his neighborhood, moral qualities of his associates etc. are the major determinants of quality of academic achievement of a student Demarest *et.al* 1993 [5]. Not surprisingly, low income adolescents have less achievement motivation and much higher risk of educational failure than the students belongs to high income family Schultz, (1993) [14]. In particular, compared with their more affluent counterparts, low-income adolescents receive lower grades, earn lower scores in class tests, and are much more likely to drop out of the school (Tenda, Schneidr & Kao, 1996) [25]; Hauser, Simmons & Pager 2000) [26]. Low-income students usually attend schools with lower funding levels, which result in reduced availability of textbooks and other instructional materials, laboratory equipment, library books, and other educational resources; low-level curricula; and less-qualified teachers and administrators (Kozol, 1991; Oakes, 1990) [9, 12]. Many research studies have been conducted in social sciences to find out influences of socio-economic status on adolescent self-concept, Valenzuela, 1971; Heyneman, 1975; Chauhan, 1982; White, 1982; Yadav, 1989; Harikrishan, 1992; Crnic & Lamberty, 1994). Kormos *et al.* (2013) [21, 7, 3, 23, 24, 6, 4, 8] suggests that social class has an overall medium-size effect on motivational factors with self-efficacy beliefs being the most strongly related to socio-economic status.

Methodology

Descriptive survey method was used to gather the data. This method is designed to procure information on conditions and

practices as they exist. In the present investigation, the population was stipulated and defined as all adolescent male and female adolescent students studying in class XI of schools in Delhi. The sample consisted of both adolescent girls and boys students studying in class XI. In totality 15 schools were finalized from all over Delhi as sample schools and 450 sample students were selected from class XI. Special care was taken to

select equal representation of boys and girls. Every geographical area was represented by two governments and one private school i.e. government boys’ school, government girls’ school and public co-ed school. In this manner, the final sample of 450 students was chosen, breakup detail of which has been given in the Table- 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Sample

Area	Type	North	East	South	West	Central	Total
Schools	Public (co-ed)	29	31	30	31	37	158
	Govt. boys	27	28	25	38	30	148
	Govt. girls	31	32	27	25	29	144
Total		87	91	82	94	96	450

Tools Utilized

- ❖ ‘Socio-economic Status Scale’ (SESS) standardized by A. K. Kalia & Sudhir Sahu was utilized to measure the socio economic status of adolescents.
- ❖ ‘Self-Concept Scale’ (SCS) standardized by S. P. Ahluwalia is used to measure the self-concept of the adolescents.

Statistical Techniques

In order to study the nature of data, descriptive statistics i.e. Mean SDs and inferential statistics i.e. one way ANOVA and t-test were computed with the help of SPSS statistical package 17.0 (version). For further investigation, Duncan’s Mean test was employed. Correlation technique was also utilized to find out the co-relation between independent and dependent variables.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The objective of the present study was to explore the relationship of socio-economic status with self-concept of

adolescent students. Investigator categorized all the students into three categories on the basis of socio-economic status a) high SES b) middle SES c) low SES respectively. Investigator employed, ‘t’ test to compare the study habits of male and female adolescent students. In order to find out the difference in self-concept of students having high, middle and low socio-economic status, their respective scores of self-concept were taken into consideration and significance of difference in the mean values of these three levels of scores have been calculated by means of adopting by one way analysis of variance or F- test. In order to determine the significant difference between means of categories taken two at a time, the categories were subjected to Duncan’s Test. This test was administered to find out t- ratio between (Low and Middle) socio economic status (Middle and High) socio economic status, (High and Low) socio economic status. Table -1 shows comparison of self-concept scores among three categories of socio-economic status.

Table 1: Comparison of self-concept among three categories of socio-economic status

Low SES (N=163)		Middle SES (N=216)		High SES (N=71)		Low vs Middle	Middle vs High	High vs low	F-Value
Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
50.87	8.19	52.64	9.23	52.66	7.09	-	-	-	2.27NS

NS: Not Significant

Table-1 shows comparison of self-concept scores among three categories of socio-economic status. The self-concept scores of the three categories of SES were subjected to analysis of variance which yielded an F-value equal 2.27 which is not significant at 0.01 level of significance. Hence null hypothesis ‘there exists no significant difference in self-concept of adolescents having high socio-economic status, middle socio-economic status and low socio-economic status’ is accepted. This shows there is no significant difference in self-concept of adolescents having high socio-economic status, middle socio economic status, low Socio-economic status. In order to determine the significant difference between means of categories taken two at a time, the categories are subjected to Duncan’s Test. This test is administered to find out t- ratio between *low and middle* socio-economic status; *middle and high* socio-economic status and *high and low* socio economic status.

An examination of Table-1 reveals that the mean scores of self-concept of High socio-economic status adolescents is 52.66 which is higher, than, that of Middle socio-economic status

adolescents 52.64. It further reveals that the mean score of self-concept of Middle socio-economic status adolescents 52.64 is higher, than, that of Low socio-economic status adolescents 50.87. The result of Duncan’s test shows that there is no significant difference between *middle and high*, *high and low* & *low and middle* socio-economic status categories with respect to their self-concepts. If we see, mean scores of all the three categories, high and middle SES have slight high self-concept than low SES students. Since statistically, no significant difference is found between *middle and high*, *high and low* & *low and middle* socio-economic status categories, it indicates, that, all have similar self-concept. Uma Devi *et al.*, 1998; Gupta & Wogu, 1989 also supported the findings and found in research that there was no significant difference between high and low socio-economic groups with respect to self-concept, whereas Agnihotri, 1990 found, that adults belonging to low socio-economic status, had better self-concept, than adults belonging to high socio-economic status. These mean scores have also been presented in Figure- 1.1.

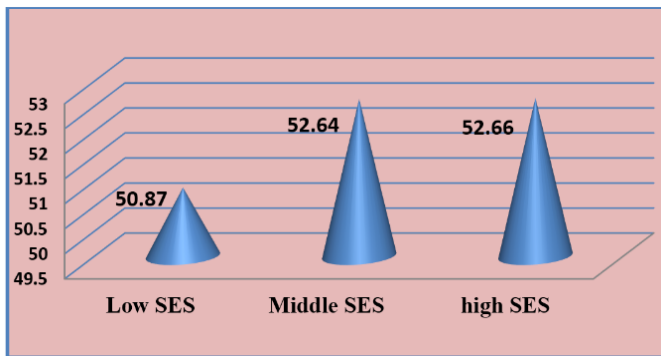


Fig 1.1: Mean scores of self-concept of adolescents with respect to three categories of socio-economic status (low, middle and high)

Table 2: Comparison of Self-concept scores between male and female adolescent student

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t- value
Male	225	51.82	8.034	.456 NS
Female	225	52.19	9.096	

NS: Not Significant

Table-2 shows the mean Self-Concept scores of male and female adolescent students which are respectively 51.82 and 52.19. The t-ratio of these means comes out to be .456. For df 448, table value of 't' at 0.05 level and 0.01 level is 1.96 and 2.59. The table-2 further reveals that the calculated value of 't' is .456 which is less than the table value at both the levels and shows no significant difference in Self-Concept of male and female adolescent students. This may be attributed the fact that female adolescents are more serious towards their self-concept. It reflects that females have improved their self-concept thus they stand better. These mean scores have also been presented in Fig. 1.2.

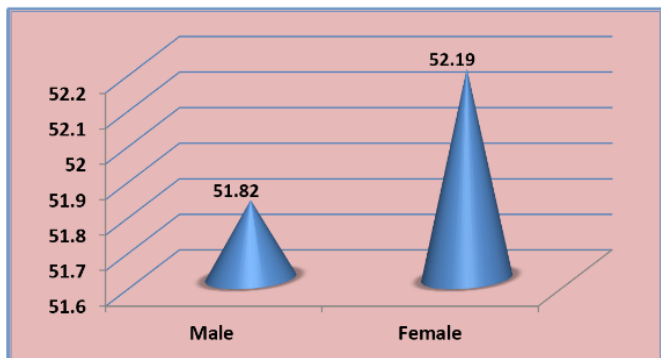


Fig 1.2: Mean scores of self-concept of male and female adolescent students

Table 3: Self-concept scores of male and female high SES adolescents

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t- value
Male	33	53.45	6.824	.876 NS
Female	38	51.97	7.343	

NS: Not Significant

Above table-3 shows mean self-concept scores of male and female adolescent students having high socio-economic status.

For df 69, the table values of 't' is 2.65 at 0.01 level of significance. The calculated value of 't' is .876 which is less than the table value, at both the levels. This suggests that there exists no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescent students having high socio-economic status. Hence, the null hypothesis 'There exists no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescents having high socio-economic status' is accepted and found insignificant. It can be inferred from the tabulated result that male and female adolescent students belonging to high socio-economic status, do not show any difference in their self-concept and it can be said that there is no influence of gender on self-concept of adolescents who possess same high socio-economic status. Table-3 in terms of mean scores also depicts the same. These mean scores have also been presented in Fig. 1.3.

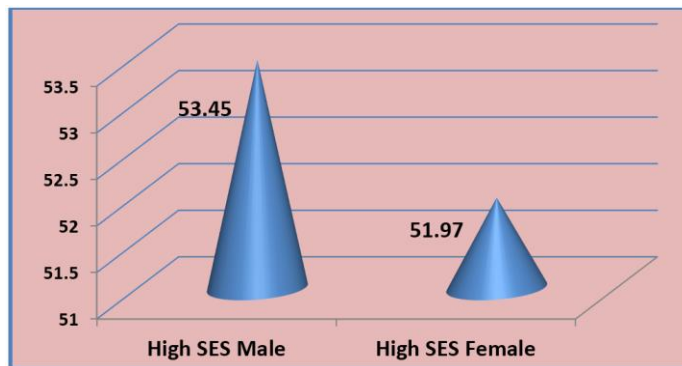


Fig 1.3: Mean self-concept scores of male and female adolescents having high socio-economic status

Table 4: Self-concept scores of male and female middle SES adolescents

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t- value
Male	123	52.47	8.667	.315 NS
Female	93	52.87	9.948	

NS: Not Significant

Above table-4 shows the mean self-concept scores of male and female adolescent students having middle socio-economic status which are respectively 52.47 and 52.87. For df 214, the table values of 't' is 2.60 at 0.01 level of significance respectively. The calculated value of 't' is 0.315 which is less than the table value at 0.01 level of significance. This suggests that there exist no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescent students having middle socio economic status.

Hence, the null hypothesis 'there exists no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescents having middle socio-economic status' is accepted and found insignificant. It can be inferred from the tabulated result that male and female adolescent students belonging to middle socio- economic status, do not show any difference in their self-concept and it can be said that there is no influence of gender on self-concept of adolescents who possess same middle socio-economic status. Table-4 in terms of mean scores also depicts the same. These mean scores have also been presented in the form of bar-diagram in Fig. 1.4.

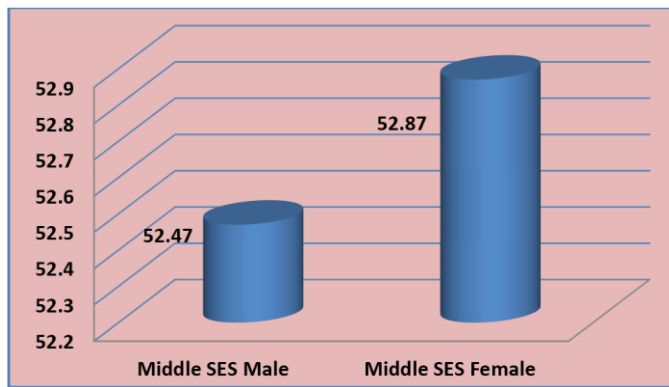


Fig 1.4: Mean self-concept scores of male and female adolescents having middle socio-economic status

Table 5: Self-concept scores of male and female low SES adolescents

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t- value
Male	69	49.87	7.073	1.332 NS
Female	94	51.60	8.893	

NS: Not Significant

Above table-5 shows the mean self-concept scores of male and female adolescent students having low socio-economic status which are 49.87 and 51.60 respectively. The t-ratio of these means comes out to be 1.332. For df 161, the table values of ‘t’ is 2.61 at 0.01 level of significance. The calculated value of ‘t’ is 1.332 which is less than the table value at 0.01 level of significance. This suggests that there exist no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescent students having low socio-economic status.

Hence, the null hypothesis ‘There exists no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescents having low socio-economic status’ is accepted and found insignificant. It can be inferred from the tabulated result that male and female adolescent students belonging to low socio-economic status do not show any difference in their self-concept and it can be said that there is no influence of gender on self-concept of adolescents who possess same low socio-economic status. Table-5 in terms of mean scores also depicts the same and similar results are supported by Bester, 2007 that, no gender difference exists between boys and girls, with regard to self-concept whereas Mary & Paul, 2005 oppose the findings and explored that boys and girls, differ significantly, in their self-concept. These mean scores have also been presented in Figure 1.5.

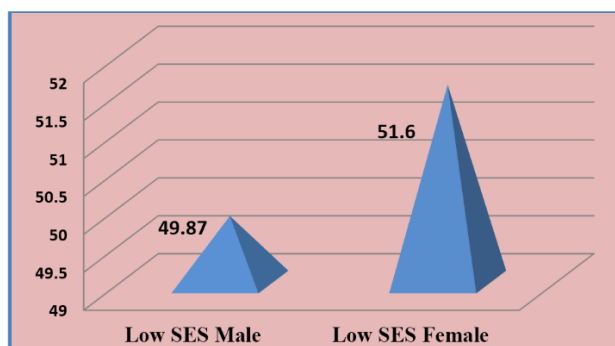


Fig 1.5: Mean self-concept scores of male and female adolescents having low socio-economic status

Table 6: Correlation between socio-economic status and self-concept of adolescent students

Variables	N	Df	r	Significance level
Socio-economic status and self-concept	450	448	.087 NS	Not Significant

NS: Not Significant

Above table-6 shows correlation between socio-economic status and self-concept of adolescent student. For df 448, the table values of coefficient of correlation (r) at 0.01 level is 0.11. The calculated value of coefficient of correlation (r) is .087 which is less than the table value at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis ‘there exists no significant correlation between socio-economic status and self-concept of adolescent students’ is accepted and found not-significant. It denotes that both variables (socio-economic status and self-concept) have positive negligible correlation. It can be inferred that socio-economic status does not affect self-concept of the students considerably. However it cannot be totally denied that self-concept stands alone and do not get affected due to socio-economic conditions of the person as the score shows positiveness of relation, though non- substantial and significant. It further can be inferred that due to this positiveness of correlation between socio-economic status and self-concept, the difference gets affected, either positively or negatively. As the Table-6 also depicts both have positive negligible correlation. Venkatamaiah *et al.*, (1998) also supported the findings, that majority of urban school children had high and average self-concept, but there exist no relation between male and female socio-economic status and self-concept.

Findings of the Study

On the basis of the careful analysis and interpretation of the objectives and hypothesis of the study the investigator arrives at the following findings:-

- No significant difference is found in self-concept of adolescents having high socio-economic status, middle socio-economic status and low socio-economic status. The mean score of self-concept of High socio-economic status adolescents is higher than that of middle socio-economic status adolescents. It further revealed that the mean score of self-concept of Middle socio-economic status adolescents is higher, than, that of Low socio-economic status adolescents. No significant difference was found between Middle and High and High and Low and Low and Middle socio-economic status categories. We can interpret that difference in status is not responsible for low and high self-concept in adolescents.
- No significant difference was found in self-concept of male and female adolescent students. In the context of mean scores it can be interpreted that, there is no influence of gender on self-concepts of adolescents.
- There exists no significant difference in self-concept of male and female adolescent students having high socio-economic status. It can be said that there is no influence of gender on self-concept of adolescents who possesses same high status.
- No significant difference is found in self-concept of male and female adolescent students having middle socio-

economic status. It is inferred that gender has no impact upon self-concept of adolescents belonging to same middle socio-economic status.

- No significant difference was found in self-concept of male and female adolescent students having low socio-economic status.
- Positive negligible correlation is found in self-concept and socio-economic status of adolescent student. It can be inferred that socio-economic status does not affect self-concept of the students considerably.

Implications of the Study

Socio-economic status plays an important role in determining the level of self-concept in an individual. The study explored significant difference between low and middle socio-economic status categories with respect to their self-concepts. The implication of this is that the school staff members may generate an understanding that they can help parents and peers to become more effective supporters. They may provide suggestions for generating opportunities for appropriate positive reinforcement and help students learn to be more aware of the support they receive. The study has implications for the administrators of the school also. The principals may focus on building students' competencies and self-perceptions, which, in turn, will prompt their self-concept. The study generate an understanding for the teachers that they should make an efforts to provide a platform for the students, so as to strengthen their self-concept through classroom experiences, brain storming sessions, tutorial groups, organizing different inter or intra competitions among several groups such as debates, symposium, extempore, paper presentations and discussions etc. this suggests that increasing students' academic skills in a more effective means to boost their self-concept. The teachers can also use appropriate positive feedback to maintain positive self-concept. The study suggests keeping in mind that praise, recognition and encouragement are strong determinants of positive self-perception. Therefore, teachers may also prevent and reduce feeling of low self-concept by reducing social comparison within the classroom. Encouraging students to focus on how much they have improved over time instead of focusing on how their peers are doing is a simple way of avoiding negative self-perception and low motivation. Therefore, the study is beneficial in providing guidelines for teachers as well as students so that they can devote time towards studies. The result of the study is significant to the general public in that it will provide awareness on the relationship between socio-economic status and self-concept. With this awareness, the general public will understand the need for parental education, income and occupation on the education of child that will be helpful in enhancing his/her self-concept.

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