Research Paper

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An Empirical Study on Self-Image Among Secondary School Students

Education

KEYWORDS : Empirical Study, Self-Image, Secondary school Student.

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ABSTRACT

Self-image is the mental and conceptual awareness one has of oneself. Self-image can determine the quality of our relationships with others. How we think and feel about ourselves influences the way we react or respond to life stressors. A positive self-image affects our physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual well being. The present study is an attempt to assess self-image among 50 secondary school students from 5 purposively selected secondary schools of Guwahati city of Assam. Out of 50 sample students, 25 were male and the rests 25were female. Gender and class (IX and X) wise comparison were done by adopting a standardised scale named as "Self Image Questionnaire (SIQ)" developed by Dr. (Smt.) L.Sharma at Agra Psychological Research Cell, Agra.

Background of the Study:
Self-image is the personal view we have of ourselves. It is our mental image or self-portrait. Self-image is an internal dictionary which describes the characteristics of the self, including intelligent, beautiful, ugly, talented, selfish and kind. These characteristics form a collective representation of our assets and liabilities as we see them. The image we see in the mirror may be a real or distorted view of who we really are. Based on this view, we develop either a positive or a negative self-image. We continually take in information and evaluate ourselves.

Statement of the Problem: The problem undertaken by the investigator has been entitled as: "An Empirical Study on Self-Image among Secondary School Students."

Operational Definitions of different terms used:

1. Empirical Study: Empirical study is a way of gaining knowledge by means of direct observation or experience. Empirical evidence (the record of one's direct observations or experiences) can be analyzed quantitatively or qualitatively.
2. Self-Image: Self-image is the personal view we have of ourselves. It is an idea, conception or mental picture one has of oneself
3. Secondary School Students: Secondary School students indicate the student group from class IX and X. Secondary school stage is the second stage or level of education after primary schooling.

Objectives of the Study: The objectives of the present study are:

1. To assess self-image among the students.
2. To make a comparative analysis of self-image with respect to the variables-

i. Gender
ii. Class.

Hypothesis: As the objective 1 is related with the fact finding issue, so there is no need to formulate any hypothesis for the first objective. For the objective 2 (i and ii), the investigator has formulated the following null and research hypotheses.

Null Hypothesis H_{01}: There is no significant mean difference in self-image scores between male and female students.

Null Hypothesis H_{02}: There is no significant mean difference in self-image scores between class IX and Class X students.

Research Hypothesis $H_{1.1}$: There is a significant mean difference in self-image scores between the male and female students.

Research Hypothesis $H_{2.1}$: There is a significant mean difference in self-image scores between the class IX and X students.

Method: Descriptive survey method was followed for the present study.

Sample: For the present study, the investigator has randomly selected fifty (50) students of class IX and X from 5 purposively selected secondary schools of greater Guwahati. The features of the samples are:

i. Twenty-five (25) students were males and the rests twenty-five were females.
ii. Twenty-five (25) students were from class IX and the rests twenty-five were from class X.

Tool used for data collection: For the present study, the investigator has adopted a standardised tool named as "Self Image Questionnaire (SIQ)" developed by Dr. (Smt.) L.Sharma at Agra Psychological Research Cell, Agra.

Description of the tool: In the Self Image Questionnaire (SIQ), fifty (50) items have been constructed by considering the various potent issues such as adolescent's ego, emotional tone, body image, social relationship, morals, sexual attitude related to adolescent's feeling, attitude towards the opposite sex, mastery of external problems, family relationship etc.

The SIQ has been tested for its Split-Half as well as Test-Retest reliabilities. The Split-Half reliability coefficient was found to be 0.81 and the Test-Retest reliability was found to be 0.698. Accordingly, the procedure of item-selection itself ensured high content and face validity.

For scoring procedure, all the 50 items were scored from 3 to 1, i.e. a score of 3 was assigned to 'totally agree', a score of 2 to 'agree' and a score of 1 to 'totally disagree'. The total score ranges from 50 to 150. Thus, the higher score would become descriptive of high self-image or better adjustment.

Statistical Measures used in the present study:

- Basic statistical tools like Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) are computed.
- To make comparison of the self-image Scores between the variables gender and class, t- test has been adopted for testing the significant difference.

Delimitation of the Study: The investigator was restricted to study about the self-image among secondary school students in the Guwahati city only. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized to all the students of Assam.

Analysis and Interpretation: Analysis of relevant data have been made objective wise in tabular form as shown below:

Objective 1: To assess the self-image among secondary school students.

Table 1: Mean and SD of Self-Image Scores among all 50 sample students

Mean Self-Image Score	99.96
SD	20.68

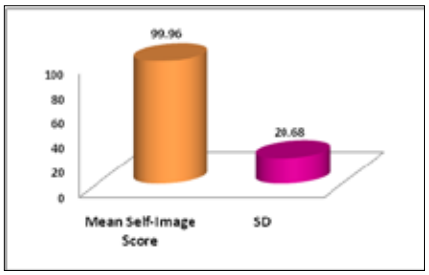


Figure 1.1: Graph showing the mean and SD scores of Self-Image among the entire students

Table 1 and figure 1.1 have depicted that the mean self-image score among the entire 50 selected students was 99.96 along with the standard deviation (SD) score of 20.68. On the basis of mean score, the sample students have been categorised into two levels, namely students having higher self-image and lower self-image. The student whose summated score was higher than the mean score i.e.> 99.96 were treated as having higher self-image; while the student whose summated score was smaller than the mean score i.e. < 99.96 were treated as having lower self-image. The distribution of students according to these two levels has been depicted in the following table.

Table 2: Number of students according to their level of self-image

Level of self-image	No. of students	%
Lower	18	36%
Higher	32	64%
Total	50	100%

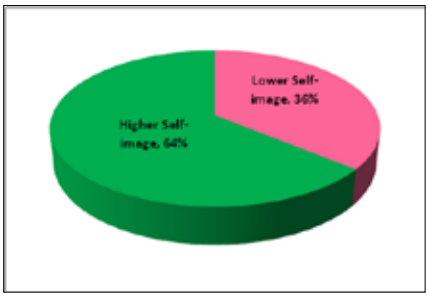


Figure 2.1: Pie diagram showing the % distribution of students according to their level of self-image

Table 2 and figure 2.1 have shown that out of 50 students, 18(i.e.36%) were found to have lower level of self-image as they have secured score less than the mean value , and the rests 32 (i.e.64 %) students had higher level of self-image as they have scored more than the mean SI value.

Objective 1 has been fulfilled from table 1and 2.

Objective 2(i): To make a comparative analysis of self-image with respect to the variable gender.

Null Hypothesis H_{01}: There is no significant mean difference in self-image scores between male and female students.

Research Hypothesis $H_{1.1}$: There is a significant mean difference in self-image scores between the male and female students.

Table 3: Mean and SD score of Self-image among the students according to gender and their t-value

Gender	Mean Self-image score	SD	SEM	d.f.	t-value	Significance
Female	90.68	16.64	3.329	48	3.524*	Significant (p<0.01)
Male	109.24	20.41	4.081			

Table 3 has shown the mean and SD values of Self-image scores among the male and female students. It was found that the male students have higher mean score than their female counterparts. For statistical significance, t-test was adopted to test whether there is a significant difference in self-image scores between the male and female students. The table reveals that there was a significant difference in self-image scores between the male and female students as the computed value of t (i.e.3.524) is higher than the critical value of t for 50-2=48 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of significance. So, the null hypothesis H01 has been rejected and the research hypothesis H1.1has been accepted.

The objective 2(i) has been fulfilled from table 3.

Objective 2(ii): To make a comparative analysis of self-image with respect to the variable class.

Null Hypothesis H_{02}: There is no significant mean difference in self-image scores between class IX and Class X students.

Research Hypothesis $_{H2.1}$: There is a significant mean difference in self-image scores between the class IX and X students.

Table 4: Mean and SD score of Self-image among the students according to class and their t-value

Class	Mean Self-image score	SD	SEM	d.f.	t-value	Significance
IX	96.84	19.386	3.877	48	1.069	Not Significant (p>0.05)
X	103.08	21.833	4.367			

Table 4 has depicted the mean and SD values of Self-image scores among class IX and X students. It was found that class IX students have lower mean score than the students of class X. For statistical significance, t-test was adopted to test whether there is a significant difference in self-image scores between class IX and X students. The table reveals that there was 'no significant difference' in self-image scores between the two groups as the calculated value of t (i.e.1.069) is smaller than the critical value of t for 50-2=48 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. So, the null hypothesis H02 has been accepted and the research hypothesis H2.1has been rejected.

The objective 2(ii) has been fulfilled from table 3.

Major Findings:

1) The mean self-image score among the entire 50 students was 99.96.
2) Majority of the students, i.e. 64% have higher self-image. The rests 36% have lower self-image.
3) Male students are found to have higher self-image than their female counterparts.
4) Students of class X have higher self-image than the students of class IX.

Implications: Self-image is a very important issue, because how we think about ourselves directly affects how we feel about ourselves and how we respond to life. Self-image can determine the quality of our relationships with others. How we think and feel about ourselves influences the way we react or respond to life stressors. A positive self-image affects our physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual well being.

Many people have a self-image which is extremely high. Those people have exaggerated sense of self worth and also they feel superior to others. Such feelings can lead to arrogance and self-indulgence, therefore making the person believes that they deserve extraordinary privileges. Conversely, many other individuals have an excessively low self-image which may rise to various psycho-social problems. Thus, research on self-image is the need of the hour. A healthy and positive self-image can affect one's mental, physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

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