

Probing the Role of Self-Concept and Study Habits in Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

Globalization and advancements in science and technology has pose new challenges for the young generation around the world. A well-educated, well-trained, and well-skilled generation is the demand of the rapidly changing modern world. The importance of education and skill could be estimated by emphasis that was put in the visionary preambles enshrined in "The World Programme of Action for Youth", which was adopted in 1995, prioritizes education as a top priority. India, with the largest adolescents, plays a significant role in this endeavour. India having the largest population of adolescents in the world is the largest stakeholder in this gigantic endeavour. Against this backdrop, the present study was undertaken with a randomly selected sample of 200 students belonging to secondary school located in urban and rural area of Siwan district. The Self-Concept Questionnaire by Dr. R. K. Saraswat (2011) was administered to assess the self-concept of the students and Test of study habits (TSHA) constructed by Dr. C.P Mathur (1974) was applied. Percentage of the marks obtained in the last year grade examination accepted as indicator of academic achievement. Statistical analysis of data obtained confirmed all hypotheses framed to achieve the objectives of the study.

Keywords: Self-concept, Study Habits, Academic Achievement, Secondary School Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence

Adolescence is the developmental period of transition between childhood and adulthood; it involves biological, cognitive and socio-emotional changes. These changes transform the young person's vision of the self into a more complex, well-organized and consistent picture. Adolescence is the period of heightened sensitivity for rapid learning and of critical acquisitions which determine the general style of adult life. G. Stanley Hall (1904), the father of the child study movement, is generally credited with discovering adolescence with his 1904 study 'Adolescence' which deals with the phases of adolescence. Hall characterised adolescence as a 'new' developmental phase resulting from social change. Adolescence is characterized by notable changes in mood known as mood swings. Contemporary thinkers, however, place adolescence as a developmental period during which young people negotiate important life transitions (Ellis, 2004; Seginer & Somech, 2000). Psychological development in adolescence involves challenges and opportunities in terms of both risk and protective factors. The development of appropriate skills of self-regulation is critical for later behavioural and emotional outcomes. Adolescents who display

an enhanced ability to choose appropriate responses in the presence of competing demands are more likely to achieve better quality adjustment skills (Wang, Brinkworth, & Eccles, 2013). In a similar fashion, King and colleagues (2013) reported that adolescents who were slower to develop and display self-regulation skills were more likely to experience externalising difficulties later in their developmental trajectory.

These life transitions are characterised by significant relationship challenges that indirectly and directly have an influence on the adolescents' schooling, social relations, and psychological development. (Casey et al., 2010; Galvan, 2014; Spear, 2000). A school is an institution which provides learning spaces and learning environments for the teaching of students under the direction of teachers. A major part of adolescent's lives and a significant portion of their time is spent in school. Stress, anxiety and depression are the most common psychological problems that most of the school going adolescents experience today.

Self-Concept

Self-concept is a general view about oneself across various sets of specific domains and perceptions based on self-knowledge and evaluation of values formed through experiences in relation to one's environment (Eccles, 2005). According to Hurlock (1978) self-concept is the composition of a picture of self-perception, that perception is belief, feelings, and attitudes about the values that are recognized by the individual as his traits.

Academic self-concept is referred to as a person's self-evaluation regarding specific academic domains or abilities (Trautwein, et al. 2006). In other words, academic self-concept is how students do schoolwork or feel about themselves as learners (Guay, 2003; Harter, 1998). Most definitions link this construct to achievement, and there is some empirical evidence to support this theoretical linkage (Brookover, Le Pere, Hamachek, Thomas, & Erickson, Torshen, 1965). Self-concept, then, whether used as an outcome itself or as a moderator variable that helps explain achievement outcomes, is a critical variable in education and in educational evaluation and research.

In very broad terms, self-concept is a person's perception of him/herself. These perceptions are formed through his or her experience with their environment, perhaps in the manner suggested by Kelly (1973) and are influenced especially by environmental reinforcements and significant others. According to Carl Rogers, the self is the aspect of phenomenological experience. Phenomenological experience is one aspect of our experience of the world. The one that meets our conscious experience is the experience of ourselves, or self. For Rogers, the self is not a small person who is in us. Self is not the controlled behaviour that runs independently. However, the self is a series of regular perceptions held by individuals. Rogers recognizes the two different aspects of the self that is the actual self and the ideal self. Rogers recognized that naturally people are not just thinking only of himself or herself at the moment, but also themselves potentially in the future. Therefore, they organize patterns of perception not only about themselves, but also the ideal self that they want. So, the ideal self is the self-concept which is wanted to be owned by individuals.

Study Habits

According to Good (1973) the term study habits refer to the student's way of study whether systematic, efficient or inefficient etc. Good study habits are perceived to be the determinants of academic performance. Armstrong (1956) declares the study habits as the connection between learning readiness with an activity in the form of a process. Mostly it is for the acknowledgement based on some specific goal and compulsory exercises. According to Azikiwe (1998), good study habits are good assets to learners because they (habits) assist students to attain mastery in areas of specialization and consequent excellent performance, while the opposite constitutes constraints to learning and performance leading to failure.

That is why efforts are made to develop and improve study habits of students. Students have to face the emotional causes due to several reasons. They have poor study habits and show poor academic performance motivation. A great deal of evidence is present to show the positive correlation between study habits and academic achievement. The main purpose of study guidance is to enable the students to see a clear picture of the information regarding every aspect of his study system and study problems. Ansari (1980) found that study habits and study behaviour are both significant variables which determine the academic performance of the students. Kemjika (1998) suggested that study habits to be considered effective, if the following fundamental components and more should be evidently present in the study habits; drawing up and abiding to daily study schedule, full involvement in teaching and learning processes, inculcating good reading habits, promptly doing and turning in classwork and assignment, jotting down points while the teacher is teaching and during private studies. Good study habits are essential ingredients for excellent academic performances for every student.

In the light of the literature reviewed the present study is an attempt to discover strategies for healthy study habits and to find out the effect of self-concept on the academic achievement of adolescent students. The study also tends to explore the self-concept and study habits of rural and urban adolescents and their effects on academic achievement which have not been properly studied so far. This work will provide significant cues to educational planners and educational psychologists. This justifies the present work.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sharma (1971) compared the study habit of 65 Gurukula and 65 non-Gurukula students. The difference between study habits of Gurukula and non-Gurukula students were not significant at any level of significance. Chinna (1985) conducted a study on 'study habits' in relation to over and under achievement in English. It was concluded that over-achievers in English had significantly better study habits as compared to under-achievers in the same subject. Dinesh (2003) in his investigation on a sample of 300 students (science stream = 86, arts stream = 125 and commerce stream = 89) of IX class selected randomly from government and private senior secondary schools of Chandigarh concluded significant difference in the study habits of students belonging to science and arts streams. Kaur (2005) investigated the study habits of male and female adolescents belonging to arts and science streams. The investigation revealed insignificant difference in the study habits of students belonging to urban and rural areas. However, significant difference was found in the study habits of male and female adolescents, as well as between adolescents studying in arts and science streams. Singla (2007) conducted her study on a sample of 200 boys and girls studying in 10+1 class in the senior secondary schools of Chandigarh in order to compare their study habits. The Study Habit Inventory by Mukhopadhyay and Sansanwal (1992) was used to assess the study habits of students. Insignificant difference was found in the study habits of students studying in Arts and Commerce streams. Similarly insignificant difference was found in the study habits of boys and girls. Bhogayata (1986) in his study found insignificant difference in the self-concept of boys and girls. Nadeem and Malik (1986) in their study on 75 physically handicapped adolescents and 75 normal children of District Anantnag of J & K state found significant difference in the 'perceived self' and 'ideal self' of handicapped and normal adolescents. Singh (2004) conducted a study on 708 hosteller and non-hosteller adolescents and found significant difference in the self-concept of hostellers and non-hostellers. Results were in favour of hostellers. Arora (2005) conducted a study on 1600 male and female students of XI class studying in secondary urban and rural schools of Kathua, Udhampur and Rajouri districts of J & K state. The Study revealed that students belonging to the urban area were possessing a favourable self-concept

for factors ‘behaviour’ and ‘intellectual’, as compared to the students belonging to the rural area.

Hypotheses: The present study will be conducted to examine the following hypotheses:

H₁: There will be significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students.

H₂: There will be significant relationship between study habits and academic achievement of secondary school students.

H₃: Secondary school students of urban and rural areas will differ significantly on their self-concept.

H₄: Secondary school students of urban and rural areas will differ significantly on their study-habits.

3. METHODOLOGY:

a) SAMPLE: The study will be undertaken on a sample of 200 secondary school students randomly drawn from different secondary schools located in urban and rural localities in Siwan district. The sample will consist of male and female subjects in equal proportion.

b) MEASURING INSTRUMENTS: The following measuring tools and instruments will be applied to obtain data:

- The Self-Concept Questionnaire by Dr. R. K. Saraswat (2011).
- Test of Study Habits and Attitudes (TSHA) constructed by Dr. C.P Mathur (1974) will be applied.
- Annual Examination Marks obtained is used to assess the level of academic achievement.

4. RESULT:

The data obtained for this investigation has been analysed and discussed under the following headings:

Table 1: Summary of Correlation Analysis on the Relationship between Self-concept and Academic Achievement among Secondary School students

Variables	Coefficient of Correlation
Self-concept	0.748
Academic Achievement	

From the analysis of data furnished in Table 1 and Figure 1, it could be concluded that there is a fairly strong positive correlation (0.748) exists between the self-concept and the academic achievement of secondary school students. This finding has also been supported by the research findings of Marsh (1990) and Muijs, (2011). Marsh (1990) found that students with more positive academic self-concept achieved greater academic success the following year. Later studies confirmed the relationship between the two but indicated that achievement affects self-concept more than the self-concept inherently influences achievement success (Muijs, 2011). Therefore, the H₁ “There is a significant relation between Self-Concept and Academic Achievement of secondary school students” is accepted.

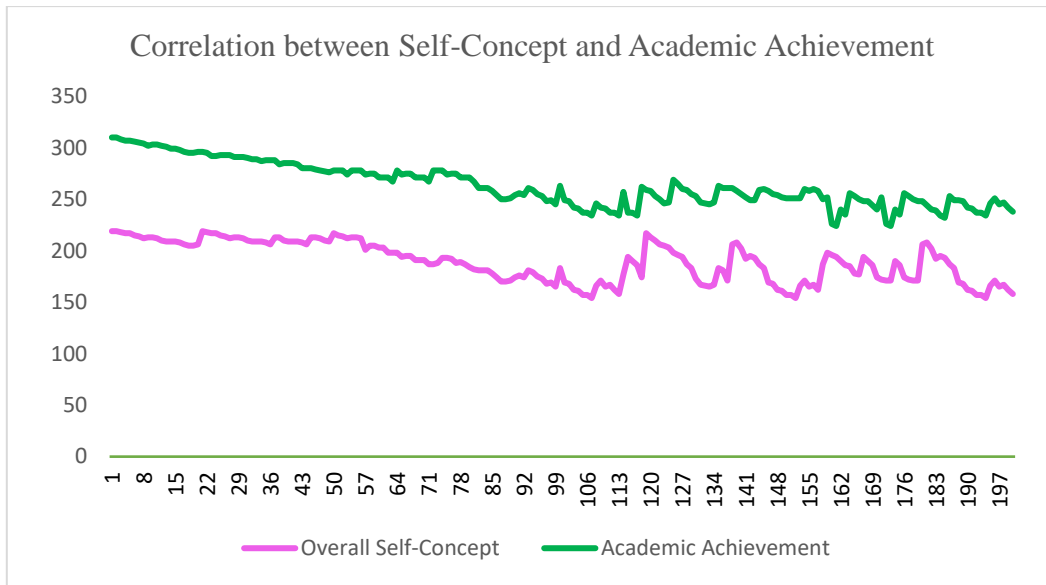


Figure 1

Table 2: Summary of Correlation Analysis on the Relationship between Study Habits and Academic Achievement among Secondary School students

Variable	Coefficient of Correlation
Study Habits	0.715
Academic Achievement	

The data in Table 2 showed that there is a fairly strong positive relationship between study habit and academic achievement among secondary school students of Siwan district, Bihar state. This inference comes as a result of the ‘r’ having a positive value, $r = 0.715$ and $n = 200$. Hence, the study concluded that there exists a fairly strong positive relationship between study habits and the academic achievement of secondary school students.

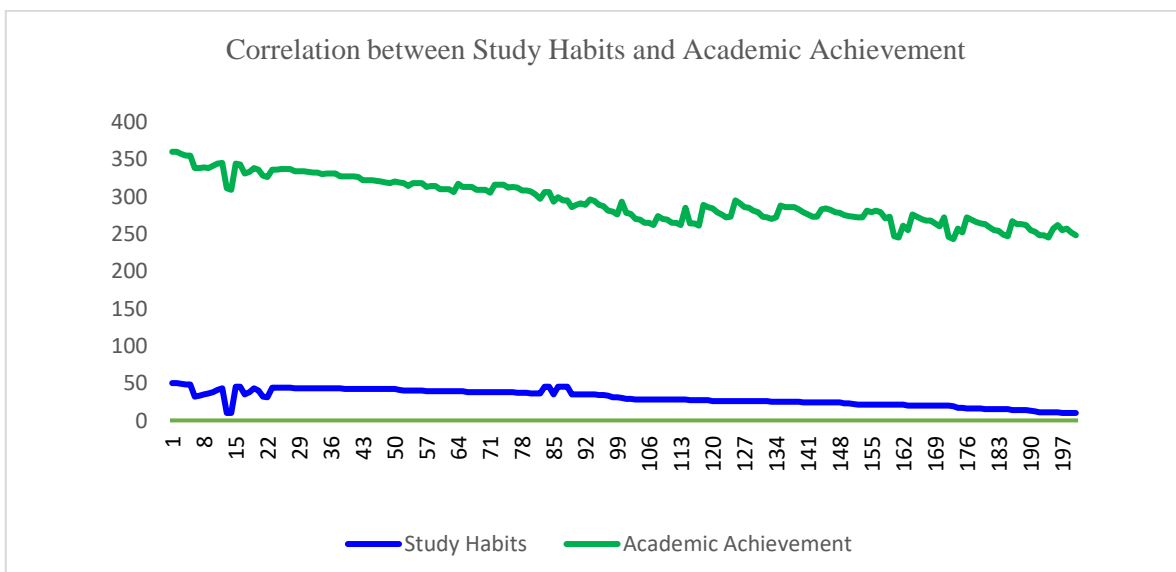


Figure 2

Table 3 Mean, SD and t-Test Regarding Self-Concept of Urban and Rural Students.

Self-Concept	N	Mean	S.D.	SE _D	df	t-value	Level of Significance
Urban Students	100	158.64	10.72	1.072	198	10.47	p<.01
Rural Students	100	146.85	3.47	0.347			

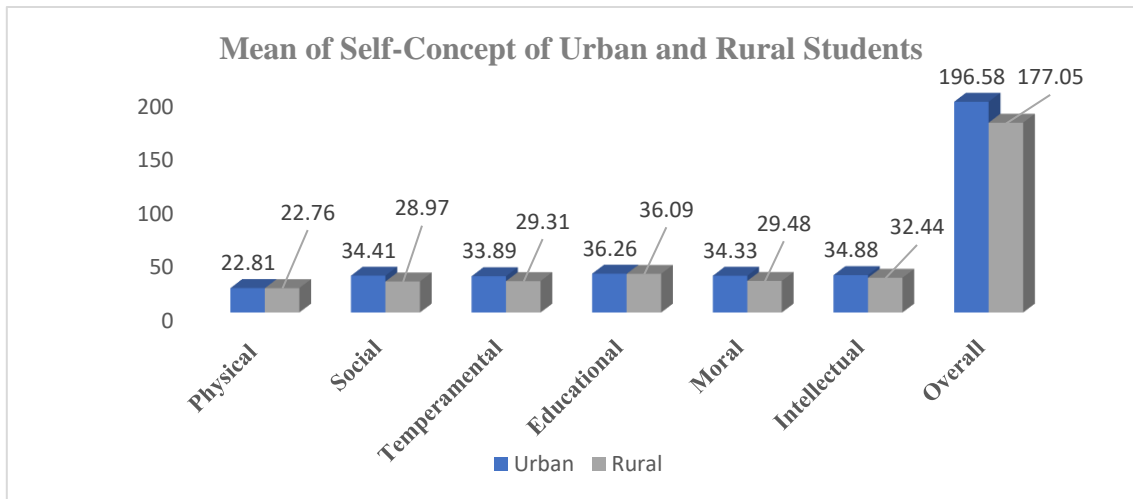


Figure 3

Analysis of data mentioned in Table 3 reveals that urban students edge out the students belonging to rural areas of Siwan district with respect to the self-concept developed with the passage of time because of interaction with the peers in school and other surroundings. Thus, the hypothesis formulated after reviewing literature available in this area of research work is accepted.

Table 4 Mean, SD and t-Test Regarding Self-Concept of Urban and Rural Students.

Self-Concept	N	Mean	SD	SE _D	df	t-value	Level of Significance
Urban Students	100	39.22	6.00	.600	198	21.57	p< .01
Rural Students	100	21.60	5.54	.554			

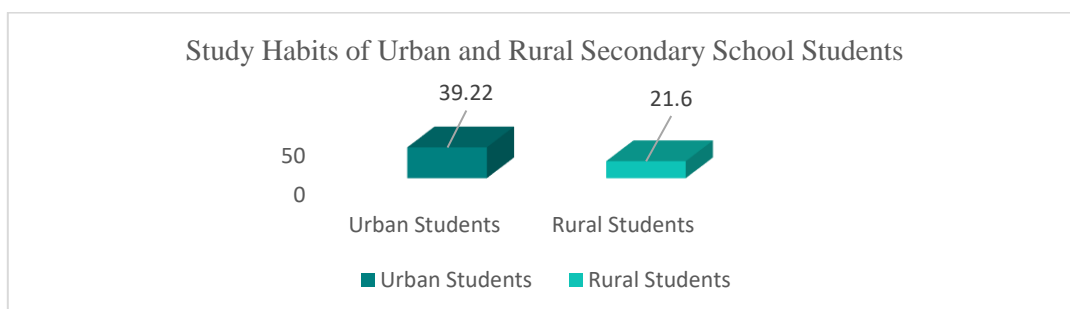


Figure 4

5. CONCLUSION

The study shows a moderately positive relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students. The study further revealed that a positive relationship exists between study habits and the academic achievement of secondary school students. In addition, a significant difference is found between the self-concept of urban and rural students. A significant difference also has been found in the study habits of urban and rural students. Students with a positive self-concept tend to believe in their capability to succeed academically, leading to greater motivation, persistence in challenging tasks, and a willingness to take risks, ultimately impacting their academic achievement positively. In addition to it, good study habits like time management, active learning strategies (e.g., summarizing, note-taking), consistent review, and focused study sessions can directly improve information retention and comprehension, leading to better grades. Futuremore, a positive self-concept can encourage students to develop better study habits, while effective study habits can further reinforce a positive self-image, creating a beneficial cycle.

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