

Academic Self-Concept Among Secondary School Students of Gulf-Migrant and Non-Migrant Parents: A Comparative Study in Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract:

Academic self-concept is a crucial psychological construct that influences students' academic engagement, confidence, and achievement, particularly during the secondary school stage. In the context of increasing parental migration to Gulf countries, the present study examines differences in academic self-concept among students of migrant and non-migrant parents. A comparative descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The sample consisted of 1000 secondary school students (500 from Gulf migrant families and 500 from non-migrant families) selected from Kadapa district, Andhra Pradesh. The Academic Self-Concept Scale (ASCS) developed by Minchekar and Naik was used for data collection, and the data were analysed using Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-test.

The findings revealed that 47% of students exhibited average academic self-concept, while 35% showed low and 18% high levels. Students of non-migrant parents demonstrated significantly higher academic self-concept compared to students of Gulf migrant parents across all variables. Significant differences were observed with respect to gender (Male: $t = 8.12$; Female: $t = 6.85$), locality (Rural: $t = 11.24$; Urban: $t = 5.89$), and family income (Below 2 lakhs: $t = 10.18$; 2–5 lakhs: $t = 8.47$; Above 5 lakhs: $t = 5.36$), all significant at the 0.01 level. Mean scores consistently indicated higher self-concept among non-migrant students (e.g., Male = 218.7 vs. 192.4; Rural = 215.8 vs. 186.2).

The study concludes that although parental migration improves economic conditions, it negatively affects students' academic self-concept due to reduced parental support and emotional bonding. The study highlights the need for school-based interventions and supportive environments to enhance self-concept among children of migrant parents.

Keywords: Academic Self-Concept, Parental Migration, Gulf Migration, Secondary School Students

Introduction:

Education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge but also the development of self-beliefs and perceptions that influence learning behavior. Among various psychological constructs, academic self-concept holds a significant place in determining students' academic engagement and success. It refers to an individual's perception, evaluation, and belief about their own academic abilities.

During adolescence, particularly at the secondary school stage, students develop a clearer sense of self-identity, including their academic strengths and weaknesses. This stage is highly sensitive to environmental influences such as family background, peer interaction, and school experiences. Positive academic self-concept leads to higher confidence, better performance, and increased persistence, while negative self-concept may result in low achievement and lack of motivation.

In regions like Andhra Pradesh, where Gulf migration is a common socio-economic phenomenon, many students grow up in households where one or both parents are working abroad. While remittances improve economic conditions, parental absence can significantly affect children's emotional and psychological development. The lack of direct parental guidance and emotional bonding may negatively influence students' self-perception, particularly their academic self-concept.

The present study focuses on understanding how academic self-concept varies among students of Gulf-migrant and non-migrant parents and examines the influence of demographic variables on this construct.

Review of related Literature:

Shukla (2021) examined the relationship between academic self-concept, study habits and academic achievement among secondary school students. The sample consisted of 150 students from government secondary schools. Results indicated a significant positive relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement. Students with higher self-concept demonstrated better study habits, improved classroom engagement and higher academic scores. The study concluded that academic self-belief is an important factor influencing students' academic behaviour.

Chaudhary (2022) studied academic self-concept among adolescents in secondary schools in India. The research included 250 students and used standardized academic self-concept measurement scales. Findings indicated that students with higher academic self-concept demonstrated stronger classroom participation, better problem-solving abilities and greater academic confidence. The study also revealed that supportive family and school environments contribute significantly to the development of positive academic self-beliefs.

Yang et al. (2023) examined academic self-concept among 998 left-behind children in China and explored the role of discrimination and school belonging. The study found that perceived discrimination negatively predicted students' academic self-concept, while school belonging mediated this relationship. Children who experienced stronger peer support reported higher academic self-concept levels. The findings suggested that social environment and peer relationships significantly influence self-concept development among migrant-affected students.

Abbasi (2023) analysed the effects of parental migration on children's non-cognitive abilities in rural China using large-scale educational data. The study found that migration of one or both parents negatively affected several psychological attributes, including self-confidence and self-perception related to learning. The findings suggested that parental migration may influence students' non-cognitive development and academic self-concept.

Verma and Sharma (2023) analysed academic self-concept and academic achievement among high school students in Tamil Nadu. The study involved 220 students from secondary schools. Results showed a strong positive relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement. Students with higher self-concept demonstrated stronger academic motivation, confidence in learning tasks and higher educational aspirations. The study concluded that academic self-concept plays a crucial role in students' academic development.

Kumar (2024) examined academic self-concept among secondary school students in India using survey data from 200 students. The findings indicated that students with positive academic self-perceptions demonstrated greater confidence in learning tasks and stronger academic engagement. The study also highlighted that teacher encouragement and parental support significantly influenced students' academic self-concept.

Singh (2025) studied academic self-concept among adolescents in secondary schools in India. The research involved 250 students from government secondary schools. Findings revealed that students with supportive family environments and positive teacher relationships demonstrated higher academic self-concept. The study concluded that academic self-concept plays an important role in students' educational participation and learning motivation.

Objectives of the study:

1. To assess the levels of Academic Self-concept among secondary school students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents.
2. To compare the Academic Self-concept of secondary school students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to demographic variables such as Gender, Locality, and Family Income.

Hypotheses of the study:

1. There is no significant difference in Academic Self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to Gender.
2. There is no significant difference in Academic Self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to Locality.
3. There is no significant difference in Academic Self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to Family Income.

Delimitations of the study:

1. The present study was confined to Kadapa District of Andhra Pradesh only.
2. The study was restricted to secondary school students studying in Classes IX and X only.
3. The sample size of the study was limited to 1000 secondary school students.
4. The study was delimited to selected demographic variables such as gender, locality, and medium of instruction.

Sample of the Study:

For the present study, students studying in Classes IX and X were randomly selected to form the final sample. The total sample consisted of 1000 secondary school students, including 500 students whose parents had migrated to Gulf countries and 500 students whose parents had not migrated.

Tools Used:

The Academic Self Concept Scale (ASCS) developed by Dr. Vikas S. Minchekar and Dr. Bharat A. Naik was used.

Data Collection:

The investigator obtained formal permission from the Heads of the selected schools to conduct the research.

ch. The data was collected from the intermediate students with the assistance of the concerned class teachers after clearly explaining the purpose, significance, and confidential nature of the study. The aggregate percentage of marks obtained in the most recent annual examination was taken as the measure of their academic achievement.

Statistics Used:

Mean and Standard Deviation and t-test were used.

Analysis and Interpretation of the data:

Objective - 1: To assess the levels of Academic Self-concept among secondary school students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents.

Table-1: Distribution of Sample on Academic Self-Concept by Parental Migration Status (N=1000)

Parental Migration Status	N	Low	Average	High
Gulf Migrant Parents	500	230 (46%)	210 (42%)	60 (12%)
Non-Migrant Parents	500	120 (24%)	260 (52%)	120 (24%)
Total Sample	1000	350 (35%)	470 (47%)	180 (18%)

Table -1 reveals that, overall, 35% of students exhibited Low academic self-concept, 47% Average, and 18% High, indicating generally moderate self-concept levels in the sample. However, a stark comparative difference emerges: students of Gulf migrant parents showed a substantially higher proportion in the Low category (46%) and a lower proportion in the High category (12%) compared to non-migrant parents (24% Low, 24% High). Non-migrant students displayed a more favorable and balanced distribution, with stronger representation in Average and High levels.

This pattern suggests that parental absence due to Gulf migration may contribute to lower perceived academic competence, confidence, and self-worth among left-behind children, consistent with studies indicating that emotional gaps, reduced parental feedback, and lack of direct encouragement often lead to diminished academic self-perceptions, despite potential remittance benefits (Tesfaw, 2022; Nguyen, 2016; Lu, 2014).

Objective -2: To compare the Academic Self-concept of secondary school students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to demographic variables such as Gender, Locality, and Family Income.

Hypothesis -1: There is no significant difference in Academic Self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to Gender.

Table -2: Significance of Difference in Mean Scores on Academic Self-Concept according to Gender and Parental Migration Status (N=1000)

Gender	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Male	Gulf Migrant Parents	250	192.4	28.6	8.12*
	Non-Migrant Parents	250	218.7	30.1	
Female	Gulf Migrant Parents	250	188.1	30.4	6.85*

	Non-Migrant Parents	250	210.5	31.2	
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*Significant at 0.01 level

Male students of Gulf migrant parents obtained a lower mean academic self-concept score (192.4) compared to male students of non-migrant parents (218.7), with a mean difference of 26.3 points. Similarly, female students of Gulf migrant parents scored lower (188.1) than female students of non-migrant parents (210.5), with a mean difference of 22.4 points. In both gender groups, students from non-migrant families demonstrated significantly higher mean self-concept scores, and the gap appeared slightly larger among males than among females.

The computed t-value for males (8.12) and for females (6.85) were both statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates a significant difference in academic self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents within each gender group, with students of non-migrant parents showing significantly higher academic self-concept in both cases. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected for both male and female students. This pattern is visually represented in Figure 1.

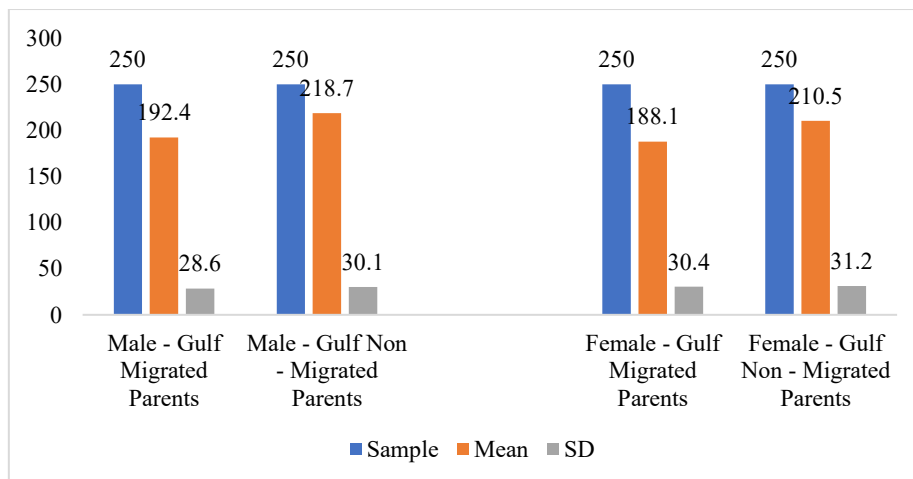


Figure 1: Comparison of Mean Academic Self-Concept Scores by Gender and Parental Migration Status

Hypothesis - 2: There is no significant difference in Academic Self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to Locality.

Table -2: Significance of Difference in Mean Scores on Academic Self-Concept according to Locality and Parental Migration Status

Locality	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Rural	Gulf Migrant Parents	350	186.2	27.5	11.24*
	Non-Migrant Parents	250	215.8	29.3	
Urban	Gulf Migrant Parents	150	198.7	30.1	5.89*
	Non-Migrant Parents	250	220.4	31.0	

*Significant at 0.01 level

Rural students of Gulf migrant parents obtained a lower mean academic self-concept score (186.2) compared to rural students of non-migrant parents (215.8), with a substantial mean difference of 29.6

points. Similarly, urban students of Gulf migrant parents scored lower (198.7) than urban students of non-migrant parents (220.4), with a mean difference of 21.7 points. In both rural and urban localities, students from non-migrant families demonstrated significantly higher mean self-concept scores, and the gap was noticeably larger in rural areas than in urban areas.

The computed t-value for rural students (11.24) and for urban students (5.89) were both statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates a significant difference in academic self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents within each locality group, with students of non-migrant parents showing significantly higher academic self-concept in both rural and urban settings. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected for both rural and urban students. This pattern is visually represented in Figure 2.

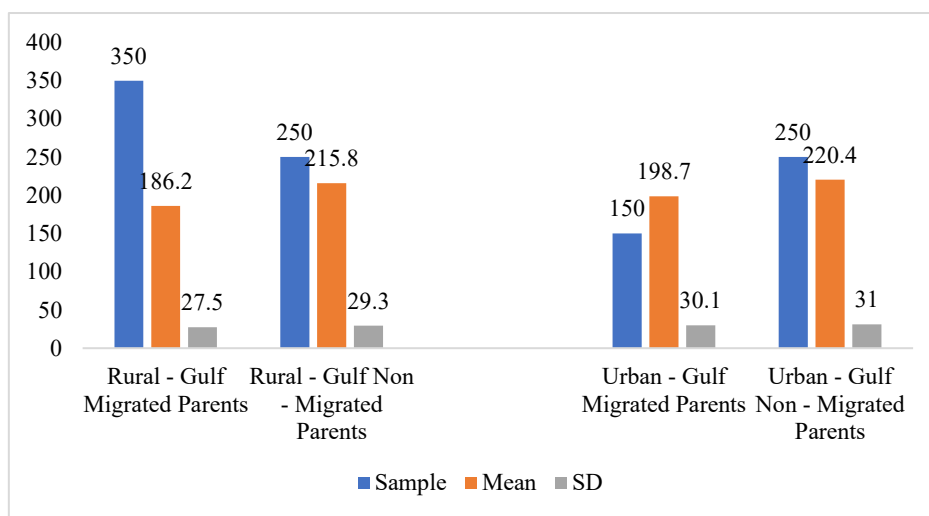


Figure 2: Comparison of Mean Academic Self-Concept Scores by Locality and Parental Migration Status (N=1000)

Hypothesis - 3: There is no significant difference in Academic Self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents with respect to Family Income.

Table-3: Significance of Difference in Mean Scores on Academic Self-Concept according to Family Income and Parental Migration Status (N=1000)

Family Income	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Below 2 Lakhs	Gulf Migrant Parents	180	183.5	27.9	10.18*
	Non-Migrant Parents	220	212.6	29.8	
2-5 Lakhs	Gulf Migrant Parents	250	196.4	29.2	8.47*
	Non-Migrant Parents	250	224.1	31.0	
Above 5 Lakhs	Gulf Migrant Parents	70	204.8	30.5	5.36*

	Non-Migrant Parents	30	231.7	32.4	
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*Significant at 0.01 level

Students of Gulf migrant parents in the Below 2 Lakhs income category obtained the lowest mean academic self-concept score (183.5) compared to their non-migrant counterparts (212.6), with a substantial mean difference of 29.1 points. In the 2–5 Lakhs category, migrant students scored lower (196.4) than non-migrant students (224.1), with a difference of 27.7 points. Even in the Above 5 Lakhs category, migrant students had lower scores (204.8) than non-migrant students (231.7), with a difference of 26.9 points. Across all three income groups, students from non-migrant families consistently demonstrated significantly higher mean self-concept scores, and the gap was largest in the lowest income category.

The computed t-value for the Below 2 Lakhs group (10.18), 2–5 Lakhs group (8.47), and Above 5 Lakhs group (5.36) were all statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates a significant difference in academic self-concept between students of Gulf migrant and non-migrant parents within each family income category, with students of non-migrant parents showing significantly higher academic self-concept in all three income levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Findings of the study:

1. The majority of secondary school students (47%) exhibited average levels of academic self-concept, followed by 35% with low self-concept and 18% with high self-concept. However, students of Gulf migrant parents showed a higher percentage in the low category (46%) and a lower percentage in the high category (12%) compared to non-migrant parents, indicating comparatively lower academic self-concept among migrant families.
2. There were significant differences in academic self-concept with respect to gender, as students of non-migrant parents scored higher (Male mean = 218.7; Female mean = 210.5) than students of Gulf migrant parents (Male mean = 192.4; Female mean = 188.1). The obtained t-values (8.12 for males and 6.85 for females), significant at the 0.01 level, indicate that parental migration significantly affects academic self-concept across both genders.
3. There were significant differences in academic self-concept with respect to locality, where rural students of non-migrant parents (mean = 215.8) scored higher than rural students of Gulf migrant parents (mean = 186.2), and urban non-migrant students (mean = 220.4) scored higher than urban migrant students (mean = 198.7). The t-values (11.24 for rural and 5.89 for urban), significant at the 0.01 level, show that the impact is more pronounced in rural areas.
4. There were significant differences in academic self-concept with respect to family income, as students of non-migrant parents scored higher across all income groups. In the below 2 lakhs category, non-migrant students (mean = 212.6) scored higher than migrant students (mean = 183.5); in the 2–5 lakhs category, non-migrant students (mean = 224.1) scored higher than migrant students (mean = 196.4); and in the above 5 lakhs category, non-migrant students (mean = 231.7) scored higher than migrant students (mean = 204.8). The obtained t-values (10.18, 8.47, and 5.36), significant at the 0.01 level, indicate that parental migration significantly influences academic self-concept across all income levels.

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