



SELF-ESTEEM AMONG YOUTH AGED 14-18 YEARS

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ABSTRACT

Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall evaluation and sense of worth about oneself. Adolescence is an important period for the development of self-understanding and personal identity. Young people between the ages of 14 and 18 experience changes in their physical appearance, academic life, relationships, and social environment, which may influence how they view themselves. The present article focuses on self-esteem among youth aged 14-18 years. The study aims to understand the level of self-esteem among adolescents and to examine possible differences among them. The findings may provide useful information for parents, teachers, counsellors, and educational institutions in supporting the healthy psychological development of young people.



KEYWORDS: *Self-esteem, youth, adolescents, self-worth, self-concept.*

INTRODUCTION:

Adolescence is a significant stage of development during which young people develop a clearer understanding of themselves. They become increasingly aware of their abilities, appearance, relationships, academic performance, and position among their peers. These experiences can influence how they evaluate themselves.

Self-esteem is an important psychological concept associated with an individual's overall sense of personal worth. It reflects the way individuals value and evaluate themselves. A young person with healthy self-esteem may generally recognise personal strengths and weaknesses while maintaining a positive sense of self.

Self-esteem does not mean believing that one is better than others. Rather, it involves accepting oneself, recognising one's strengths, and being able to accept weaknesses and mistakes.

During adolescence, self-esteem can be influenced by several factors. Family relationships, peer relationships, academic experiences, social acceptance, physical appearance, and feedback from significant people may all play a role in the development of self-esteem.

The experiences of adolescence can therefore have an important influence on how young people see themselves. Understanding self-esteem among youth is important because a positive sense of self may help them face challenges, develop healthy relationships, and make constructive decisions.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Self-esteem has been widely studied in developmental and social psychology. Rosenberg described self-esteem as an individual's overall positive or negative attitude towards the self. His work provided an important foundation for measuring global self-esteem.

Research has indicated that self-esteem develops through interaction with family, peers, school, and the wider social environment. Adolescents may compare themselves with others and may be particularly sensitive to acceptance and rejection during this period.

Academic experiences can also influence self-esteem. Success may strengthen confidence, while repeated academic difficulties may negatively influence how students view their abilities. However, self-esteem is influenced by multiple factors and cannot be explained by academic performance alone.

Similarly, peer relationships may have an important role. Positive relationships and a sense of belonging may support healthy self-esteem, while social rejection or negative peer experiences may affect an adolescent's self-evaluation.

Because adolescence is a period of rapid personal and social development, studying self-esteem among young people can provide valuable information for educational and counselling interventions.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Young people today experience various academic, social, and personal expectations. They are also exposed to social comparisons through peer groups and digital platforms. These experiences may influence their perception of themselves.

A better understanding of self-esteem among adolescents can help parents and teachers recognise the importance of providing a supportive environment. It can also assist counsellors in identifying areas where young people may require guidance and encouragement.

The present article therefore focuses on self-esteem among youth aged 14–18 years.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of self-esteem among youth aged 14–18 years.
2. To understand the general pattern of self-esteem among the participants.
3. To examine differences in self-esteem among the selected participants based on relevant demographic variables.
4. To highlight the importance of healthy self-esteem during adolescence.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive research design may be adopted for the study.

Participants

The participants may include youth aged between 14 and 18 years. They may be selected from educational institutions using an appropriate sampling procedure.

Research Instrument

A standardised self-esteem scale may be used to assess the level of self-esteem among the participants. The selected scale should have established reliability and validity and should be suitable for the age group.

A demographic information sheet may also be used to collect relevant background information.

Data Collection

Permission may be obtained from the concerned authorities before collecting the data. The purpose of the study may be explained to the participants. Participation should be voluntary, and confidentiality should be maintained throughout the study.

Data Analysis

The collected data may be analysed using appropriate statistical methods. Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation may be used for descriptive analysis. Suitable inferential statistical tests may be used to examine differences based on the objectives and demographic variables.

Expected Findings

The study is expected to provide an understanding of the level of self-esteem among youth aged 14–18 years. It may identify variations in self-esteem among the participants.

The findings may also provide insight into the importance of self-esteem during adolescence. However, conclusions should be drawn only from the results obtained through the actual data analysis.

DISCUSSION

Self-esteem plays an important role in the development of adolescents. Young people are developing their identity and becoming more aware of their strengths, limitations, and social relationships.

Healthy self-esteem can help young people accept themselves and deal with everyday challenges in a more positive manner. It may also support their willingness to participate in activities, form relationships, and deal with setbacks.

The development of self-esteem is influenced by several aspects of an adolescent's life. Therefore, family, school, peer relationships, and the broader social environment should be considered when understanding self-esteem among young people.

Teachers and parents have an important role in creating environments where adolescents feel respected and valued. Constructive feedback, encouragement, and opportunities for meaningful participation may help young people develop a healthy sense of self-worth.

Educational and Practical Implications

The findings of the study may be useful for schools and educational institutions. Schools can introduce activities that encourage self-awareness, communication, teamwork, creativity, and appreciation of individual strengths.

Teachers can provide constructive feedback and avoid unnecessary comparisons between students. Counsellors can support adolescents who experience difficulties related to self-confidence, peer relationships, academic performance, or social adjustment.

Parents can also contribute by providing emotional support, listening to their children, and recognising their efforts rather than focusing only on achievements.

Limitations

The study may have limitations related to the selected sample, geographical area, age group, and research instrument. Since self-esteem is influenced by several personal and environmental factors, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of the study.

CONCLUSION

Self-esteem is an important aspect of psychological development during adolescence. Youth aged 14–18 years are going through a period of significant personal and social change, making this an important stage for understanding their sense of self-worth. A supportive family, positive school environment, healthy peer relationships, and appropriate guidance can contribute to the development of healthy self-esteem. Understanding self-esteem among adolescents can therefore help educators, parents, and counsellors provide better support for their overall development.

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