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## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SELF CONCEPT OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

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### Short Profile

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### Abstract

The present investigation is an attempt to study the gender differences if any in the self concept of higher secondary students. Normative survey method was used. Data was collected from a sample of 400 higher secondary students selected from different schools of Kanniyakumari district in Tamil Nadu State using random sampling technique. Self Concept Inventory (Saraswat, 2019) was used to collect data. Gender differences were noted in the Self concept of higher secondary students. Also significant gender differences are noted in the dimensions of self concept except on intellectual self concept. Female students possess high self concept compared to male higher secondary students.

*Key Words:* gender, self concept, physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral, and intellectual, higher secondary students.

## Introduction

Self concept is defined as “the individual’s belief about himself or herself, including the person’s attributes and who and what the self is” (Baumeister, 1999). Self concept is closely related with one’s behaviour in the environment, family, social and so on. In the educational system, Self concept seems to be the driving forces to success at school and in life (Liu, 2009; O’Neill, 2015; Shavelson, 1976; Van Boxtel and Monks, 1992). Students’ self concept always leads to the success on academic tasks

Self concept is considered as the central theme of life which affects all relationship, performances and achievements either positively or negatively. Students who have a positive self concept lead to believe that they will succeed at any tasks that are likely to behave in ways that ultimately lead to success. Students who have negative self concept lead to believe that they are good for nothing. So they are depressed, feel lonely, disappointed etc. Teachers should take care of it and give proper guidance and counselling to the students. They can carefully monitor student’s appearance and approach; they can give positive academic feedbacks that are highly associated with self concept. Self concept is an important element in the growth and developmental process for individual human beings. Higher secondary education is the foundation for higher education. Those who have high level of intrinsic motivation leads to higher achievement. So it is very important to know the level of self concept. Also now a day, it is more important for teachers to care gender difference in the classroom teaching learning process. Therefore it is essential to examine the gender differences in the self concept of students. Hence, this study is an attempt to examine the level of self concept of higher secondary students and the gender difference in their self concept.

## Objectives of the study

1. To study the level of self concept and its dimensions namely physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual self concept of higher secondary students.
2. To study the gender wise differences if any, in the self concept and its dimensions of higher secondary students.

## Hypothesis of the Study

1. There exists significant gender wise difference in the mean scores of self concept and its dimensions of higher secondary students.

## Methodology

The investigator adopted normative survey method for the study. Data was collected from a sample of 400 higher secondary students selected from different schools of Kanniyakumari district in Tamil Nadu state using random sampling technique. Self Concept Inventory (Saraswat, 2019) was used to collect data. Self Concept Inventory includes 48 questions in the six dimensions of self concept namely physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual. Reliability of the tool was established using Test Retest

method and was found to be 0.91. Content validity and construct validity of the tool were established. The organized data were analysed using arithmetic mean, standard deviation and t test.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1

*Different levels of self concept and its dimensions of higher secondary students.*

Domain	Levels	Count	Percent
Physical	Low	60	15
	Moderate	286	71.5
	High	54	13.5
Social	Low	63	15.75
	Moderate	273	68.25
	High	64	16
Temperamental	Low	61	15.24
	Moderate	281	70.25
	High	58	14.5
Educational	Low	62	15.5
	Moderate	270	67.5
	High	68	17
Moral	Low	54	13.5
	Moderate	281	70.25
	High	65	16.25
Intellectual	Low	70	17.5
	Moderate	266	66.5
	High	64	16
Self concept total	Low	60	15
	Moderate	286	71.50
	High	54	13.50

From Table 1, it is clear that majority of higher secondary students possess moderate level of self concept (71.5% moderate, 15% low and 13.50% high). Nearly 70% of higher secondary students possess moderate level in all dimensions of self concept (Physical 71.5%, Social 68.25%, Temperamental 70.25%, Educational 67.5%, Moral 70.25% and Intellectual 66.5%). This result is in agreement with the results of Bharathi and Sreedevi (2013) and Malhotra (2020), which indicated the majority of higher secondary students, have moderate level of self concept.

Table 2

*Gender wise comparison of self concept of higher secondary students.*

Dimension	Gender	Mean	SD	N	t value	p value
Self concept	Male	160.11	21.37	157	8.403	0.000
	Female	176.39	14.33	243		

The calculated t value (t=8.403; P<0.01) is significant at 0.01 level. It indicated that gender wise differences existed in the self concept of higher secondary students. Mean values showed that female students possess higher self concept compared to male students. This result is in agreement with the findings of Kimmelmeier and Oyserman (2001); Alzyoudi (2007) which also indicates gender differences in the self concept of students. This result is in contradiction with the result of Manjari (2017); Muthuri and Arasa (2017); Kumar, Lal (2016) Alrajhi and Aldhafri (2015); Ayeshakhan and Shah Alam (2015); Rashid, Iqbal and Khalid (2015); Liu, Cobiac and Skrzypiec (2002), which indicated no gender differences in the self concept of students. This may be due to the changes in the sample, tool used etc.

Table 3

*Gender wise comparison in the dimensions of self concept of higher secondary students.*

Dimensions of self concept	Gender	Mean	SD	N	t value	P value
Physical	Male	28.42	5.52	157	2.417	0.016
	Female	29.62	3.57	243		
Social	Male	27.34	5.24	157	3.941	0.000
	Female	29.35	4.55	243		
Temperamental	Male	26.41	4.87	157	5.720	0.000
	Female	29.05	3.88	243		
Educational	Male	24.99	5.42	157	11.203	0.000
	Female	30.84	4.56	243		
Moral	Male	27.45	4.58	157	10.667	0.000
	Female	31.98	3.37	243		
Intellectual	Male	25.50	4.83	157	0.108	0.914
	Female	25.55	3.96	243		

The above results indicated that there existed significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their Physical ( $t= 2.417$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), Social ( $t=3.941$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), Temperamental ( $t=5.720$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), Educational ( $t=11.203$ ,  $P<0.01$ ), and Moral ( $t=10.667$ ,  $P<0.01$ ). It is clear that mean scores of educational self concept was significantly high among girls as compared to boys. No significant difference was noted between male and female higher secondary students in their Intellectual self concept ( $t=0.108$ ,  $P>0.05$ ).

### Conclusion

The study revealed that nearly three fourth of higher secondary students had moderate level of self concept. Gender exerts an important role in the self concept of higher secondary students. Female students possess higher self concept than male higher secondary students. This may be due to the fact that female students from childhood onwards inculcated a lot of responsibility feelings, safe from their family environment. Male students in this study were found to have lower self concept, therefore, it appears that they need to be handled differently in the school setting in order to enhance their self concept. To improve the self concept of male students certain measures can be followed,

- Leadership training can be given to develop their self concept.
- Involve the students in various club activities.
- Encourage the students to be actively participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities like group discussion, cultural programmes, sports and games, seminars, workshop and project work

These activities can be conducted frequently for higher secondary students which would definitely enhance their self concept.

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