

# Exploring the Self-Concept of Post Graduate Level Students: A Critical Study

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## ABSTRACT

Self-Concept is the overall perception of individuals about their own personality and behaviours. It is a very common indicator of students' academic achievement. Self-Concept can be considered as the sum total of persons' thoughts and beliefs about how they are. The present study puts emphasis on the Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students in Purulia district of West Bengal. The objectives of the study are to express the differences between the Self-Concept of Female and Male students; Urban and Rural students & Arts and Science students of Post Graduate level respectively. Descriptive survey method is followed to conduct the study. The researchers have selected 200 Post Graduate level students from Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University of Purulia district as the sample of the study by using stratified random sampling technique. 'Self Concept Scale' developed by Dr. (Mrs.) Pratibha Deo was used to collect the data. No significant difference was found in the Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students in respect to their Gender (Female and Male) and Stream (Arts and Science group); but there was a significant difference in their Self-Concept on the basis of Residence (Urban and Rural).

**Keywords:** Self-Concept, Post Graduate level students, Gender, Residence, Stream.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Self-Concept is the image that we have of ourselves. Self-Concept is an important factor of a person that leads his/her behaviour towards phenomena. It indicates

our thoughts about us. Self-Concept assures us about how we are! This mental picture is our belief, control, and perception about us including self-esteem, body image, personal identity etc. A person's Self-Concept develops in social circumstances under the influence of people around us with whom we regularly interact. Self-Concept helps individuals to build their personality either positive or negative (Singh, 2015). It includes one's feelings about the self, other persons, society, and experiences including his convictions, values, goals and attitudes (Maheswari, 2016). Jackson (2001) described that Self-Concept is associated with a wide range of performance indicators. It is one of the significant psychological concepts for many of the developmental, clinical, social and especially educational outputs. Self-Concept is the perception of an individual including self-esteem, body image, personal identity etc. Self-concept matters; so, it is a key to get success in life; the basic assumption is that learners who feel good about themselves and their abilities are most likely to succeed. So, it is important to study the Self-Concept of students especially of higher education students as it influences their future achievements as well as their excellence further.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The researchers have reviewed several studies regarding Self-Concept of students.

Collins, C. J. et al. (2004) conducted a study to know the relationship between Academic Achievement and Academic Self-Concept. Moderate to strong relationship between Academic Achievement and Academic Self-Concept has been found in those studies. Wang, J. and Lin, E. (2008) conducted study where moderate to strong relationship between Academic Achievement and Academic Self-Concept has been found. Li, C. (2010) conducted a study on the Self-Concept of university students. The findings showed that the physical self-ethics, self-criticism, and self-satisfaction of males were higher than females, but females' ethics were higher than males. Arul Lawrence, A.S. and Vimala, A. (2013) conducted a study on Self-Concept and Achievement Motivation of high school students. Significant difference in the Self-concept of high school students' was found in terms of gender and locality. Adebule (2014) conducted a study on the relationship between Self-Concept and Academic Performance of students. The result exposed that Self-Concept did not influence Academic Performance of students. Gupta, R. (2014) has carried out a study on Self-Concept of students. The result revealed that gender had an effect upon the Self-Concept and also concluded that boys had higher Self-Concept level than girls. Guha, A. and Pan, A. (2015) conducted a study on Self-Concept and Achievement Motivation with 200 English medium school students of Hoogly district. The study revealed that Self-Concept and Achievement Motivation had significant positive relationship, they differs significantly in relation to gender & strata. Singh, P. (2015) carried out a study to explore the relationship between Self-Concept and Anxiety levels of Higher Secondary students. The results revealed that there were no significant differences among the students in respect to their location, gender and stream of the study. Gunasekar, N. and Pugalenth, N. (2016) conducted a study on Self-Concept and Academic Achievement of students. It was found that boys' students were different in

compare with girls' students in their Self-concept. Rural students had higher Self-Concept in respect of urban students. Biswal, B. K. (2016) conducted a study on Self-Concept and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students. It was found that there was a significant difference between the Self-Concept of boys and girls & also between rural and urban adolescent students. Kumar, A.C.L. (2016) conducted a study on Self-Concept of Higher Secondary students where he found that male and female students did not differ significantly in their Self-Concept. Manjari. (2017) has conducted a study on Self-Concept of college students. The result revealed that there was no significant difference between Temperamental Self-Concept among the male and female college students. Muthuri R. N. D. K. and Arasa, J. N. (2017) conducted a study on Self-Concept of students. In the study, males were found to have a higher Self-Concept than female undergraduate students. Halder, U. K. & Khatun, J. (2018) conducted a study on Self-Concept of the Post Graduate Students. The result revealed that there was a significant difference between the male and female as well as rural and urban students in terms of their Self-Concept. No difference was found in respect to their academic disciplines. Kundhare, S. H. and Ghoti, R. M. (2019) conducted a study regarding Self-Concept of college students. It was found that male adolescents were significantly superior on Self-Concept than female adolescents.

### **3. Research Gap**

The researchers have reviewed several studies regarding the Self-Concept of students in India and abroad. No study was conducted to investigate the Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students in Purulia district of West Bengal on the basis of their Gender, Residence and Stream. Therefore, the researchers have found this research gap and conducted the present study.

#### 4. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the difference between the Self-Concept of Female and Male students of Post Graduate level.
2. To find out the difference between the Self-Concept of Urban and Rural students of Post Graduate level.
3. To express the difference between the Self-Concept of Arts and Science students of Post Graduate level.

#### 5. Hypotheses of the Study:

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference between the Self-Concept of Female and Male Students of Post Graduate level.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference between the Self-Concept of Urban and Rural students of Post Graduate level.

H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant difference between the Self-Concept of Arts and Science students of Post Graduate level.

#### 6. Delimitations of the Study:

- i. The study was delimited to only Purulia district of West Bengal.
- ii. The study was restricted to only the students of Arts and Science group of Post Graduate level who are pursuing their Master Degree in Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University.

### 7. METHODOLOGY

#### Population of the Study:

All the Post Graduate level students of Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University in Purulia district of West Bengal are considered as the population of this study.

#### Sample and sampling of the study:

The researchers have selected 200 Post Graduate level students from Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University of Purulia district for conducting the present study. Stratified

random sampling technique was used to take the needed sample.

#### Tools used in the study:

In the present study, the researchers have used 'Self Concept Scale' developed by Dr. (Mrs.) Pratibha Deo to collect the data regarding Self-Concept. It consists of 212 adjectives divided into six characteristics viz., Aesthetics, Character, Social, Neutral, Emotional and Intellectual. It is a five – point rating scale having options as – Very Much Like This, Much Like This, Uncertain, Not Much Like This and Not At All Like This. Positive words are scored as 4, 3, 2, 1, 0; negative words are as 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 and the neutral are as 0, 0, 0, 0, and 0. It is a standardised scale.

#### Data Collection Procedure:

Quantitative Research Technique was followed in the present study. Survey was conducted for data collection to test the formulated hypotheses. The questionnaires were given to the participants (Post Graduate level students) to complete the total scale with a schedule not leaving any gap; and by this, personal information was collected from them for the present study. All subjects were asked to respond to the questionnaire and their responses were guaranteed to keep confidential.

#### 8. Analysis and Interpretations:

##### Descriptive statistics:

In the present study, the Mean of the Self-Concept score of 200 Post Graduate level students is 482.83 and Standard Deviation (SD) is 48.458.

##### Hypotheses Testing:

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no significant difference between the Self-Concept of Female and Male students of Post Graduate level.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Sig.	Inferences
Female	104	483.77	46.927	.283	.777	H <sub>0</sub> 1 is accepted
Male	96	481.81	50.695			

From the Table 1, it is found that the Mean of Female and Male Post Graduate level students' Self-Concept are 483.77 and 481.81; and SD of Female and Male Post Graduate level students' Self-Concept are 46.927 and 50.695 respectively. The calculated t-value is .283 that is less than the table t-value at .05 level of significance; and

the significance value is .777 which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that H<sub>01</sub> is accepted at .05 level of significance.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the Self-Concept of Urban and Rural students of Post Graduate level.

Residence	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Sig.	Inferences
Urban	78	493.26	46.542	2.453	.015	H <sub>02</sub> is rejected
Rural	122	476.16	48.995			

From the Table 2, it is found that the Mean of Urban and Rural Post Graduate level students' Self-Concept are 493.26 and 476.16; and SD of Urban and Rural Post Graduate level students' Self-Concept are 46.542 and 48.995 respectively. The calculated t-value is 2.453 which is greater than the table t-value at .05 level of

significance; and the significance value is .015 which is less than 0.05. It indicates that H<sub>02</sub> is rejected at .05 level of significance.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the Self-Concept of Arts and Science students of Post Graduate level.

Stream	N	Mean	SD	t- value	Sig.	Inferences
Arts	89	487.01	43.465	1.089	.278	H <sub>03</sub> is accepted
Science	111	479.48	52.407			

From the Table 3, it is found that the Mean of Arts and Science Post Graduate level students' Self-Concept are 487.01 and 479.48; and SD of Arts and Science Post Graduate level students' Self-Concept are 43.465 and 52.407. The calculated t-value is 1.089 that is less than the table t-value at .05 level of significance; and the significance value is .278 which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that H<sub>03</sub> is accepted at .05 level of significance.

## 9. DISCUSSION

Through hypotheses testing the researchers have found that the Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students were almost same in respect to Gender (Female and Male). Similar results were found in the study conducted by Singh (2015), Kumar (2016) and Manjari (2017). It was also found in the study that Self-Concept differs between Urban and Rural Post Graduate level students. The result is similar with the study

of Halder, U. K. and Khatun, J. (2018), Biswal, B. K. (2016), Gunasekar, N. and Pugalenthi, N. (2016), Arul Lawrence, A.S. and Vimala, A. (2013). The researchers have also found that Stream (Arts and Science) did not play significant role in determining the Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students. The finding is consistent with the study of Singh (2015). There are several related studies conducted by different researchers who found similar results in their studies.

## 10. Educational Significance:

Self-Concept can be considered as a general determinant of one's personality. It helps to define behaviours of a person directly or indirectly in a particular context. In educational concern, Self-Concept is a crucial factor that affects the overall Academic Achievement of students. On the other hand, Post Graduate level is one of the most vital parts of educational stages where

students must be concerned about their future achievements. It is important to make an investigation on the Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students as it affects various aspects of their life. So, the study was conducted by the researchers through which they want to express the overall Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students on the basis of their Gender, Residence and Stream.

## 11. CONCLUSION

From the overall discussion of the study, it can be concluded that no significant differences were found in the Self-Concept of Post Graduate level students in respect to their Gender and Stream. But the researchers have observed a significant difference between the attitude of Urban and Rural Post Graduate level students in regard to Self-Concept. Self-Concept is simply the knowledge, views and beliefs of an individual about the self that determines the level of performances of students in educational field. The study is helpful to know the overall self-Concept of Post Graduate level students.

### Declaration by Authors

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