

# ME AND MYSELF: SELF-CONCEPT OF THE YOUNG ADOLESCENT LEARNERS

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## ABSTRACT

The study assessed the self-concept of rural and urban adolescents. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select rural and urban adolescent students from Karachi, Sindh province in Pakistan. The total number of adolescent students selected for the study was 12000 which consist of 6000 rural (3000 boys and 3000 girls) and 6000 urban students (3000 boys and 3000 girls). The Belbin's Self Perception Inventory (SPI) was used for data collection and some statistical methods like descriptive and inferential methods were used for data analysis. The results confirmed that urban adolescent students showed greater self-evaluation and aspiration than rural adolescent students. The category-wise data showed that urban adolescent students led rural adolescents in both genders on self-evaluation and aspiration.

**Keywords:** self-concept, self-evaluation and aspiration, Real self, Ideal self, Adolescent, Rural, Urban.

## Introduction

The basic unit of knowledge is a concept. It is something we can be aware of and think about, as well as something that may reside inactivated in the memory until we have a reason for using it (Bourne & Ekstard 1985, p. 209). A concept of self-evaluation or consciousness (Ruhl, 2020) is the success of one's per unit pretensions. Similarly, an individual's more self-concept can enhance the rate of achievement in his life (James, 1890). Adolescents who are clear about their self-concept may retain more successes in their field; we can term it as attitude towards self, which means very organized thoughts about him/her. These organized thoughts are belief in one's self, his/her feelings, attitudes, and values which an adolescent considers his character. This central system of organized thoughts is based on perceptions adolescents attribute to themselves in contacting this world and the world's viewpoint about

themselves (Ruhl, 2020). Furthermore, the self may be defined as a component of one's identity we humans spend a lot of time and effort thinking about ourselves (Gibbon, 2018); to some extent, we tend literally to be self-centered. According to Kenrick (2019), an individual's self is the core of his social world. The self-concept or one's identity can be acquired through social roles that start with adolescents' immediate family and prolongs throughout one's life that he interacts. Finally, the self-concept is the planned set of one's perceptions, beliefs, and feelings about him. Precisely, there are conceptual frameworks that act like other conceptual frameworks do (Gibbon, 2018). Allport G. W (1961) has defined the self-concept in this way: that the current awareness of one's self. It is the warm, core, and personal region of one's life (Ruhl, 2020). It can play a vital role in one's consciousness, in one's personality, and one's organization of life. More precisely, these are a concept beyond the self, a concept beyond the consciousness, and a concept beyond the personality. Hence, it may be termed as the core of one's being.

Self-concepts are not static and unchanging they are shaped by experience and how people interpret their experience. Critcher and Gilovich (2010) have proposed that an important distinction is a basic incomprehension and classification for the self-concept of a clear difference between 'I', 'Me', and 'Myself'. According to them: 'Me' possesses four dimensions of oneself: 1) the psychological self, 2) the active self, 3) the physical self, and 4) the social self. They add one more classification of 'I' development. According to them, 'I', is the subjective self that translates and classifies one's experiences of life. Continuity distinctiveness volition and self-reflectivity are the core elements of 'I'.

Self-concept formation, reflected appraisal, was described by sociologist Charley Horton Cooley in 1902. Reflected appraisal refers to a process by which individuals develop a sense of themselves as reflected in other's eyes. Cooley used a metaphor, the 'looking glass self'. He theorized that people attend to how other people respond to them people infer the nature of other's judgments of their actions. These judgments, in turn, can become incorporated into a person's self-concept.

Gooding-Williams, R. (2017) believed, that adolescents are ready to do something following their strong self-concept about previous experiences and discontinue actions that distort their self-concept. It (self-concept) starts developing at a very young age of an individual; at the age of infancy. But, children evolve a broader sense of self-consciousness; positive regard plays a vital role in it. The sense of being loved and esteemed by others, especially one's friends and parents, are examples of positive regard (Gibson, 2019).

Another psychological process that has an important influence on self-concept formation is social comparison. Social comparison theory, which was introduced by Leon Festinger in 1954, describes a process of self-evaluation concerning one's reference group. A reference group is made up of individuals that are meaningful in a person's life, which might include parents, close friends, role models, and so on. Festinger argued that people are not content to take their opinions and abilities for granted. He proposed that personal opinions or abilities are not determined by reference to objective reality. Rather, people are motivated to evaluate their opinions and abilities subjectively, in terms of social reality, which consists of shared beliefs, opinions, and values of one's salient reference group.

The self-concept of school-going children can play a vital role in their social and personal development; it may be greatly influenced by personal experiences students perform at their home, with friends, and in school. Our attitudes and values, beliefs and feelings, strengths and weaknesses are examples of our self-concept. It is the way of perceiving these all. The self-concept begins to evolve at birth and personal experiences continually frame it. Therefore, self-concept classifies one's skills and capabilities. James (1890) suggested many kinds of self-concepts: 1) the real self: his beliefs and feelings, 2) the social self: thoughts and beliefs of others about him and their perceptions about him.

### **Need and Importance**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is the age of antagonism, academic achievement, and education, therefore, the self-concept can play a pivotal role in motivating adolescents to achieve greater and higher academic achievement and education at a secondary and higher secondary level of education. Young adolescents must evaluate their selves: their capabilities, interests, feelings, weaknesses, and strengths. They need to introspect in different decisions of life. Hence, it is necessary for young adolescents at a secondary and higher secondary level of schooling that they have developed a self-concept and have performed all activities following the knowledge of their selves. It is quite obvious that an individual knowing himself develops a sort of self-concept where he develops a realistic approach to achieve higher and to excel others in his endeavors. The present system of education lays much emphasis upon the all-around personality development of every individual.

Technically, envisioning the essential aim of academic achievement and education, the constant worry at a higher secondary and secondary level of schooling is to be laid on healthy and raising the self-concept among the young

adolescents. The self-concept has a pivotal effect on the entire behavior of the young adolescents of rural or urban areas. Scientific studies have shown that self-concept is a great source of prediction for the success of humans.

### **Objectives**

1. To study the self-concept of rural and urban adolescents.
2. To compare the rural students and urban students on real self.
3. To compare the rural students and urban students on ideal self.
4. To compare the rural boys and urban boys on real self.
5. To compare the rural boys and urban boys on ideal self.
6. To compare the rural girls and urban girls on real self.
7. To compare the rural girls and urban girls on ideal self.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypothesis has been formulated for the present study:

1. Rural and urban adolescent students do not differ significantly on real self
2. Rural and urban adolescent students do not differ significantly on the ideal self
3. Rural Boys and urban boys do not differ significantly on real self
4. Rural Boys and urban boys do not differ significantly on the ideal self
5. Rural Girls and urban girls do not differ significantly on real self
6. Rural Girls and urban girls do not differ significantly on the ideal self

### **Scope of the study**

The scope of the study was limited to the adolescent students of two districts of Karachi, Sindh province (Pakistan) namely Malir and Central. The Malir is a rural area and Central is an urban one. The sample of rural students was selected from Malir whereas the urban students were selected from Central.

### Selection of sample

The sample for the present study consists of 12000 students among which 6000 rural (3000 boys and 3000 girls) 6000 urban students (3000 boys and 3000 girls) of 10<sup>th</sup> standard, selected randomly from different government and private schools of district Malir and Central. District Malir is a rural area while District Central is an urban area of living. For this purpose, six schools from Malir District and six schools from Central District were selected. The breakdown of the sample is as under.

Table 1. *Description of the Sample and Schools*

S.No	Name of the school	Location	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Govt. Boys High School	Nunner Malir	750	0	750
2.	Malir Girls High School	Manigam Malir	0	750	750
3.	Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School	Manningham Malir	750	0	750
4.	Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School	Gulli bagh Malir	0	750	750
5.	Sindh Valley educational institution (co-education)	Kangan Malir	750	750	1500
6.	Evergreen High school (co-ed)	Nunner Malir	750	750	1500
7.	Govt. Girls High School	Harwan Central	0	750	750
8.	Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School.	Brain Central	0	750	750
9.	Kothi Bagh Higher Secondary School	Lal chowk Central	750	0	750
10.	Imami Public School (Co ed)	Shalimar Central	250	500	750
11.	Iqbal Islamia Mission High School (Co-education)	Kralsangri Central	1000	1000	2000
12.	Govt. Boys High School	Harwan Central	1000	0	1000
Grand Total			6000	6000	12000

### Data Collection Tools

The tools used for the relevant data collection were:

#### Self-perception inventory:

The Belbin's self-perception inventory was administered for data collection for the self-concept among young adolescents, with two extents: 1) the Real Self, and 2) the Ideal Self.

### Statistical Methods

Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were administered for data analysis and making inferences.

### DATA INTERPRETATION

The details of statistical treatment and the results obtained have been arranged in a tabular form.

Table 2. Mean comparison of the rural and urban adolescent on real self

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Rural	6000	284	13.0	8.75	Sig at 0.01
Urban	6000	30002.37	9.85		

Table 2 gives a comparison of two groups of students i.e. rural adolescent students and urban adolescent students with N=6000 in both cases, on the real self dimension of self-concept inventory.

The results revealed that the two groups of students i.e. urban and rural differ significantly in their real selves. This result indicates that the hypothesis which reads, urban and rural students do not differ significantly in their mental health towards real self stands rejected. However, the mean scores of urban students are higher than the mean scores of rural students which indicates that the group with a higher mean score is more stable, self-evaluative than the group with lower scores.

Table 3. Mean comparison of the rural and urban adolescents on the ideal self

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Rural	6000	286	12.05	8.6	Sig at 0.01
Urban	6000	30002.81	9.21		

Table 3 gives a comparison of two groups of students i.e. rural adolescent students and urban adolescent students With N=6000 in both cases, on the ideal self dimension of self-concept inventory. The results depicted that the two groups of students i.e. urban and rural differ significantly in their Ideal selves. This result indicates that the hypothesis which reads, urban and rural students do not differ significantly in their self-concept towards the real self dimension stands rejected. However, the mean scores of urban students are higher than the mean scores of rural students which indicates that the group with a higher mean score has a higher level of self-evaluation self aspiration.

Table 4. Mean comparison of the rural boys with urban boys on real self

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Rural boys	3000	142	8.54	5.41	Sig at 0.01
Urban boys	3000	151.57	4.64		

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Table 4 gives a comparison of two groups of students i.e. rural boys and urban boys With N=3000 in both cases, on the real self dimension of self-concept inventory.

The findings revealed that the two groups of students i.e. urban boys and rural boys differ significantly in their real selves. This result indicates that the hypothesis which reads, urban and rural boys do not differ significantly in their self-concept towards real self dimension stands rejected. However, the mean scores of urban students are higher than the mean scores of rural students which indicates that the group with higher mean score have a higher level of self-evaluation than the group with lower scores.

Table 5. *Mean comparison of the rural boys with urban boys on the ideal self*

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Rural boys	3000	143	7.81	5.69	Sig at 0.01
Urban boys	3000	151.87	3.51		

Table 5 gives a comparison of two groups of students i.e. rural boys and urban boys with N=3000 in both the cases, on the ideal self dimension of self-concept inventory.

The results depicted that the two groups of students' i.e. urban boys and rural boys differ significantly in their ideal selves. This result indicates that the hypothesis which reads, urban and rural boys do not differ significantly in their self-concept towards ideal self dimension stands rejected. However, the mean scores of urban boys are higher than the mean scores of rural boys which clearly indicates that the group with higher mean scores had higher aspirations than the group with lower scores.

Table 6. Mean comparison of the rural girls with urban girls on real self

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Rural girls	3000	142	4.47	7.04	Sig at 0.01
Urban girls	3000	150.8	5.2		

Table 6 gives a comparison of two groups of students i.e. rural girls and urban girls with N=3000 in both the cases, on the real self dimension of self-concept inventory.

The results showed that the two groups of students' i.e. urban girls and rural girls differ significantly in their real selves. This result indicates that the hypothesis which reads, urban and rural girls do not differ significantly in their self-concept towards real self dimension stands rejected. However, the mean scores of urban girls are higher than the mean scores of rural girls which indicates that the group with a higher mean score has a higher level of self-evaluation than the group with lower scores.

Table 7. Mean comparison of the rural girls with urban girls on the ideal self

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Rural girls	3000	143	4.2	6.11	Sig at 0.01
Urban girls	3000	150.9	5.7		

Table 7 gives a comparison of two groups of students i.e. rural girls and urban girls with N=3000 in both the cases, on the Ideal self dimension of self-concept inventory.

The results pointed out that the two groups of students' i.e. urban girls and rural girls differ significantly in their ideal selves. This result indicates that the hypothesis which reads, urban and rural girls do not differ significantly in their self-concept towards the Ideal self dimension stands rejected. However, the mean scores of urban girls are higher than the mean scores of rural girls which indicates that the group with a higher mean score has a higher level of self-evaluation than the group with lower scores.



### Findings:

Based on analysis and interpretation, the findings of the present study revealed that urban adolescent students have a higher level of self-evaluation and higher aspiration than rural adolescent students. The study also revealed that urban boys have a higher level of self-evaluation and higher aspiration than rural boys. The study further depicted that urban girls have a higher level of self-evaluation and higher aspirations than rural girls.

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