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## Self Esteem: A Study of Boys versus Girls

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**Abstract:**

*Self esteem is a term that describes how a person judges oneself. It reveals what a person thinks about his or her own worth. It is a crucial phenomenon because low self esteem can lead to depression and inferiority complex. In order to learn about self esteem, the research has been conducted on hundred individuals. Out of which, fifty are boys and fifty are girls. The sample size is of age group 18-21. The research has been conducted to investigate the general level of self esteem among the youth. Also, it gave an insight about the relationship between gender and self esteem. It was found that the girls have low self esteem as compared to the boys.*

**Keywords:** self esteem, phenomenon, depression, inferiority complex.

### 1. Introduction

“In youth, it was a way I had,  
To do my best to please.  
And change, with every passing lad  
To suit his theories.  
But now I know the things I know  
And do the things I do,  
And if you do not like me so,  
To hell, my love, with you.”

— Dorothy Parker,

Many early theories suggested that self-esteem is a basic human need or motivation. American psychologist Abraham Maslow included self-esteem in his hierarchy of needs. According to him, individuals cannot grow without the fulfillment of the self-esteem need. Also, he suggested that individuals aspire for self-actualization as well. The model given by him is-

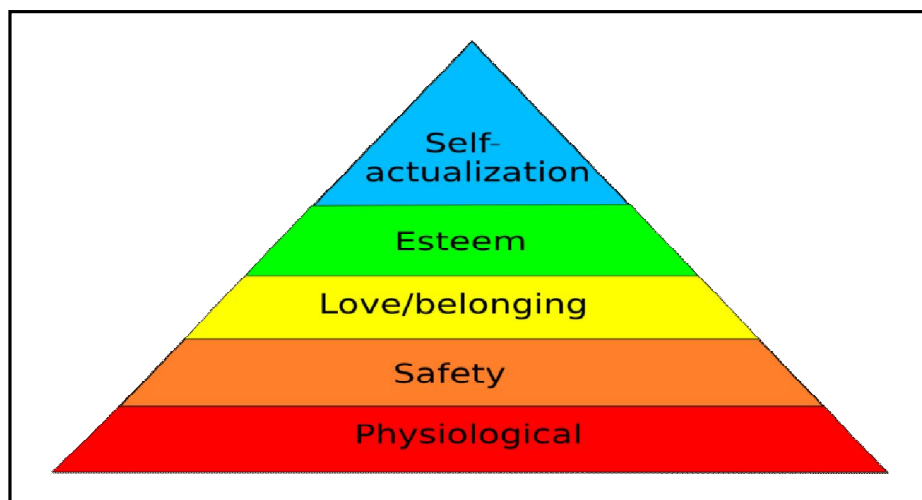


Figure 1

Self-esteem is important because it is concerned about ourselves and about our sense of personal value. Thus, it affects the way we are and the way we are related to everybody else in this world. Modern theories of self-esteem explores the reasons humans are motivated to maintain a high regard for themselves. Sociometer theory explains that self-esteem is related to one's level of status and acceptance in ones' social group. Terror management theory relates self-esteem to a protective function and reduces anxiety about life and death. Carl Rogers, American psychologist, exposed that the origin of problems for many people is that they hate themselves and they consider themselves to be unvaluable and unworthy of being loved; thus the importance he gave to unconditional acceptance of the client. Infact, the concept of self-esteem is approached since then in humanistic psychology as an undeniable right for every person.

### *1.1. Factors That Influence Self-Esteem*

- Our own thoughts and perceptions
- The way other people react to us
- Our experiences at different places like school, home, work place, society
- The way we think about our disability, illness or injury
- Culture or religion, we belong to
- Our status in society
- Our relationships with closed ones

## **2. Literature Review**

Baldwin and Hoffmann (2002) founded in their research that children experience a fall in self esteem during adolescence years, which is considered a critical transition period for them. The decline begins early in girls, that is, at age 12. On the other hand, boys experience it at a later age, that is, 14. Youth having high self-esteem are happy and feel worthy. They believe that they are equal to others and can bring a change in whatever they do. In other words, they are motivated. Youth having low self-esteem feel rejected and dissatisfied. They have a negative approach towards life.

A study by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry showed that Low self-esteem can lead to mental, emotional and health issues. It can even lead to drug abuse, suicide, violence, and alcohol. Also, a low and negative self-esteem in adolescence is associated with depression in both boys and girls. It leads to eating disorders, especially in girls. A research done by university of Florida (2007) revealed that body weight is a major factor that affects self esteem of children. Also, self esteem has a huge impact on the mental health of the youth.

A report from the National Survey of Children's Health (2007) showed that 10.4% of 6-17 year old children in Kentucky exhibit problematic social behaviors as compared to 8.8% nationwide. The most common type of behaviors were being disobedient, arguing too much, bullying, being stubborn, being cruel or irritable to others.

A research by Eithier KA, Lewis, Milan S, and Ickovics (2006), and Division of Maternal and Child Health, Department for Public Health. 2009 showed that teen pregnancy in teenage is a big issue due to lack of self esteem in girls. Also, it was observed that adolescents who have lower self-esteem have sex earlier and had risky partners. A study by Hadley, Elizabeth and Moore (2008) and Birndorf, Ryan, Auinger, and Aten, (2009) showed that female adolescents concern more about physical appearance than males and boys have high self-esteem as compared to girls.

## **3. Objectives of the Study**

- To evaluate general level of self-esteem among boys and girls
- To determine whether an individual need to work on his/her self-image.
- To learn more about his/her true sense of self.

## **4. Research Methodology of the Study**

- The Research is done on 100 people (sample size).
- Self Esteem of 50 boys and 50 girls of age group 18-21 is compared.
- A Questionnaire is selected and sample is asked to examine the statements and indicate the degree to which they apply to them or describe them.
- In order to receive the most accurate results, sample is asked to answer each question as honestly as possible.
- After finishing the test, they receive a Snapshot Report with an introduction, a graph and a personalized interpretation for test scores.

## **5. Data Analysis and interpretation**

The analysis is done on the basis of questionnaire. It is shown in a tabulated form. The graphical representation has also been done.

Serial No.	Boys	Girls	Serial No.	Boys	Girls
1	74	44	26	63	41
2	88	56	27	70	54
3	89	74	28	80	51
4	90	84	29	81	75
5	50	55	30	79	27
6	82	67	31	59	30
7	70	88	32	54	48
8	71	78	33	62	49
9	66	62	34	74	53
10	60	49	35	78	76
11	85	65	36	90	66
12	40	78	37	89	70
13	60	63	38	81	60
14	50	68	39	78	80
15	55	69	40	76	23
16	75	71	41	59	33
17	68	72	42	62	59
18	69	82	43	63	61
19	56	67	44	87	86
20	91	64	45	68	84
21	58	43	46	59	41
22	62	40	47	77	40
23	66	33	48	70	57
24	72	20	49	82	30
25	83	25	50	67	49

Table 1: Percentage of self esteem as collected from the sample

	AVERAGE	MAXIMUM	MINIMUM
<b>BOYS</b>	70.76	91	40
<b>GIRLS</b>	57.2	88	20

Table 2: Data Statistics

BOYS				
C.I		X	FREQUENCY	CF
10	20	15	0	0
20	30	25	0	0
30	40	35	1	1
40	50	45	2	3
50	60	55	9	12
60	70	65	14	26
70	80	75	11	37
80	90	85	12	49
90	100	95	1	50
			<b>50</b>	

Table 3: Data Analysis (Boys)

GIRLS					
C.I		X	FREQUENCY	CF	
10	20	15	1	1	
20	30	25	5	6	
30	40	35	4	10	
40	50	45	8	18	
50	60	55	8	26	
60	70	65	11	37	
70	80	75	8	45	
80	90	85	5	50	
90	100	95	0	50	
			<b>50</b>		

Table 4: Data Analysis (Girls)

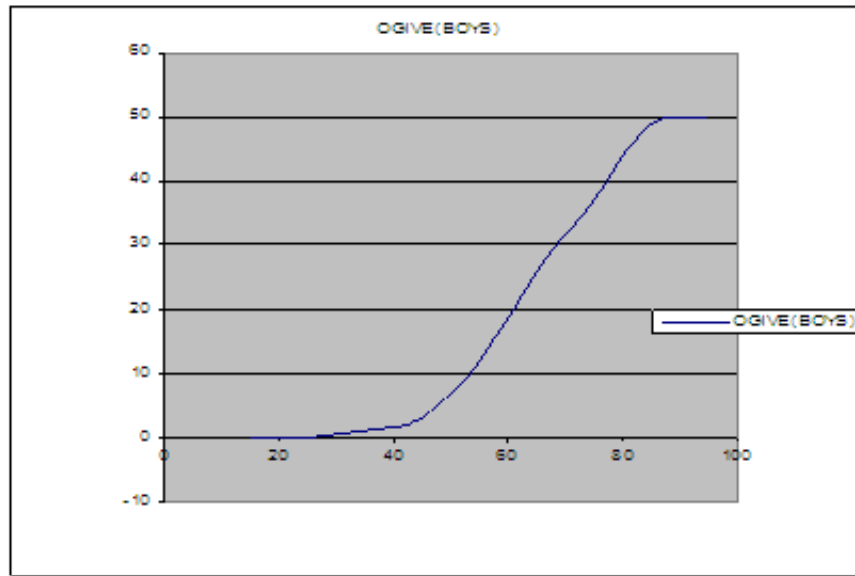


Figure 2: Boys

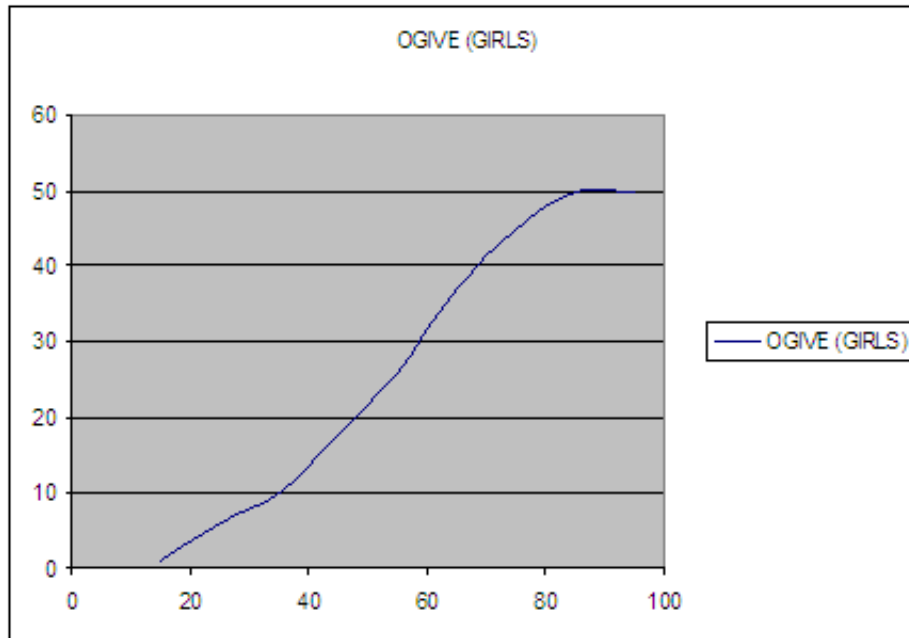


Figure 3: Girls

## 6. Findings

- The Average of the Self-Esteem of boys is greater than girls. Thus, boys self esteem is greater than girls.
- The Maximum Value of Self Esteem of Boys is greater than the Maximum Value of Self Esteem of Girls.
- The Minimum Value of Self Esteem of Boys is greater than the Minimum Value of Self Esteem of Girls.
- The Ogive of Boys is Steeper than the Ogive of Girls.
- Thus, it can be said from the sample that the Girls need to work more on their Self Esteem.

## 7. How to improve Self Esteem

Self-esteem depends on our feelings, thoughts, and opinions that we have about ourselves. It keeps on changing depending on our thought process. The more negative we think about ourselves, the more our self esteem becomes. Thus, one should work over the thought process and should feel good about himself/ herself. Some of the things to try for better self esteem are:

- Reduce self criticism
- Feel good about your strengths and improve your weakness.
- Concentrate on trying rather than perfection
- Learn from your mistakes.
- Reduce inferiority complex about
- Keep telling yourself that no one can be perfect at everything
- Keep trying new things and do give credit to yourself
- Set certain goals for yourself
- Take pride in yourself and your achievements and ideas
- Appreciate compliments
- Be helpful and try to make a contribution in society
- Exercise to keep active and fit
- Relax to reduce stress

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**ANNEXURES****Annexure 1 QUESTIONNAIRE****INCREASE YOUR SELF-AWARENESS—HOW'S YOUR SELF-ESTEEM ?**

**INSTRUCTIONS-** ANSWER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS **HONESTLY**. NEXT TO EACH QUESTION WRITE 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 DEPENDING ON WHICH ANSWER BEST DESCRIBES YOU.

1= Very Often

2= Fairly Often

3= Sometimes

4=Once in a great while

5=Practically Never

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How often do you have the feeling that there is nothing that you can do well?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When you talk in front of a class or group of people of your own age, how often do you feel worried or afraid?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How often do you feel that you have handled yourself well at a social gathering?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. How often do you have the feeling that you can do everything well?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 5. How often are you comfortable when starting a conversation with people you don't know?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How often do you feel self conscious?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 7. How often do you feel that you are a successful person?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 8. How often are you troubled with shyness?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 9. How often do you feel inferior to most people you know?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 10. How often do you feel that you are a worthless individual?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 11. How often do you feel confident that your success in your future job or career is assured?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 12. How often do you feel sure of yourself when among strangers?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 13. How often do you feel confident that some day people will look up to you and respect you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 14. In general, How often do you feel confident about your abilities?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 15. How often do you worry about how well you get along with other people?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 16. How often do you feel that you dislike yourself?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 17. How often do you feel so discouraged with yourself that you wonder whether anything is worthwhile?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 18. How often do you worry about whether other people like to be with you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 19. When you talk in front of a class or group of people of your own age, how often are you pleased with your performance?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 20. How often do you feel sure of yourself when you speak in a class discussion?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Course pursuing \_\_\_\_\_

Age-( Please Tick) 18- 22 \_\_\_\_\_ or 22 above \_\_\_\_\_ Sex (M/ F) \_\_\_\_\_

Email id \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_