

# Effect of Self-Esteem Enhancement Program on level of self-esteem among School Children: A Pre Experimental Study

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## Abstract

An experimental study was conducted to assess the effect of self-esteem enhancement programme on the self-esteem of school going adolescents in selected schools of Kottayam district. The research design used was one group pretest, post test design. The study was conducted among 8<sup>th</sup> standard Malayalam medium students of a selected school in Kottayam district of Kerala State. The sample consisted of 62 students, recruited using purposive sampling. The data were collected, using self report questionnaire- Socio demographic data and Self-esteem inventory (Thomas 1984). Structured intervention programme comprised of 10 sessions and each session was for 45 minutes. Post assessment was done one week after the structured intervention programme, using the same tool. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings revealed that majority of the study group were having average self - esteem, there was significant improvement in the mean self- esteem of sample in the post assessment. There was no significant relationship between adolescent's self-esteem and demographic variables. Based on the findings of study it is important to focus on primary prevention, and programmes to enhance self-esteem of adolescents should be formulated and implemented.

**Keywords:** Self-esteem, self-esteem enhancement programme, School students.

## Introduction

Self esteem is a person's personal judgment of self worth. The most basic task for one's mental, emotional and social health is the construction of positive self esteem. According to Rosenberg self esteem is one's positive or negative attitude towards oneself and one's evaluation of one's own thoughts and feelings<sup>1</sup>. The beliefs and evaluations people hold about themselves determine who they are, what they can do and what they can become<sup>2</sup>.

Self-esteem is the evaluative and affective dimension of the self-concept and is considered as

equivalent to self-estimation and self-worth<sup>3</sup>. It refers to a person's global appraisal of his/her positive or negative value, based on the scores a person gives him/herself in different roles and domains in life<sup>4</sup>.

Empirical studies over the last 15 years indicate that the self-esteem is an important psychological factor contributing to health and quality of life<sup>3</sup>. Recently several studies have shown that subjective wellbeing significantly correlate with high self-esteem and that self-esteem shares significant variance in both mental wellbeing and happiness<sup>4</sup>. Self-esteem has been found to be the most dominant and powerful predictor of happiness. Indeed, while low self-esteem

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leads to maladjustment, positive self-esteem, internal standards and aspirations actively seem to contribute to wellbeing. Self-concept, identity and self-esteem are among key elements of mental health<sup>5</sup>.

Adolescence is a critical period of life which is associated with extensive changes in cognition and structure. Adolescence is the last step of growing up during which parents and educators can actively help them to find their life path. Self-esteem plays a very important role for the development during this period. When adolescents have a strong self-concept they are able to better position themselves for learning and this in turn can facilitate a strong academic self-concept<sup>6</sup>.

Low self-esteem has been linked to numerous adolescent risk behaviors such as smoking, drug use and sexual activity. A large number of studies conducted in various cultures and populations supported the significance of self-esteem in adolescents. Adolescents, who have high self-esteem, always handle their stress and frustration in more appropriate ways<sup>5</sup>.

Adolescents with low self-esteem tend to be more depressed by the times they reach their mid-thirties. Having low self-esteem can affect our ability to perform and achieve in different aspects of our lives. There is a strong relationship between academic stress, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and suicidal ideation among students in secondary or high school and young adults. Adolescents may have varied level of self-esteem. There is great need for interventions to promote adolescents self-esteem in order to maintain healthy mental health of adolescents<sup>7</sup>.

## Materials and Methods

Quantitative research approach using pre experimental research design was adopted to find out the effect of self-esteem enhancement program and association between self-esteem and selected demographic variables. The study was conducted among 8<sup>th</sup> standard students. The study was conducted in a government high school in Kottayam. The study population comprised of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> standard Malayalam medium divisions. A total of 62 samples who met the inclusion criterion were selected by purposive sampling.

**Data collection instruments ad techniques:** The research tools used in the study were:-

1. Tool I – self-report questionnaire. Socio-demographic data.

This consisted of age, gender, parent's educational status, occupation, monthly income and type of family, birth order and number of children in the family.

2. Tool II – self-esteem inventory by Thomas (1984) is used in measurements of self-esteem level.

**Scoring:** Self-esteem inventory has 25 items and each item has five options like “strongly agree, agree, don't know, disagree, and strongly disagree. There are positive and negative items. Scores for positive items are 5, 4,3,2,1 and negative items 1, 2,3,4,5 respectively. Maximum score 12 minimum score 25. Based on scoring, self-esteem is divided into three levels. High, average and low

Score	Self-esteem level
96-125	High
73-95	Average
25-72	Low

**Structured intervention program:** The intervention program is a modified version of the intervention program developed by Jose in 2006 an unpublished Ph.D. thesis. The program consists of 10 sessions. Each session consist of 45 minutes. Facilitator will impart information with the help of information sheet and conduct group discussions. Each Session begins with a review of preview session. Students are guided in the active participation of program.

After obtaining permission from concerned authority, a pilot study was conducted. The investigator obtained permission from human ethical committee, Medical College Hospital, Kottayam prior to the study. The teachers of the school, students and parents were also informed about the commencement of study. The investigator went to the class established a good rapport with students. The purpose of study was explained and students' willingness to participate in the study was ensured before starting the study. On the next day of the pre

assessment structured intervention program was started for the students. It comprised of ten sessions. Each session consist of 45 minutes. This took three weeks to complete the program. One session per day, for each group of students separately. One week after completing the program post assessment was done using the same self-esteem inventory.

## Results

### • Socio-demographic data of study subjects

In the present study 85.5% of the study participants were males and Hindus (59.7%) Among the study participants, majority 82.3% of father's were laborers' and 80.6% of mothers were house wives. Majority of parents (71%) were having educational status S.S.L.C and above. Majority 74.2% of study participants were from nuclear family. Among the sample, 67.7% were from family with two children. Majority (53%) of study sample were eldest in the family.

### • Effect of self-esteem enhancement programme

**Table 1: Frequency distribution and percentage of self-esteem score in pre and post assessment**

(n = 62)

Self Esteem score	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Pre Assessment</b>		
96-125 (High)	8	12.9
73-95 (Average)	35	56.5
25-72 (Low)	19	30.6
<b>Post Assessment</b>		
96-125 (High)	17	27.4
73-95 (Average)	39	62.9
25-72 (Low)	6	9.7

**Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and ' t ' value of adolescent's self-esteem with respect to self-esteem enhancement programme.**

(n = 62)

Self-esteem score	Mean	SD	t value	p value
Pre Assessment	80.73	15.09	8.94	0.001***
Post Assessment	90.48	14.41		

\*\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.001$

Table 2 reveals that the obtained 't' value is significant at 0.001 level. This shows that there is significant difference in adolescent's self-esteem with respect to self-esteem enhancement programme.

## Discussion

In the present study, 85.5% of study participants were males. Investigator assumes that male students are more because the study was conducted in a Government school and female students had opportunity to study in a near by Govt. Aided Girls High School. Ritchie, (2001) found that perceived level of self-esteem and hopefulness did not significantly differ between boys and girls. Study findings revealed that out of the 62 participants, majority (82.3%) of fathers were labourers and 80.6% of mothers were housewives. Another finding is that majority of student's fathers 71% were having educational status S.S.L.C and above. In the present study majority (62.9%) of students were having average self-esteem. The study was conducted in a govt. school; Majority of students were from low socio economic status. A few, public schools and aided schools are functioning in the locality. So children from middle and high socio economic status were sent to these schools. Present study indicates that 74.2% of adolescents were from nuclear families Jose found that adolescents from joint families have higher self-esteem. In Joint families grant parents and other elders were present to give moral and spiritual guidance to support the children. In the present study no significant relationship was found between self-esteem and type of family<sup>8</sup>.

Findings of studies revealed that high birth order associated with poor self-concept. In the present study majority (53.2%) of sample were eldest in the family. No significant relationship was found between birth order and self esteem<sup>9</sup>.

In the present study there was significant increase in the self-esteem scores of sample in the post test as compared to pre test self-esteem scores. This indicates that the structured intervention programme was effective in enhancing self-esteem. Jose in 2006 also found that a significant increase in the self-esteem of experimental group after the intervention of Adolescent Wellness Enhancement Programme<sup>8</sup>. Self-esteem was found to have significant positive relationship with all other variables namely

subjective well-being, lifestyle practices, knowledge on pubertal changes, adjustment and spiritual well-being of adolescents. Positive feelings about the self during development have been argued to promote psychological well-being and stability<sup>3</sup>.

No significant association was found between self-esteem and demographic variables such as sex, religion, educational status and occupational status of parents, type of family, number of children and birth order. The investigator assumes that this may be due to the fact that majority of sample share the same socio economic status and cultural background.

**Ethical clearance-** Taken from Institutional Ethics committee of Govt Medical College, Kottayam.

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**Conflict of Interest -** Nil.

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