



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

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Abstract

The main purpose of the paper is to examine the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in English of higher secondary students. A total sample of 300 higher secondary Plus One students (142 boys and 158 girls) were randomly selected for the study. Normative survey method was employed for data collection. The Rosenberg's Self-Esteem scale was used to collect the data. Students' achievement marks were collected from the mark register. Three research questions were framed to guide this study. Results revealed that there is a significant and positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in English. Also, there is significant difference between boys and girls in self-esteem and achievement in English where girls excelled boys. Findings showed that private school students were high in self-esteem and achievement in English when compared to government school students.

Keywords: *Self-Esteem, Academic Achievement in English, Higher Secondary Students, Government and Private Schools*



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1. Introduction

The term self-esteem comes from a Greek word meaning "reverence for self." The "self" part of self-esteem pertains to the values, beliefs and attitudes that we hold about ourselves. The "esteem" part of self-esteem describes the value and worth that one gives oneself. Simplistically, self-esteem is the acceptance of ourselves for who and what we are at any given time in our lives.

Self-esteem is the complication of feelings about ourselves that guides our behaviour, influences our attitudes, and drives our motivation. Self-esteem can be described as a value that processes information within self-imagination of individual and it is caused by an individual's beliefs about all attributes and characteristics within him or her.

According to the definition of Branden (1969), there are three key components of self-esteem:

- Self-esteem is an essential human need that is vital for survival and a normal healthy development.

- Self-esteem arises automatically from within based on a person's beliefs and consciousness.
- Self-esteem occurs in conjunction with a person's thoughts, behaviours, feelings, and actions.

Factors that can influence Self-Esteem

There are different factors that can influence self-esteem. Genetic factors that help shape overall personality can play a role, but it is often our experiences that form the basis for overall self-esteem. Those who consistently receive overly critical or negative assessments from caregivers, family members, and friends, for example, will likely experience problems with low self-esteem.

Student confidence is vital to his or her success. The amount of student self-confidence a child possesses will affect every aspect of his or her educational goals. One of the best ways to improve confidence is to engage students in various self-esteem activities at school. By boosting self-esteem in students, children who may come from less than desirable home settings can learn skills that foster a sense of community and respect. Students' self-esteem is directly related to their school performance. By ensuring that student self-esteem is healthy, the environment for learning becomes one where education and learning thrives. Self-esteem activities for students are an excellent way to help boost a child's confidence and increase learning. Many self-esteem activities for students can be used including those that are used in an individual as well as classroom setting.

Bahareh et al. (2011) investigated the relationship between self-esteem, age and gender on one hand and speaking skills on the other hand and found significant relationship between self-esteem and speaking skill with fluency exerting the most influence. Concerning the relationship between gender and speaking skills, no statistically significant association was found. James et al. (2006) in their study of the relationship between communication apprehension and self-esteem reported that from two college student samples indicate highly consistent relationship across age group and occupational types. Aryana (2010) highlighted the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among pre-university students and suggested that high self-esteem is an important factor and strengthen the prediction of academic achievement in students. Arshad (2015) revealed significant and positive relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of university students.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in English among higher secondary students.

2. Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to determine the relationship between students' self-esteem and academic achievement in English.

3. Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to guide this study.

- Is there any significant relationship between students' self-esteem and achievement in English?
- Is there any significant difference between boys and girls in self-esteem and achievement in English?
- Is there any significant difference between Government and Private school students in self-esteem and achievement in English?

4. Methodology

The subjects for the study were drawn from selected higher secondary schools within Chennai of Tamil Nadu State. Stratified random sampling was used in the selection of the schools. The sample comprised of students from Government and Private schools. In all, a total of 300 higher secondary Plus One students (142 boys and 158 girls) were randomly selected for the study. The target population for this study were the students in Plus One higher secondary. This category of students were selected on the assumption that they were matured enough to form independent opinion about self-esteem, their confidence towards the subject and their achievement.

5. Instrumentation

The investigator required an assessment of level of self-esteem of higher secondary students. The Rosenberg's Self-Esteem was used to collect data from the students. It is a 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is believed to be uni-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Give "Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4 points. Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem. The achievement scores in English were collected from the mark register.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of the self-esteem scale is 0.84. On the basis of the magnitude of these indices the instrument were found to be adequate for testing purposes and were subsequently group administered by the investigator. With the assistance of the

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class teachers, the completed questionnaires were collected from the subjects and scored accordingly.

6. Operational Definition

a. Self-Esteem

In the present study, self-esteem is how one value himself; it is how we perceive one's value to the world and how valuable one think he/she to others. Self-esteem affects our trust in others, our relationships, our work – nearly every part of our lives.

b. Academic Achievement in English

Student achievement measures the amount of academic content a student learns in a determined amount of time. In this study, student's achievement in English refers to the marks scored by the student in English in the Annual Examination.

7. Data Analysis

Data from the study were subjected to appropriate statistical analysis to be able to draw up inferences from it. The t-test and Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient were used for data analyses.

8. Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1: Is there any significant relationship between students' self-esteem and achievement in English?

Table 1 Showing Pearson's Product Moment correlation co-efficient between Self-Esteem and Academic Achievement in English

Variables	Self-Esteem	Academic Achievement in English
Self-Esteem	-	0.428**

From the above table, it is inferred that there exists significant and positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in English at 0.01 level.

Research Question 2: Is there any significant difference between boys and girls in self-esteem and achievement in English?

Table 2 Showing significant mean difference between boys and girls in Self-esteem and Academic Achievement in English

Variables	Gender				t value	P value
	Boys (N=142)		Girls (N=158)			
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Self- Esteem	14.12	2.701	16.12	2.369	3.761	<0.001**
Academic Achievement in English	13.00	5.238	15.62	6.320	3.872	<0.001**

Note: ** Significant at 0.01 level

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant difference between boys and girls in self-esteem and achievement in English at 0.01 level. From the mean scores, it is observed that girls (16.12) have high self-esteem and high scores in Mathematics (15.62) than boys (14.12, 13.00). This may be due to the fact that girls tend to put more effort in achieving their goals and hardworking than boys. Also, they put the blame for failure on themselves like lack of effort and hard work whereas boys may project some other reason for their failure.

Research Question 3: Is there any significant difference between Government and Private school students in self-esteem and achievement in English?

Table 3 Showing significant mean difference between students studying in Government and Private schools in Self-Esteem and Academic Achievement in English

Variables	Type of School				t value	P value
	Government (N=153)		Private (N=147)			
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Self-Esteem	14.03	2.682	16.03	2.948	5.288	<0.001**
Academic Achievement in English	12.98	6.313	17.02	5.693	7.537	<0.001**

Note : ** Significant at 0.01 level

It is inferred from the above table that there exists significant difference between Government and Private school students in self-esteem and achievement in English at 0.01 level. From the mean scores, it is observed that Private school students (16.03) have high and high achievement scores (17.02) than Government school students (14.03, 12.98). This may be due to the fact that Private schools are functioning under the Management and they provide necessary infrastructural facilities as well as well qualified staff to gain a good reputation in

the society and also conduct remedial teaching sessions for the betterment of students when compared to Government schools.

9. Educational Implications

From the above findings, it is concluded that self-esteem plays a crucial role in enhancing achievement in English. Hence, it becomes imperative to foster self-esteem among students in the following ways.

- Analyze one's strengths and weaknesses. One should try to get a supportive friend or relative to help with these lists, as people with depression are not usually in the most objective frame of mind.
- One should think positively about themselves. Identify and challenge any negative thoughts about oneself such as 'I am loser', 'I never do anything right', or 'No one really likes me'.
- Pay special attention to our personal hygiene.
- One should wear clean clothes that make us to feel good.
- Eat good food as part of a healthy, balanced diet.
- Regular exercise should develop one's self-esteem.
- Most importantly, one should reduce the stress level.
- Set for ourselves a challenge that one can realistically complete.
- Be nice to people, and do nice things for them.
- Spend more time with those hold us near and dear. At the same time, try to enlarge our social circle by making an effort to meet and befriend people.
- Avoid people and places that treat us badly or make us feel bad about ourselves. This could mean being more assertive.

10. Conclusion

Motivation and interest are the most essential aspects determining success in learning the English language and which can also help in having positive attitude towards English. Teachers should inculcate intrinsic motivation among the students to enhance interest in the subject. Grammar should be taught using real examples so as to make them confident in learning the language. Achievement in English could be improved by giving group activities and henceforth their self-esteem will be raised and in turn be able to achieve better in English. When they work in groups, communicative ability would also be improved among students. Thus, to fulfil the dream of Late Dr.A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, to make our country

proud, each and every citizen should be well versed in English, our universal language so as to compete with other developed countries.

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