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### Relationship between self-concept and self-esteem with Psychopathology in boy and Girl Students in Babol High Schools

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The aim of this study was to describe and compare the self-concept, self-esteem and psychopathological symptoms in 15-18 years old girls and boys in Babol high schools. **Objective:** We considered the correlations between these variables, too. 800 boys and girls (100 boys and 100 girls of every age category in high school and pre university) were fulfilled the self-esteem scale, self-concept questionnaire and psychopathological symptoms inventory (SCL-90-R). Data were analyzed with multiple ANOVA and Tukey post hoc tests and was using statistical software SPSS22. Pearson correlation was used to determine correlations between variables ( $P < 0.05$ ). **Results:** The results showed that there was a significant difference with age in self-concept, self-esteem and the quality of psychopathological symptoms between ages 15-18. Also there were no significant differences due to gender in self-concept and self-esteem, but girls had significantly higher scores in psychopathological symptoms than boys. **Conclusion:** The results indicated significant negative correlations between self-concept and self-esteem and many of psychopathological symptoms in both boys and girls. The existence of significant inverse relationships between self-concept/self-esteem and psychopathological symptoms suggest that self-concept and self-esteem may be consider as indicators of mental health. Also intervention programmers that promote self-concept and self-esteem in the prevention of psychopathological problems are suggested as necessity.

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, research about self-concept and self-esteem has been prevalence in the form of recognizing maintenance factors against psych problems. Their importance in personal health, mental health, sophisticated success, social communication, educational performance and like, has concentrated the attention of so many research projects in social and human science. Nevertheless, prevalence of research in the ground of self-concept, there is some conceptual confusion and ambiguity [2]. Therefore, researchers has used of self-concept, image of self, self-esteem, self-acceptance and other psychological words. In differentiating among self-concept and self-esteem, almost authors have related self-concept to recognition and psych self-consciousness by the aid of self-esteem for evaluating indicators of affection. Self-concept is for consciousness in which includes all activities and psych and recognition contents (concepts, understanding, image, judge, reason, self-design, etc.) judging about self-forms consciousness inner system organizations. These judges are in the two different forms: descriptive and evaluative, descriptive judge indicates who we are? According to age, gender, job, bodily characteristic, behaviors forms, and like, evaluative judge has been considered by our characteristics and what do we think about them? Self-esteem includes evaluating self-concept, consciousness.

Relation among self-concept (descriptive) and self-esteem (evaluative) does have chronically nature. Self-description is related to positive self-evaluation in which support person system. In this case, self-descriptive indication includes evaluation indication, they includes some degree of evaluation. Therefore, differentiating recognition form of psych indicator is very hard, and then self-concept word includes the two indicators. Cardenal & Fierro (2003) has defined self-concept as an evaluation indication and descriptive about them and reasoning self-concept provides a method in which persons know themselves, evaluate and provide [5]. Also,

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this researcher indicates self-concept and self-esteem are always used for each other; self-esteem is evaluative indicator in self-concept and self-consciousness.

The result of study on the difference of self-concept and self-esteem is spread. In a research in which shows gender difference, the women showed lower self-concept [17]. In addition, in other studies defeated to find meaningful relation among self-concept [8] or self-esteem [12], and about psych pathology factors, in many studies women does sowed higher level of these factors. Chabrol *et al* (2004) has found self-esteem in boys is higher and depression is lower in meaningful way. The result of their research proposes the difference in self-esteem among boys and girls is related to the frequency of intermediate to high depression factors [6].

Self-esteem is one of variables in which has been studied spread in behavioral science. But, there are some problems in understanding the method of developing self-esteem in the life long run. Some studies has shown the level of self-esteem is high in childhood, then decreases in youth and in adulthood increases gradually and then decreases highly in old age. Self-esteem does have continued in the long run comparing to other personal characteristics. Trzeniewski (2004) have done a research on persons in the age of 25-96 year's old in about 8 years. The result of study showed self-esteem does have low stability in the long run; the mean correlation test-retest is 0.43. Also, the stability of self-esteem decreases in old age. This tendency shows the age differences in narration and stability. This tendency could not describe the age difference in narration and stability. The level of stability does not change to gender, race or social-economic situation. In addition, self-esteem level increases at the beginning to the middle of old age linearly. This linear procedure is stable for gender, race and social-economic situation. Also, because of positive experience, experience leads to higher self-esteem in all ages, but could not avoid decreasing self-esteem in old age. Also the result of research shows the person by higher self-esteem level does have higher stability in all the life from social view. In general, the result showed self-esteem is an important psych structure [16].

Researches analyzing the relation among self-concept/self-esteem and psych pathology factors in Childs, youth and adult showed reverse relation among these structures. Positive relation among self-esteem and psych health and mental has been reported [19]. Garaigordobil and Bernaras (2009) showed there is negative relation among self-concept and self-esteem to the nervous modes of youth [9]. Some researchers showed negative relation among self-concept/ self-esteem and inner personal sensitivity and depression [11]. The other researchers showed high self-esteem is a protective factor against depression factors (15), whereas low self-esteem is forecasting factors for depression [4] Fathi-Ashtianin *et al* (2007) reported increase in self-concept and self-esteem is along with decreasing agitation and there is negative relation among self-concept/self-esteem and depression [7]. Some researchers showed reverse relation among self-esteem and agitation, and shows youth by high self-esteem does show lower level of descriptive- mode agitation [8, 18].

Studies about bodily self-concept and also the relation among them does show reverse relation to psych pathology factors and some contradictory differences among boys and girls. We tried to describe self-concept characteristics, self-esteem and psych pathology factors in age dimension of youth. Also, we examined the relation among self-concept, self-esteem to psych pathology factors and subscales.

### **Methodology:**

The method of recent research is of comparing-causality one. Researcher has describes, compared and examined the relation among research variables in spread society from age view in order to reach study targets. Statistical society of study includes all girl and boy students in high school and pre-university level in Babol city. 400 boys and 400 girls from different level of education have been selected by the aid of random sampling and multi-stages as a study statistical society. In order to reach to the target of measurement, three measurement instruments have been evaluated. We have used of Rosenberg self-esteem scale (1965) in measuring self-esteem. Mohammadi (2005) has examined stability of questionnaires and reported the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and half making by 0.68, 0.69 and retest coefficient of scale is 0.77, 0.73, and 0.78 after one week [13]. We have used of Karl Rodgers self-concept scale in measuring self-concept. This scale includes two forms of A, B. in which anyone does have 25 similar materials. A form measures person view to real self (what is) and B form measures person view to ideal self (how would be). Mohammadi Kaji (2004) reported correlation among single and double scores in 67% scale and then this coefficient has been remedied by the aid of spearman brown method and this amount is 80% [14]. Fathi-Ashtiani *et al* (2007) has reported the confidence of questionnaire by Cronbach's alpha and confidence coefficient in a form 56% and in B form by 63% [7]. From psych pathology factors list (SCL-90-R) has been used for evaluating psych pathological factors [10]. this 90 questions test has evaluated 9 dimensions of psych pathology including bodily complaint, obsession and compulsion, sensitivity in interactional relation, depression, agitation, dispute, disease fear, paranoid thought, and psych disorder. Bagheri (1995) has reported the stability of test 0.80 [3].

At first we have done required coordination to province education and teaching general office in introducing to schools. In second stage, we have coordinated to school administrator and teachers by researchers. Then, educated groups have distributed questionnaires in schools in city. They are those who have been evaluated by researcher by questionnaire as if there was ambiguity in understanding questions, could help

them. We should mention, because there was so many questions in questionnaire and so many questionnaires in this research, in any referring to schools, we have completed one questionnaire. In this study, we have used of descriptive statistic and describing taste characteristic including mean and standard deviation. Also, in comparing research groups, we have used of t-test independent and variance analysis test and Toki pursuit test. Also, in examining relation among research variables, we have used of Pearson correlation coefficient.

### Results:

The result of variance analysis showed there is no meaningful difference in relation to age in self-concept ( $F=2.39$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) self-esteem ( $F=2.95$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and psych pathology ( $F=2.99$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) (table 1).

**Table 1:** The mean and standard deviation self-concept and self-esteem with psychopathological in different age groups.

	self-concept		self-esteem		psychopathological	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
15 years	10.83	8.36	31.61	4.22	57.93	41.62
16 years	9.95	7.42	31.47	4.67	59.57	40.40
17 years	10.50	8.12	31.49	5.10	58.19	40.38
18 years	10.88	8.28	30.23	4.62	57.20	39.94

In gender factor, the result of research shows there is no meaningful relation among girl and boy in self-concept ( $F=1.50$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and self-esteem ( $F=2.24$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) (tables 2 & 3).

**Table 2:** The mean, standard deviation and variable analysis of variance self-concept & self-esteem according to gender

		boys		girls		analysis of variance
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
self-concept	15 years	10.16	7.88	9.74	8.63	0.62
	16 years	10.27	7.55	10.61	7.42	0.87
	17 years	9.90	8.71	10.03	8.12	0.90
	18 years	10.63	7.59	9.86	8.28	0.74
self-esteem	15 years	32.30	3.85	31.14	4.43	1.36
	16 years	31.72	4.80	31.12	4.74	0.29
	17 years	30.68	4.59	31.03	5.10	0.88
	18 years	31.05	4.65	30.48	4.42	0.53

**Table 3:** The mean, standard deviation and variable analysis of variance psychopathology according to gender.

	Boys		girls		total		analysis of variance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Somatization	9.52	6.97	8.66	6.65	10.27	7.15	21.10
Obsession and Compulsion	8.79	6.41	8.47	6.30	9.07	6.50	3.50
Interpersonal sensitivity	7.63	6.14	6.93	5.64	8.23	6.48	17.84
Depression	9.41	8.26	8.23	7.53	10.42	8.73	27.90
Anxiety	5.33	3.63	4.75	5.31	5.83	6.36	13.37
Aggression	3.63	3.83	3.82	3.91	3.47	3.75	3.26
Phobia	1.59	2.61	1.31	2.52	1.83	2.67	15.45
Paranoid thoughts	4.57	3.64	4.84	3.86	4.33	3.42	7.92
Psychosis	3.13	4.03	3.03	3.98	3.22	4.08	0.83
Additional Questions	5.31	4.48	5.08	4.35	5.50	4.58	3.54
Overall coefficient of symptoms	0.65	0.45	0.61	0.42	0.69	0.47	11.90
Coefficient is a measure of discomfort	1.53	0.70	1.52	0.90	1.55	0.46	0.50
The sum of morbid symptoms	36.86	18.64	35.40	18.75	38.12	18.45	8.41
total score	58.95	40.63	55.16	38.26	62.22	42.33	11.90

Also, the result of Pearson correlation test showed there is meaningful and negative relation among self-concept/ self-esteem to all psychopathological factors in the two genders (table 4).

**Table 4:** Pearson Correlation coefficient between self-concept / self-esteem and psychopathology.

	self-concept			self-esteem		
	Boys	girls	total	Boys	girls	total
Somatization	0.09	0.12	0.10	0.12	0.24	0.20
Obsession and Compulsion	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.26	0.39	0.33
Interpersonal sensitivity	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28
Depression	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.33	0.44	0.40
Anxiety	0.18	0.12	0.15	0.19	0.25	0.23
Aggression	0.22	0.20	0.21	0.12	0.27	0.19
Phobia	0.18	0.12	0.14	0.17	0.19	0.19
Paranoid thoughts	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.18	0.27	0.22
Psychosis	0.22	0.19	0.20	0.22	0.31	0.27
Additional Questions	0.17	0.15	0.16	0.22	0.29	0.26
Overall coefficient of symptoms	0.26	0.30	0.28	0.29	0.40	0.35
Coefficient is a measure of discomfort	0.02	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.25	0.12
The sum of morbid symptoms	0.26	0.30	0.28	0.29	0.40	0.35
total score	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.30	0.42	0.37

### **Discussion and conclusion:**

The object of this research is to compare self-concept, self-esteem, and also the psych pathological factors in the boy and girl youth in the 15-18 years old and emphasis on age and gender differences. Also, examining the relation among self-esteem variables/ self-concept to psych pathological factors is of the objects of this research. About age difference, the study result showed there is no meaningful difference among age of youth to any study variables. These results are agreed to the result of Zeigler-Hill (2011) study. Non difference in different age in research variables could be described by similar characteristics in these eras of growth and life [20]. Perhaps this era was not so critical and special in which could influence on self-concept, self-esteem and even psych pathological indicators. Characteristics like social situation and job, anger about future life, forming family and economical and social pressures are of important and influential factors in recent research and may not be so strong to influence on tested indicators.

The result of study showed there is no meaningful difference among self-concept in gender, because boys and girls has shown similar mean. There is similar result in self-esteem variable and not meaningful difference among boy and girls. These findings in similarity and agreement to Garaigordobil *et al* (2003) does not report meaningful difference in boy and girl's self-concept and Lamiras and Rodrigez (2003) does not report meaningful difference in self-esteem among boy and girls [8, 12]. They do not have agreed to Wilgenbush and Merl research result (1999) in which has found girls does have lower self-concept to boys [17]. Some contradiction in gender difference result could be resulted from difference in age groups of sample in study and instruments have been used for measurement.

Also, the result of study showed there is meaningful difference among boy and girl in the score of psych pathology. Specially and in relation to these differences, we conclude except of paranoid thought signs in which boys does have higher score than girls, in all signs girls are higher and they have higher psych signs than bodily complaint, sensitivity in interactional relation, agitation and paranoid agitation. These results describe the girls tendency to internalizing angers in which transform to depression-agitation, psych –bodily signs. The result of study in gender difference in pathological sign is in agree to the result of before research like Chabrol *et al* (2004) in which has reported higher scores in women [6].

Also, the result of research showed there is meaningful difference among boy and girl in general score of psych pathology. In relation to these differences, we conclude except paranoid thought in which boy score is higher than girls, in all other signs girls does have higher scores. It means psych higher signs in bodily complaint, sensitivity in interactional relation, agitation and paranoid agitation. This result shows the tendency of girls in internalizing angers in which transform to depression-agitation and psych-bodily signs. The result of study in relation to gender difference in psych pathology is in agreed to before research including Chabrol *et al* (2004) in which reported higher score in women [6].

Correlation analysis result in this study shows reverse relation and meaningful among self-concept/self-esteem and general score of psych pathology and specially all signs of psych pathology including bodily complaint, obsession and compulsion, sensitivity in interactional relation, depression, quarrel, disease fear, psych disorder, paranoid agitation. These results showed youth by higher level of self-concept/ self-esteem does have lower psych pathology signs. The result of this study is in agree with the result of Yang (2000) study in which has reported reverse relation and we could say self-concept and self-esteem are the two psych health indicators. This study has reported meaningful relation among self-concept/self-esteem and pathological signs, but we should mention some correlation are very low and is the result of the number of measured statistical sample.

At last, the result provides the possibility of examining the relation among self-concept/self-esteem and pathological signs. These results do have application in preventive context and propose preventive program for increasing self-concept/self-esteem in youth and prevent developing psych pathological signs. In some studies, we have seen [1] there are different factors (biologic, family, psych, inner personal) in preventing and treating problems. But the result of this study support observes in which self-esteem/ self-concept could adjust the negative influence of these variables.

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