

# A STUDY ON CORRELATION BETWEEN SELF-CONCEPT AND MENTAL WELL BEING AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

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## Abstract

In the present study examined the relationship between Self-Concept and Mental Well being among higher secondary school students, considering background variables. Descriptive survey methods were employed and samples of 350 higher secondary students were selected using stratified random sampling. Standardized scales were used to measure Self-Concept and Mental Well being. Data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. The results revealed that significant positive correlation were found between Self-Concept and Mental Well being, indicating that a more positive self-concept is strongly associated with better mental well being among higher secondary students.

**Keywords:** Self-Concept, Mental Well being, Higher Secondary Students, Gender, Locality, Type of School, Nature of School.

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## INTRODUCTION

Higher secondary education is a very important stage in the life of an individual, as there are many physical, emotional, and social changes which occur at this stage. This is the time that students are involved in the process of identity building; future planning and they also encounter more and more demands in their academic work. Consequently, they are more prone to different psychological problems. Some of the factors contributing to their adaptation at this level include self-concept and mental well being. The perception of an individual regarding him or herself is known as self-concept, which is used as a basic premise to explain experiences, set goals, and to relate to other people. Emotional, psychological, and social well-being, mentally well being area, is crucial in defining the ability of the student to learn effectively, the ability to sustain relationships, and deal with stress. Thus, it is important to analyze the correlation between the concept of self and mental well being and determine how these variables vary by groups of students to create a positive and beneficial learning environment.

### Statement of the Problem

In the present study stated that “A Study on Correlation between Self-Concept and Mental Well being among Higher Secondary Students”.

### Operational Definitions

#### Self-Concept

Self-concept is an individual organized perception, beliefs and attitudes towards the self, which are determined using higher secondary students in terms of academic, social, and emotional. It entails the assessment of students in relation to their academic capacity, social connections and emotional consciousness.

#### Mental Well being

Mental well being is the overall psychological well being of the student in higher secondary, which includes the capacity to perceive and control emotions, effectively deal with stressors in daily life, have a good interpersonal relationship and to work productively both in school and in social life.

### Need for the Study

Mental well being of students has been on the top of the agenda in the modern educational environment. It is during the higher secondary years, more so, that the pressures come together and can drastically strain the psychological resources of a young individual. Although a lot of literature is developed on academic stress, little is done in the background on the importance of self-concept. The perception of the student regarding their competence, worth, and identity also has a direct influence on how they are able to cope with challenges and stay in a positive state of mental

well being with a high level of difference depending on the background of the student. The social requirements and gender roles may determine self-perception. Locality (rural/urban) determines the exposure to resources, opportunities and social support systems. The school category (government or private) is often associated with the variations in the academic rigor, infrastructure, and methods of teaching. The school type (co-ed or single-sex) may influence the social processes, relationships with peers, and the formation of social self-concept. A study of these variables concerning self-concept and mental well being is essential to define the groups of students who could be more susceptible and intervene in these cases in a more targeted way. In this study, the gap is aimed to be closed by giving a detailed analysis of the interaction between self-concept and mental well being in higher secondary students in the presence of this variety of background factors.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To study the level of self-concept among higher secondary students.
2. To study the level of mental well being among higher secondary students.
3. To find out whether there is a significant difference in self-concept among higher secondary students with respect to gender, locality, type of school (government/private), and nature of school (co-educational/single-sex).
4. To find out whether there is a significant difference in mental well being among higher secondary students with respect to gender, locality, type of school, and nature of school.
5. To find out the relationship between self-concept and mental well being among higher secondary students.

### Hypotheses of the Study

1. The level of stress management of adolescents among higher secondary school students is moderate.
2. The level of mental well-being of adolescents among higher secondary school students moderate.
3. There is no significant difference between self-concept among higher secondary students with respect to their gender, locality, type of school, and nature of school.
4. There is no significant difference between mental well being among higher secondary students with respect to their gender, locality, type of school, and nature of school.
5. There is no significant relationship between self-concept and mental well being among higher secondary students.

## METHODOLOGY

**Method of the Study:** The researcher adopted the descriptive survey method for the present study.

**Sample of the Study:** A sample of 350 higher secondary students in the Classes XI and XII of different schools in Tiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu was taken. To achieve a sufficient representation, stratified random sampling method were used.

### Tools Used

- **Self-Concept Scale:** In the present study self-concept scale developed and Standardized by Dr. Rajiv Kumar and Dr. Sunita Devi were used.
- **Mental Health Battery:** in the present study Mental Well being Battery (MHB) by Dr. Arun Kumar Singh and Dr. Alka Sen Gupta were employed.

### Reliability and validity

The reliability of the tool is reported to be 0.88 using test-retest methods, and it has adequate construct validity.

### Statistical Techniques

In the present study the following statistical techniques were used for data analysis. Mean Standard deviation, t-test, and Pearson's product-moment correlation.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

#### Testing of hypotheses

1. The level of stress management of adolescents among higher secondary school students is moderate.

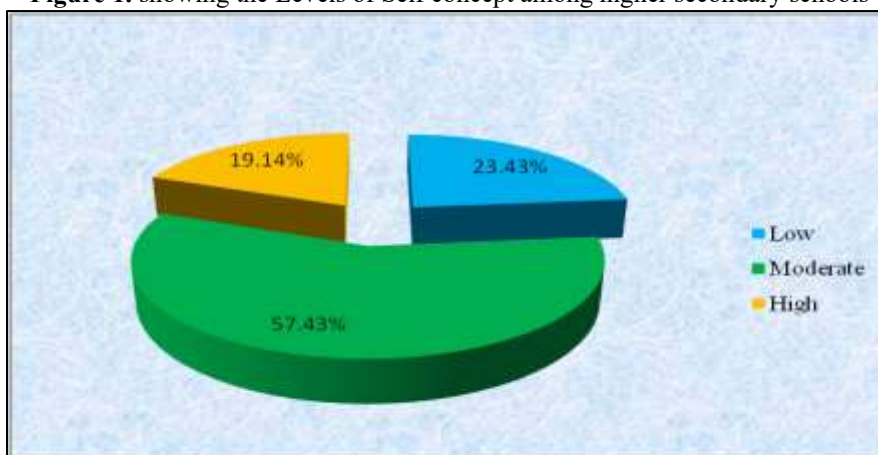
**Table 1.** showing the Level of Self-Concept among Higher Secondary Students

Variable	No. of Samples	Level	N	Percentage
Self -Concept	350	Low	82	23.43%

		Moderate	201	57.43%
		High	67	19.14%
Total			350	100%

**Interpretation:** Table 1 shows that most of the students in higher secondary 57.43% have a moderate level of self-concept. Meanwhile, 23.43% of the students have a low self-concept and 19.14% of the students have a high level of self-concept. These results indicate that despite the fact that the most of them might need specific help and interventions to improve and build their self-concept.

**Figure 1.** showing the Levels of Self concept among higher secondary schools



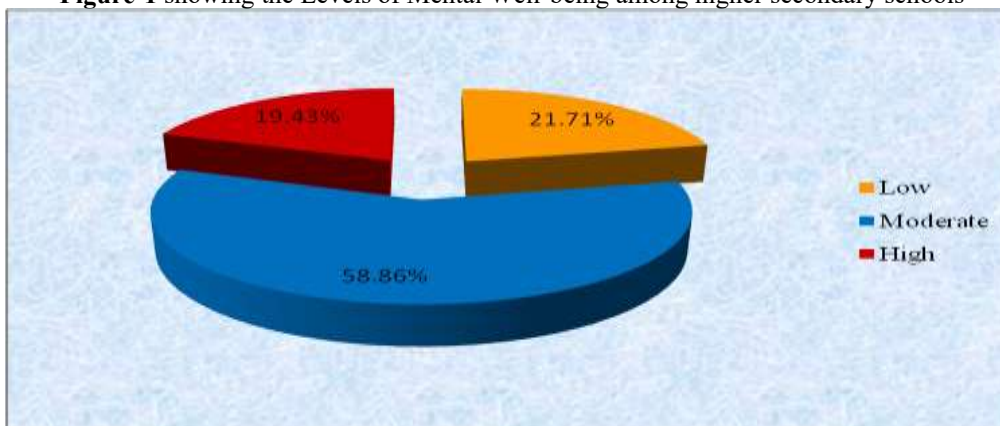
2. The level of Mental Well-being of adolescents among higher secondary school students moderate.

**Table 2.** showing the Level of Mental Well-being among Higher Secondary Students

Variable	No. of Samples	Level	N	Percentage
Mental Well-being	350	Low	76	21.71%
		Moderate	201	58.86%
		High	68	19.43%
Total			350	100%

**Interpretation:** From the Table- 2, most of the higher secondary students 58.86% are at a moderate level of mental well being which implies that most of them are generally well adjusted but they might face psychological hurdles at times. Conversely, 21.71% of the students are found in the low mental well being group, which is indicative of their susceptibility to psychological distress. Besides, 19.43% of the students are highly mentally well. The results of this research highlight the need to adopt mental well being-related awareness programs and support systems in the school.

**Figure-1** showing the Levels of Mental Well-being among higher secondary schools



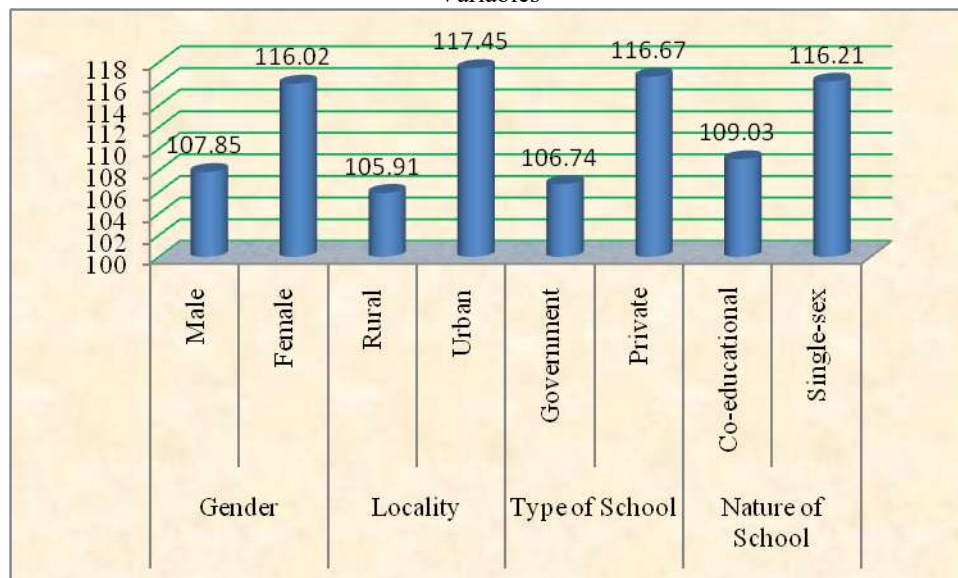
3. There is no significant difference between self-concept among higher secondary students with respect to their gender, locality, type of school, and nature of school.

**Table 3** showing the mean score of Self-Concept among higher secondary students with respect to Background Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Significance
<b>Gender</b>	Male	192	107.85	15.32	4.08	Significant
	Female	158	116.02	14.91		
<b>Locality</b>	Rural	210	105.91	16.24	5.91	Significant
	Urban	140	117.45	14.21		
<b>Type of School</b>	Government	225	106.74	15.89	5.12	Significant
	Private	125	116.67	14.53		
<b>Nature of School</b>	Co-educational	190	109.03	15.88	3.45	Significant
	Single-sex	160	116.21	14.27		

**Interpretation:** The above table-3 shows that mean scores of self-concept varies significantly amongst all the background variables. There are significant differences in female students (M=116.02) as compared with those of the male gender (M=107.85) in their self-concept. The self-concept of urban students (M=117.45) indicates a higher score than rural students (M=105.91). In the same way, the students from private schools (M=116.67) have a better self-concept as compared to those in government schools (M=106.74). In the case of the school nature, single sex school students (M=116.21) have a better self concept compared to students in co-educational schools (M=109.03). All the t-values obtained are all significant at 0.05 level. As a result, the null hypothesis with no significant difference in self concept is rejected.

**Figure 3** showing the mean score of Self-Concept among higher secondary students with respect to Background Variables



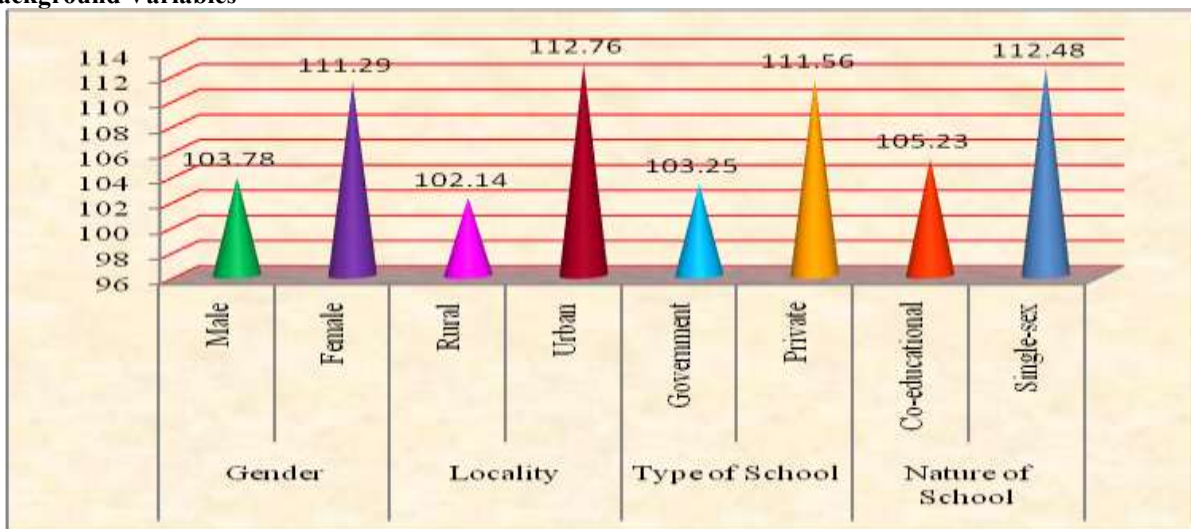
4. There is no significant difference between mental well being among higher secondary students with respect to their gender, locality, type of school, and nature of school.

**Table-4** showing the mean score of Mental Well being among higher secondary students with respect to Background Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Significance
<b>Gender</b>	Male	192	103.78	14.95	3.62	Significant
	Female	158	111.29	13.87		
<b>Locality</b>	Rural	210	102.14	15.83	5.87	Significant
	Urban	140	112.76	13.12		
<b>Type of School</b>	Government	225	103.25	15.24	4.68	Significant
	Private	125	111.56	13.67		
<b>Nature of School</b>	Co-educational	190	105.23	14.89	3.21	Significant
	Single-sex	160	112.48	13.98		

**Interpretation:** From the table 4 shows that there is a substantial variation in mental well being among all variables of background. The mental well being of female students (M=111.29) is much higher as compared to the male students (M=103.78). Mental well being is higher among students in urban localities (M=112.76) than in rural areas (M=102.14). Moreover, the students in the private schools (M=111.56) are more mentally well beingly compared to the students at the government schools (M=103.25). Finally, the mental well being outcomes of the students in the single-sex schools (M=112.48) are superior compared to the co-education schools (M=105.23). The t-values that were obtained are all significant at the 0.05 level and therefore rejected the null hypothesis of mental well being.

**Figure-4** showing the mean score of Mental Well being among higher secondary students with respect to Background Variables



5. There is no significant relationship between self-concept and mental well being among higher secondary students.

**Table 5** showing the Correlation between Self-Concept and Mental Well being among higher secondary students

Variables	N	r-value	Significance
Self-Concept & Mental Well being	350	0.71	Significant at 0.01 level

**Interpretation:** Table-5 shows the correlation between mental well being and self-concept of higher secondary students. The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.71$ ) obtained is the product-moment correlation coefficient, which shows that the correlation between the two variables is positive at the 0.01 level. This finding means that students who have more self-concept are likely to be mentally well being. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

### Major Findings of the Study

1. It is found that most of higher secondary students (57.43%) were moderate level of self-concept.
2. It is found that mental well being of higher secondary students (58.86%) showed moderate level.
3. It is found that there is significant difference between self-concept among higher secondary students with respect to gender, with female students exhibiting a more positive self-concept than male students.
4. It is found that there is significant difference between self-concept among higher secondary students with respect to locality, with urban students having a higher self-concept than rural students.
5. It is found that there is significant difference between self-concept among higher secondary students with respect to type of school, with private school students showing a higher self-concept than government school students.
6. It is found that there is significant difference between self-concept among higher secondary students with respect to nature of school, with students from single-sex schools having a higher self-concept than those from co-educational schools.
7. It is found that there is significant difference between mental well being among higher secondary students with respect to gender, with female students showing better mental well being than male students.
8. It is found that there is significant difference between mental well being among higher secondary students with respect to locality, with urban students showing better mental well being than rural students.
9. It is found that there is significant difference between mental well being among higher secondary students with respect to type of school, with private school students showing better mental well being than government school students.
10. It is found that there is significant difference mental well being among higher secondary students with respect to nature of school, with students from single-sex schools having better mental well being than those from co-educational schools.
11. It is found that there is significant positive relationship between self-concept and mental well being among higher secondary students.

## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this study reveal a strong and significant relationship between self-concept and mental well being. The positive correlation of 0.71 underscores that these two constructs are deeply intertwined. Students who hold a positive view of their abilities and worth are more likely to experience emotional stability, resilience, and overall psychological well-being. This aligns with theoretical perspectives that posit self-concept as a key mediator in how individuals process experiences and manage stress (Shavelson et al., 1976; Marsh & Craven, 2006). The significant differences found across all background variables are noteworthy. The higher self-concept and mental well being among female students may be attributed to their greater propensity for emotional expression, stronger peer support networks, and a more reflective approach to personal development. The advantage observed in urban students can be linked to greater exposure to resources such as libraries, extracurricular activities, counseling services, and a more diverse social environment that fosters self-discovery (Parashar & Varma, 2020). Students from private schools often benefit from better academic resources, smaller class sizes, and a greater emphasis on holistic development, which can positively influence both self-concept and mental well being (Kumar & Sethi, 2019). Finally, the single-sex school environment might provide a space with fewer gender-based stereotypes and social pressures related to peer interactions, allowing students to develop their identities and social skills more freely, thereby enhancing self-concept and reducing social anxiety.

### Educational Implications

The findings of this study have several important implications for educational practice:

1. **Curriculum Integration:** Schools should integrate activities that foster self-awareness and self-esteem into the curriculum. This could include reflective writing, self-assessment exercises, and discussions on identity formation.

2. **Counseling and Guidance:** School counselors should be trained to deliver programs focused on building self-concept, particularly for student groups identified as more vulnerable, such as male students, those in rural areas, and students in government and co-educational settings, who were found to have lower scores
3. **Teacher Training:** Teacher education programs should emphasize the importance of a supportive and encouraging classroom environment. Teachers should be trained to use positive reinforcement and provide constructive feedback that builds students' self-confidence rather than undermining it.
4. **Parental Involvement:** Schools should organize workshops for parents to help them understand the importance of self-concept in their child's mental well being. Encouraging a supportive home environment that values effort and personal growth over mere outcomes is crucial.
5. **Extracurricular Activities:** Promoting a wide range of extracurricular activities—in arts, sports, and clubs can provide students with diverse opportunities to discover their talents, build social connections, and develop a stronger sense of self.

## CONCLUSION

The self-concept is a critical determinant of mental well being among higher secondary students. The significant positive correlation found between these two variables reinforces the idea that fostering a positive self-perception is not just about building confidence but is fundamental to the psychological well-being of adolescents. The study also highlights that demographic factors such as gender, locality, type of school, and nature of school play a significant role in shaping both self-concept and mental well being. By understanding these nuances, educators, policymakers, and parents can work collaboratively to create learning environments that not only focus on academic achievement but also prioritize the holistic development of students' self-concept and mental well being, thereby preparing them for a resilient and fulfilling life.

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