

# A Comparative Study of Self-Concept of Rural and Urban Students of Higher-Secondary Schools



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## Abstract

Self-concept is the most important attribute and the key variable to understand the behaviour of an individual. The important role of self-concept as a determinant of human behaviour and its acceptance as a concise measure of personality is increasingly realised. Present day educators and psychologists have concluded that an individual's self-concept is a critical facet of his personality.

Self-concept plays an important role for the multidimensional development among urban and rural students. On behalf of this study it was concluded that the self-concept of urban students was found a bit higher than their counterparts. It may be due to wider exposure of urban students with respect to their thinkings, approaches and understandings.

**Keywords:** Self-Concept, Rural Students and Urban Students.

## Introduction

One's actions and achievements in life are bound to be largely determined by what one feels and thinks of oneself. Self-concept, though essentially private, influences and is revealed by most of a person's behaviour. The self-concept or phenomenal self refers to the individual's perception of himself. A currently popular hypothesis is that human behaviour in any particular context is largely determined by one's perceptions of one-self and of one's circumstances. It has been realised that studies in educational psychology which exclude the self, cannot fully understand human behaviour. The self is one's inner world. It results from evolutionary interaction with others, becoming the consistent personal perception of 'I' and 'Me'. The self-concept really is the individual's anticipation of his general acceptance or rejection in a given situation. As the self-concept is formulated, it tends to shape new experiences to established patterns.

Self-concept means those perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and feelings which the individual views as part or characteristics of himself. The child's concept of who and what he is may colour much of his thinking, his personality and his social behaviour. Achieving the philosopher's goal of know thyself, is an important part of development. Several writers have traced the genetic development of self-concept from sense of bodily identity in young children to differentiate self from others.

## Objective of this Study

The main purpose of this study was to measure the self-concept of school going adolescents of urban and rural areas. The study aims at finding out:

1. To find out if there existed any significant difference between self-concept of rural and urban students (Boys & Girls).
2. To find out if there existed any significant difference between self-concepts of rural and urban boys.
3. To find out if there existed any significant difference between self-concepts of rural and urban girls.

## Hypotheses

Some hypotheses were formulated for conducting the study with precision. The hypotheses were formulated in the null form because no evidences were available to formulate them otherwise.

1. The self-concept of rural and urban students do not differ significantly.
2. The self-concept of rural and urban boys do not differ significantly.
3. The self-concept of rural and urban girls do not differ significantly.

**Methodology of the Study**

Considering demands and nature of the study, it was thought desirable to follow the descriptive survey method, due to fact that it is designed to obtain information about the current status of phenomenon. It investigates 'what exists' with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. It is essentially a cross-sectional approach which is not concerned with individual but generalized statistics that results when data are obstructed from a number of individual cases.

**Sample**

Four hundred (400) higher secondary students have been selected for this study from 700 students of the same level. In this study the sample was drawn from the population of rural areas of Jaunpur and urban areas of Varanasi city. The following schools have been selected.

**Tool Used**

**Self-concept Scale**

For measuring self-concept of rural and urban students 'SWATVA BODH PARIKSHAN' (A test of Self-concept) prepared by G.P. Sherry, R.P. Varma and P.K. Goswami, was selected from among a number of tools to assess the self-concept.

**Results, Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

The data obtained for the study were statistically analysed and scientifically interpreted.

Conclusions were drawn on the basis of results and findings of the study. The data were analysed in the following ways.

**Significant difference between Self-concept of Students**

The study of the self-concept was done with respect to the place of residence of the students. It was assumed that the culture, civilization and living standard of the inhabitants of the urban areas was some what different from that of the rural inhabitants. Though two persons, one from the town and other from the village may fall in the same socio-economic class, yet their self-concept may be different because of the different life styles found in the rural and urban areas. The results of the analysis are given in tables below.

**Self-concept of Rural and Urban Students : (Boys + Girls)**

The mean and standard deviation were calculated on the basis of obtained scores of the students of both sexes. Such type of calculation was done by considering the criteria of urban and rural areas.

With the help of calculated values of means and S.D. t-value was found out. The inference was drawn by seeing the t-table and level of significance was fixed which has been shown in the following table.

**Table – 1**

**Mean, S.D. and t-value of self-concept scores of Rural and Urban Students (Boys + Girls)**

S. No.	Area	N.	Mean	S.D.	df.	t-value	Inference
1.	Rural	200	30.45	6.24	199	4.01	p<.01
2.	Urban	200	32.86	6.62	199		

From the perusal of table 8, it appears that the calculated t-value is 4.01 which is greater than the table value 1.97 and 2.59 at .05 and .01 level respectively. So it is clear that mean score of rural and urban students on self-concept scale is significantly different at .01 level. Since this value is significant at .01 level hence it will also be significant at .05 level. This means it will not be wrong more than one time in one hundred, if it is said that the self-concept of urban students is significantly different from that of rural students.

It is obvious also because the rural students come from relatively poor homes and their needs are not satisfied in full, have poorer-concept of themselves than their more fortunate brothers in city. However, the frame of reference of the two groups are different and it might have contributed to the less sharper difference in self-concept. This difference has come due to fact that the way of reasoning, thinking and standard of living of urban students in different from their counter partner living in crisis and miseries. The scientific and technological advances have effected all sorts of domain of urban students by which they are known as more advanced and modernized. By having all such types of facilities the students personal perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and feelings, which the individual views as part or

character of himself, are usually highly developed than students of rural areas where they are not facilitated by such type of modernity and advancement.

This difference might be due to situational compulsions and self-concept is also affected by socio-economic status, culture and civilization of students. The rural students are brought up in a traditional way of thinking, feeling and willing. It is also a fact that traditional knowledge is not based on scientific attitude and modern concepts. There are a few innovations in most of the Indian villages. On the other hand, urban population is being benefitted by newly developed inventions and innovations in all walks of life. The present age of reason and science has brought about some changes in the traditional views in urban life. Urban peoples are more open and permissive and they are not so dependent for their livelihood as rural people. It appears, therefore, that result is justified.

**Self-concept of Rural and Urban Boys**

The t-value was calculated with the help of mean, S.D. and number of cases of both groups. The level of significance was determined with the help of df and t-table which has been shown in the following table.

**Table – 2**  
**Mean, S.D. and t-value of Self-concept Scores of Rural and Urban Boys**

S. No.	Area	N.	M.	S.D.	df.	t-value	Inference
1.	Rural	150	34.80	3.32	149	2.50	.01 < p < .05
2.	Urban	200	32.86	6.62	199		

From the perusal of table 2, it is clear that there is significant difference between the means of rural and urban boys self-concept scores at .05 level because the calculated value (2.50) is greater than obtained table value (1.97). But it is not significant at .01 level, because obtained table value (2.59) is higher than calculated value. This means that it will not be wrong more than five times in one hundred, if it is said that the self-concept of rural boys is significantly different from that of urban boys.

One very remarkable fact observed in table 2 is the significant difference between self-concept of rural and urban boys. This difference is due to higher mean value of rural boys. When on the other hand table 1 showed that mean of urban students is significantly different, This may be due to scores of girl students which are included in that. In this table (No. 2) only means of boys students have represented. Thus it become obvious fact that the rural boys have better self-concept than urban boys. The reason for this is the feelings, attitudes and

mentality of the rural boys has not less developed in respect of inventions and innovations. The scientific advancement and technological blessings have also decorated their way of thinking and mode of life. They are now will inform with all surprising events and new discoveries which is done around them. They equally compete with their brothers living in cities. Some times it has been seen that the rural boys have competed in many fields of life from urban boys. This is also due to the fact that government has centered his attention towards orientation programmes and rural development planning for major part of population living in villages. It appears, therefore, that result is justified.

**Self-concept of rural and urban girls**

The sample of girl students was also drawn to see the significant difference between rural and urban girls, however this sample is only 50 and 55. The calculated values of mean, standard deviation and t has been shown in the following table.

**Table – 3**  
**Mean, S.D. and t-value of self-concept scores of Rural and Urban Girls**

S. No.	Area	N.	Mean	S.D.	df.	t-value	Inference
1.	Rural	50	32.80	6.10	49	5.50	p < .01
2.	Urban	55	38.86	6.20	54		

From the table 3, it is clear that the mean score of the urban girls is significantly different at .01 level for df 49, 54 because the obtained table value (2.63) at .01 level is less than the calculated value (5.50) for the same df.

It can be concluded that the urban girl students have higher self-concept than the rural girls. This may be due to fact that the girls coming from urban areas are of better socio-economic status and more advanced families than the girls coming from rural areas. The reason behind this is obviously known that the occupation of urban girl's parents are usually in government services, business, industries and technical fields, where as the source of income for rural girl's parents is mainly agricultural field. Only some limited sources of external income might be there. So the rural girls failed to compete in this respect. The urban girl students might also be well familiar to present age of science and reason which has brought about some changes in their traditional ways of life.

**Conclusion**

The students of urban areas tend to have better concept of their abilities, health and physique, temperamental qualities, academic status, intellectual abilities, habit and behaviour, emotional tendencies, mental health and socio-economic status. Whereas students coming from rural areas have poorer self-concept. The same fact is also true for the urban and rural girls. The girls coming from urban areas tend to have better self-concept than rural girls.

One very remarkable fact has been drawn by this study i.e. self-concept of rural and urban boys

differ significantly. The rural boys have better self-concept than the urban boys However, this conclusion is surprising and needs further support of empirical studies.

Thus it may be concluded that the role of place of residence (rural-urban) in developing good or poor self-concept seems to be significant.

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