

**Self Concept:**

The self-concept is the accumulation of knowledge about the self, such as beliefs regarding personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles. In adolescence, the self-concept becomes more abstract, complex, and hierarchically organized into cognitive mental representations or self-schemas, which direct the processing of self-relevant information.

Self-concept-the way in which one perceives oneself-can be divided into categories, such as personal self-concept (facts or one's own opinions about oneself, such as "I have brown eyes" or "I am attractive"); social self-concept (one's perceptions about how one is regarded by others: "people think I have a great sense of humor"); and self-ideals (what or how one would like to be: "I want to be a lawyer" or "I wish I were thinner").

Self-concept or self-identity is the sum total of a being's knowledge and understanding of his or her self. The self-concept is different from self consciousness, which is an awareness of one's self. Components of the self-concept include physical, psychological, and social attributes, which can be influenced by the individual's attitudes, habits, beliefs and ideas. These components and attributes cannot be condensed to the general concepts of self-image and the self-esteem.

Self-concept refers to self-evaluation or self perception, and it represents the sum of an individual's beliefs about his or her own attributes. Self concept reflects how an adolescent evaluates himself or herself in domains (or areas) in which he or she considers success important. An adolescent can have a positive self-concept in some domains and a negative self-concept in others.

Teachers, administrators, and parents commonly voice concerns about students' self esteem. Its significance is often exaggerated to the extent that low self esteem is viewed as the cause of all evil and high self-esteem as the cause of all good. Promoting high self-concept is important because it relates to academic and life success. Although the terms self-concept and self-esteem are often used interchangeably, they represent different but related constructs. Self-concept refers to a student's perceptions of competence or adequacy in academic and nonacademic (example, social, behavioral, and athletic) domains and is best represented by a profile of self-perceptions across domains. Self-esteem is a student's overall evaluation of him- or herself, including feelings of general happiness and satisfaction.

- **Self-concept and academic achievement:** Self-concept is frequently positively correlated with academic performance, but it appears to be a consequence rather than a cause of high achievement. This is a common assumption that an individual's high academic performance results in their self concept. Whereas, the high academic performance is the result of individual's self concept.
- **Self-concept and aggression:** Another popular assumption is that aggressive students have low self-concept and use aggression as a means of raising it.
- **Self-concept, depression, and use of illegal substances:** Low self-concept is often considered a defining characteristic of depression, but the evidence for this is weak. Similarly, although some evidence suggests that low self-concept may be a weak risk factor for smoking in girls, the relationship between self-concept and the use of alcohol and illegal drugs has little support.

The self-concept is an important term for both Social and humanistic Psychology. Lewis (1990) suggests that development of a concept of self has two aspects:

### **(1) The Existential Self**

This is 'the most basic part of the self-scheme or self-concept; the sense of being separate and distinct from others and the awareness of the constancy of the self' (Bee, 1992).

The child realizes that they exist as a separate entity from others and that they continue to exist over time and space.

According to Lewis awareness of the existential self begins as young as two to three months old and arises in part due to the relation the child has with the world. For example, the child smiles and someone smiles back, or the child touches a mobile and sees it move.

### **(2) The Categorical Self**

Having realized that he or she exists as a separate experiencing being, the child next becomes aware that he or she is also an object in the world.

Just as other objects including people have properties that can be experienced (big, small, red, smooth and so on) so the child is becoming aware of him or herself as an object which can be experienced and which has properties.

The self too can be put into categories such as age, gender, size or skill. Two of the first categories to be applied are age (“I am 3”) and gender (“I am a girl”).

### **Self-esteem:**

Self esteem is the one important factor required by anybody to succeed in life. It is a well proven concept that if you can build self esteem at your adolescent period it will last all through your life. Adolescence is one period in which boys and girls faces with many problems and issues. It is necessary that adolescent self esteem to be at top to face the problems faced with adolescent period. Many teenagers will have low self esteem and it is imperative to know major reasons for low self esteem and find out ways and means to combat the low self esteem. It is highly advisable to make dedicated efforts to bring up the self esteem.

There are many causes for the lack of self esteem.

- **Hereditary** is a main factor for low self esteem. If the parents are introverts and they never mingle with people for fear of their inability, the chances that children have low esteem are more.
- **The living conditions:** The surrounding in which you live also affects the lack of self esteem. If the child is brought up in a poor environment without giving proper attention to make him excel in his fields or deprived of doing good activities, the low self esteem at the adolescent stage is possible.
- **Lack of proper education:** is another factor affecting the self esteem. Uneducated children will develop lack of self esteem as they will face problems in interacting with the educated of their age.
- **Physiological:** Adolescence is a period when major physical changes occur in boys and girls. The gender hormones start the functioning in full swing during this period. Many children face problems during this change unable to cope with the changes occurring in their body and behaviour.
- **Societal implications:** During the adolescent stage of a child, society put many restrictions in their behaviours and attitudes. Girls will be automatically tempted to move away from the boys and boys are restricted to mingle with girls during the period. This makes them feel that there are some things to be afraid. This will automatically make them fear in a natural interaction.

- **Fear about future:** During the late periods of adolescence, the children will seriously think about their future and in many cases they will get depressed of their future. Unemployment, dating problems, insecurity, lack of financial backgrounds and many such factors make the adolescents afraid of facing the world.
- **Diseases and other physical ailments:** These children will be thinking that they are debris in the world. These thinking processes make them to keep away from others and they can become agitated. There are many such reasons for low self esteem of adolescents. If proper care is not given, the low self esteem gradually will lead to many physical and mental ailments. It is important to bring up the adolescents with high self esteem.