



A study of the level of self-confidence among secondary school students

Dr. Sarah Basu¹, Abhilasha Singh²

¹M.Ed., Assistant Professor, Bareilly College, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India

²M.Ed., Student, Bareilly College, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

Self-confidence is considered one of the most influential motivator and regulators of behaviour in people everyday life. The present study was aimed at investigating the level of self-confidence among secondary school students, w.r.t. gender, medium of instruction, locality, level of academic achievement. The study was carried out on a sample of 100 secondary school students of class IX of Bareilly district studying in schools affiliated to C.B.S.E. and U.P. boards from urban as well as rural areas. The investigators employed a self-developed tool - S.C.S. (Self Confidence Scale) containing 40 items involving the various aspects related to self-confidence like self-image, perception of others, self-esteem, etc. based on a three-point Likert scale. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were employed to analyze the raw scores so obtained, test the hypotheses and draw inferences using MS-EXCEL. Findings of the study reveal that gender, locality and level of academic achievement significantly impact the level of self-confidence of the secondary school students, medium of instruction has no statistically significant effect on the level of self-confidence of the students.

Keywords: Self-confidence, secondary school students, high and low achievers, medium of instruction, gender, locality

Introduction

Education helps in the development of individuality which includes physical, intellectual, emotional, social, aesthetic and moral aspects. With the development of individuality, a person becomes self-confident, can solve various problems of life and become a good citizen. Self-confidence is essentially an attitude which allows us to have a positive and realistic perception of ourselves and our abilities. According to Bandura (1986) self-confidence is considered one of the most influential motivator and regulators of behaviour in people everyday life. Self-confidence is an attitude which allows individuals to have positive yet realistic views of themselves and their situations. Self-confidence is the belief in one's ability to succeed and is the stepping stone to progress. It may be described as an attitude which permits persons to be positive and realistic towards themselves and circumstances and situations of life.

There are several reasons self-confidence can benefit a student in his academic or a professional in the workplace. When you are confident, you may be more open to taking calculated risks that may contribute to professional success. Self-confidence can also arise from having a comprehensive understanding of one's own abilities and weaknesses. This understanding is crucial for professional growth as it empowers individuals to process feedback and criticism in a healthy manner. A healthy sense of self-confidence is necessary for your child to develop social skills, become more resilient, and embrace his/ her full potential inside and outside the classroom.

Students, especially during their adolescence, are more vulnerable and often seem to suffer from self-esteem and self-confidence issues. This might not only affect their socio personal relations but also their academic performance. All concerned stakeholders, including the parents, teachers, policymakers etc. must take note of such issues and the factors affecting them so that they make take appropriate measures to correct it at the initial stages. The researchers

conducted the present study as they felt that the findings of present study would provide some clues for enhancing self-confidence of students, improving instructional strategies and effective learning.

Review of related literature

Malhotra, Kumari and Faiyaz (2022) ^[4] conducted a study on the level of self-confidence among high and low achiever school students using Agnihotri's self-confidence inventory for data collection and found that high achievers have high levels of self-confidence and low achievers have average levels of self-confidence and they are significantly different from each other. The level of self-confidence is higher among urban compared to rural school students.

Ram and Madan (2021) ^[5] in their study on the on academic achievement, personality and self-esteem among secondary school students studying in private school in and around Bangalore

found that there was no significant relationship between academic achievement, personality and self-esteem. They also reported that parental encouragement had a positive and significant

correlation with self-confidence of the students. Kumari, Mahajan and Neetu (2019) ^[3] investigated the self-confidence of senior secondary school students of Kangra district in relation to their sex, area and streams of study. Findings of the study was revealed that no significant difference in the level of self-confidence of the students in relation to their area of residence, sex. It was also found that there exists a significant difference in the level of self-confidence of the students in relation to their streams of study. Biswas (2018) ^[2] in his Study on self-esteem among the students of higher secondary school level found that all higher secondary school students had low self-esteem. The results also revealed that there is no significant difference in self-esteem of higher secondary school level students based on their gender and location.

Operational Definitions

For the present study,

Self-Confidence: Refers to the attitude which allows an individual to have a positive and realistic perception of themselves and their abilities.

Secondary school students: Refer to the students enrolled in class IX in regular mode in schools affiliated to either C.B.S.E. or U.P. board.

High achievers: Refer to the students who have scored more than 80% in their class VIII annual examinations and are now studying in class IX.

Low achievers: Refer to the students who have scored less than 60% in their class VIII annual examinations and are now studying in class IX.

Objectives of the Study

For the present study, the following research objectives were formulated:

- To examine the level of self-confidence among the secondary school students.
- To compare the level of self-confidence of male and female secondary school students.
- To compare the level of self-confidence of high achievers and low achiever secondary school students.
- To compare the level of self-confidence of English and Hindi medium secondary school students.
- To compare the level of self-confidence of urban and rural secondary school students.

Hypotheses of the Study

For the present study, the following null hypotheses were formulated

- There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of male and female secondary school students.
- There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of high achievers and low achiever secondary school students.
- There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of English and Hindi medium secondary school students.
- There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of urban and rural secondary school students.

Delimitations

The present investigation was delimited to the following areas due to constraints of time, manpower and resources:

- The study was delimited to only school students studying in government and private schools of Bareilly district.
- The study was delimited to 100 secondary school students (50 male, 50 female) from government aided and private schools affiliated to C.B.S.E. and U.P. board (60 C.B.S.E. board, 40 U.P. board) studying in class IX.
- The study was delimited to high school students from urban as well as rural areas of Bareilly district.

Methodology of the Study

The present study was based upon individual survey which is a part of the descriptive research method. For this investigation, the researchers opted for the quantitative research design. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select a sample of 100 secondary school students from a population consisting of male and female class IX students of Bareilly district studying in schools affiliated to C.B.S.E. and U.P. boards from urban as well as rural areas. The total sample was classified into two groups- high-achievers and low-achievers. They were identified on the basis of their total percentages in their annual class VIII exams. Students who received 80 percent or higher in the previous examination were labelled as high achievers, while those who received 60 percent or less were labelled as low achievers. Male and female students from urban and rural areas were all included in this study.

Tool used: The investigators employed a self-developed tool

S.C.S. (Self Confidence Scale)

Containing 40 items involving the various aspects related to self-confidence like self-image, perception of others, self-esteem, etc. The statements were based on a three-point Likert scale. The tool was easy to administer and could easily be filled by the sample subjects within 25 minutes.

Data Collection and Computation

The researchers personally visited the concerned secondary schools of Bareilly district to collect the required data. Once the data collection and scoring of the tool was done, the statistical measures of mean, standard deviation and t-test were employed to analyze the raw scores so obtained, test the hypotheses and draw inferences using MS-EXCEL.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Once the data was collated and analysed, the null hypotheses were tested using t -test. The findings of the study have been expressed in tabular and graphical form, as below:

Table 1: Level of self-confidence among secondary school students

Areas of S.C.S.	Mean	S.D.
Self-image	24.45	4.32
Self-esteem	26.51	3.45
Self-assuredness	27.27	3.21
Sense of identity	24.64	3.79
Overall	102.87	11.31

An examination of the data presented in Table 1 indicates that the greater majority of secondary school students scored well on the S.C.S. (Self Confidence Scale), i.e. they exhibit considerably good levels of self-confidence. When analysed on the basis of various aspects related to self-confidence like self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and sense of identity, the students exhibited possession of good levels of these traits. As a whole, most of the secondary level (class IX) students feel good about themselves and have a considerable amount of self-confidence. Graphically the data presented in Table 1 may be depicted as:

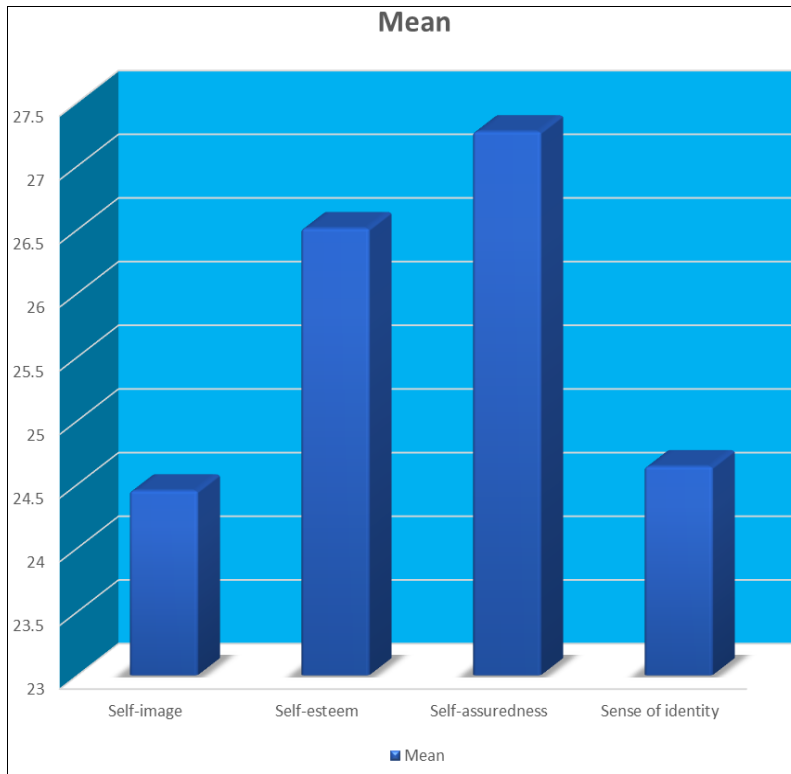


Fig 1: Level of self-confidence among secondary school students

Table 2: Level of self-confidence of male and female secondary school students

Areas of S.C.S.	Male (N=50)		Female (N=50)		t-values	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Self-image	27.67	3.41	21.23	3.67	3.11	0.01
Self-esteem	27.98	2.98	25.04	3.17	2.01	0.05
Self-assuredness	25.44	3.07	29.10	2.86	3.05	0.01
Sense of identity	24.14	2.97	25.14	3.21	0.89	NS
Overall	105.23	8.53	100.51	7.85	3.41	0.01

An examination of the data presented in Table 2 indicates that the greater majority of both male and female secondary school students well on the S.C.S. (Self Confidence Scale), i.e. they exhibit considerably good levels of self-confidence. When analysed on the basis of various aspects related to

self-confidence like self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and sense of identity, the students exhibited possession of good levels of these traits. On comparing the levels of self-confidence and its component traits, as exhibited by the male and female students, it is found that male students score significantly more than the female students in terms of overall self-confidence as well traits of self-image, self-esteem but do not differ significantly in terms of sense of identity. In terms of self-assuredness, females score higher. On the basis of the above-mentioned data, the first null hypothesis, “*There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of male and female secondary school students*” is rejected. Graphically the data presented in Table 2 may be depicted as:

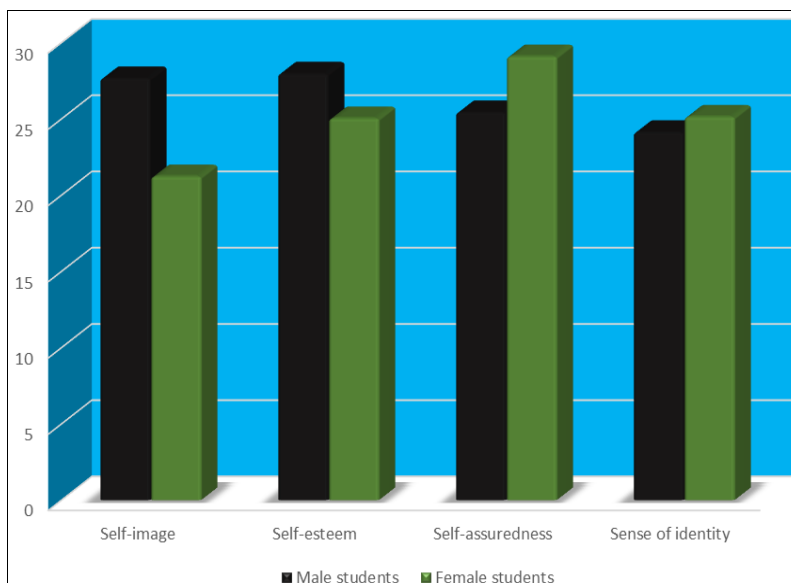


Fig 2: Level of self-confidence of male and female high school students

Table 3: Level of self-confidence of high and low achiever secondary school students

Areas of S.C.S.	High achievers (N=44)		Low achievers (N=56)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Self-image	28.62	3.82	24.51	3.71	2.97	0.01
Self-esteem	27.15	4.01	25.07	3.22	2.16	0.05
Self-assuredness	28.34	3.53	26.81	2.77	2.02	0.05
Sense of identity	24.05	2.91	24.79	2.98	0.65	NS
Overall	108.13	5.61	101.02	5.23	3.17	0.01

An observation of the data presented in Table 3 indicates that the greater majority of both high achiever and low achiever secondary school students well on the S.C.S. (Self Confidence Scale), i.e. they exhibit considerably good levels

of self-confidence. When analysed on the basis of various aspects related to self-confidence like self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and sense of identity, the students exhibited possession of good levels of these traits. On comparing the levels of self-confidence and its component traits, as exhibited by the high achiever and low achiever students, it is found that high achiever students score significantly more than the low achiever students in terms of overall self-confidence as well traits of self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness but do not differ significantly in terms of sense of identity.

On the basis of the above-mentioned data, the second null hypothesis, “There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of high achievers and low achiever secondary school students” is rejected. Graphically the data presented in Table 3 may be depicted as:

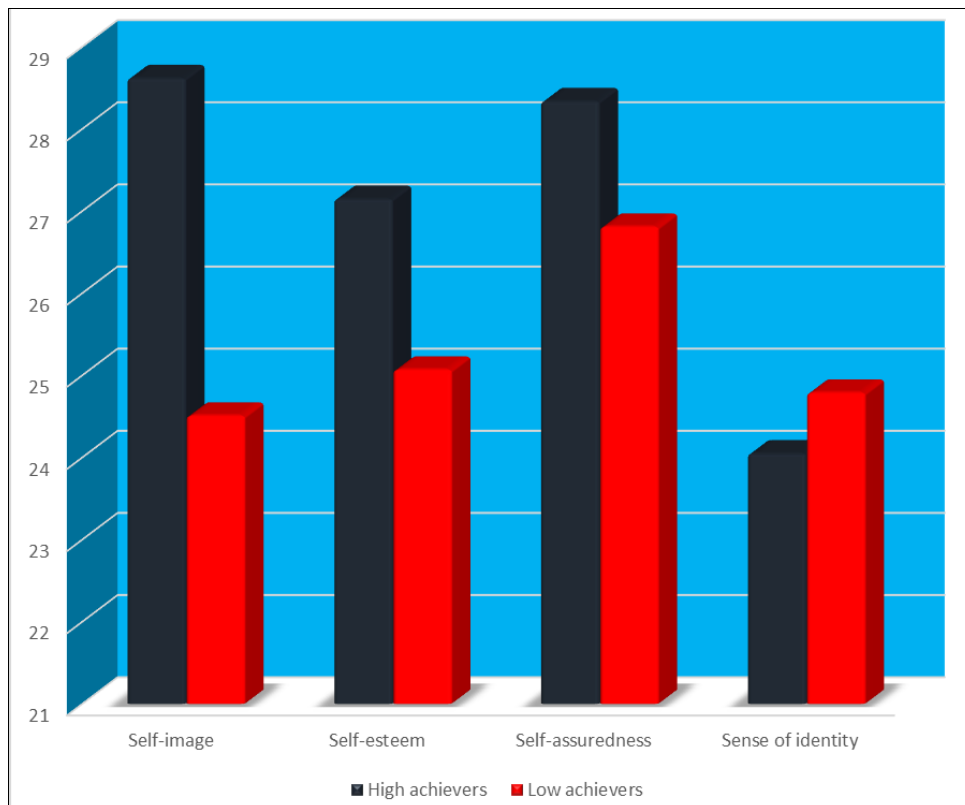


Fig 3: Level of self-confidence of high and low achiever secondary school students

Table 4: Level of self-confidence of English and Hindi medium secondary school students

Areas of S.C.S.	English medium (N=60)		Hindi medium (N=40)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Self-image	24.55	4.32	23.98	3.21	0.23	NS
Self-esteem	26.11	3.45	26.54	3.73	0.21	NS
Self-assuredness	27.06	3.21	27.52	3.14	0.19	NS
Sense of identity	25.01	3.79	24.21	3.63	0.98	NS
Overall	102.73	10.01	102.25	9.87	0.17	NS

A study of the data presented in Table 4 indicates that the greater majority of both English medium and Hindi medium secondary school students well on the S.C.S. (Self Confidence Scale), i.e. they exhibit considerably good levels of self-confidence. When analysed on the basis of various aspects related to self-confidence like self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and sense of identity, the students exhibited possession of good levels of these traits. On comparing the levels of self-confidence and its component

traits, as exhibited by the English medium and Hindi medium students, it is found that they do not differ significantly in terms of overall self-confidence as well traits of self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and sense of identity. On the basis of the above-mentioned data, the third null hypothesis, “There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of English and Hindi medium secondary school students” is accepted. Graphically the data presented in Table 4 may be depicted as:

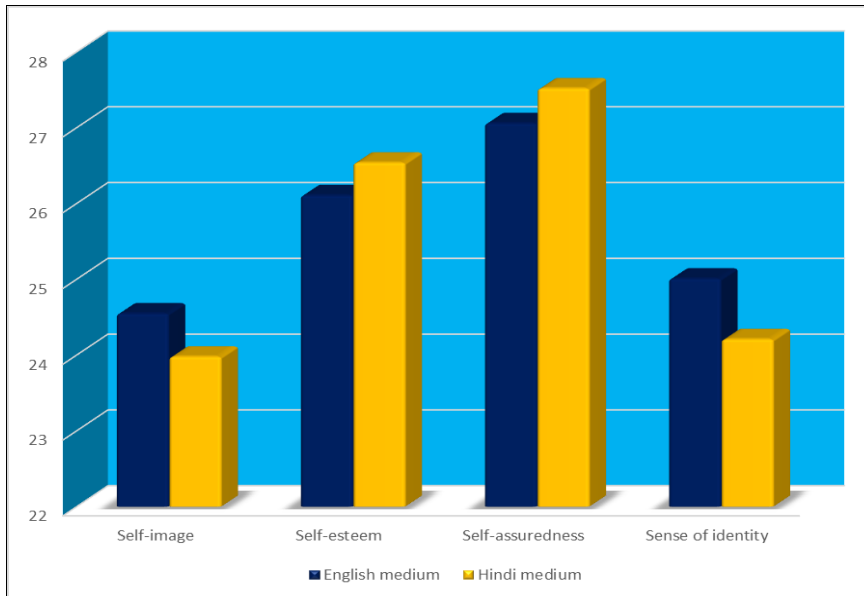


Fig 4: Level of self-confidence of English and Hindi medium secondary school students

Table 5: Level of self-confidence of secondary school students from urban and rural areas

Areas of S.C.S.	Urban (N=50)		Rural (N=50)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Self-image	27.56	3.11	21.21	3.67	3.16	0.01
Self-esteem	27.78	2.68	24.87	3.17	2.07	0.05
Self-assuredness	25.56	2.97	29.01	2.86	2.83	0.01
Sense of identity	24.32	2.81	25.10	3.21	0.57	NS
Overall	105.22	7.61	100.19	6.98	3.22	0.01

A perusal of the data presented in Table 5 indicates that the greater majority of both urban and rural secondary school students well on the S.C.S. (Self Confidence Scale), i.e. they exhibit considerably good levels of self-confidence. When

analysed on the basis of various aspects related to self-confidence like self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and sense of identity, the students exhibited possession of good levels of these traits. On comparing the levels of self-confidence and its component traits, as exhibited by the urban and rural students, it is found that urban students score significantly more than the rural students in terms of overall self-confidence as well traits of self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness but do not differ significantly in terms of sense of identity. On the basis of the above-mentioned data, the fourth null hypothesis, “*There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of urban and rural secondary school students*” is rejected. Graphically the data presented in Table 5 may be depicted as:

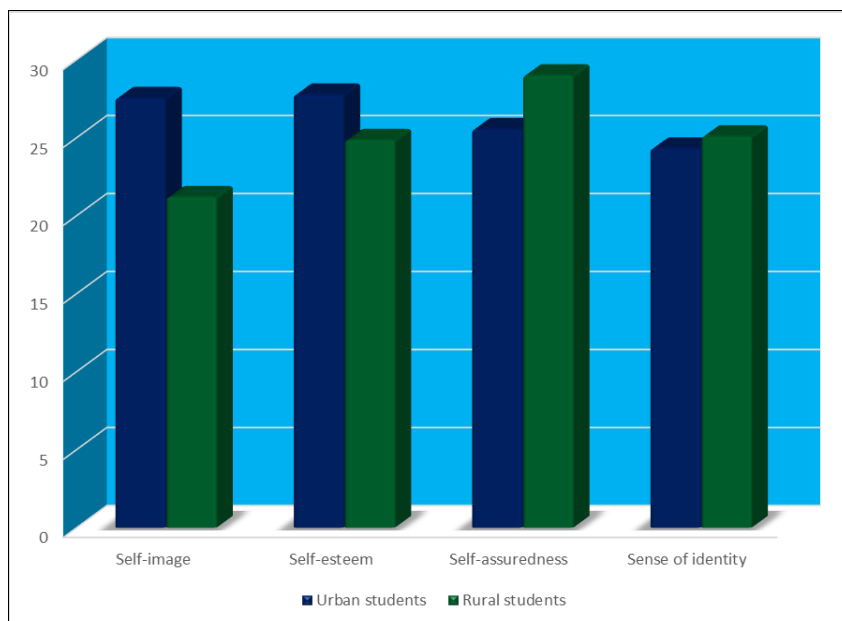


Fig 5: Level of self-confidence of secondary school students from urban and rural areas

Conclusion

- There is a significant difference between the level of self-confidence of male and female secondary school students. With male and female students just stepping

into adolescence and the discrimination with regards to societal pressures and not getting the same educational opportunities at the secondary level, their self-confidence levels seem to be much affected by gender,

with the girls exhibiting considerably lower levels of self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and overall self-confidence as compared to the boys.

- There is a significant difference between the level of self-confidence of high achievers and low achiever secondary school students. High achiever students, i.e., those who are scoring more than 80% at the school level exams are bound to feel more confident about themselves and this gets reflected in their impressions about themselves as a whole resulting in significantly higher lower levels of self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and overall self-confidence as compared to the low achievers, i.e., those who are scoring less than 60% at the school level exams.
- There is no significant difference between the level of self-confidence of English and Hindi medium secondary school students. With English and Hindi medium students getting almost same educational opportunities at the secondary level, their self confidence levels do not seem to be much affected by medium of instruction.
- There is a significant difference between the level of self-confidence of urban and rural secondary school students. With urban and rural background students just realizing the issue of non-availability of all facilities at the local level and the discrimination with regards to socio- economic pressures due to the rural-urban divide and not getting the same educational opportunities at the secondary level, their self-confidence levels seem to be much affected by gender, with the rural students exhibiting considerably lower levels of self-image, self-esteem, self-assuredness and overall self-confidence as compared to the urban background students.

Educational Implications

Confidence is not something we're born with; it's a skill to be mastered, an art to be perfected over years of learning. However, many still think that it's a fixed characteristic – that if someone is low on confidence, it's just not their strength. Yet, one can work on his/her confidence, and the benefits for learners can be invaluable. A healthy sense of self-confidence is necessary for your child to develop social skills, become more resilient, and embrace his/ her full potential inside and outside the classroom. Self-confidence is a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgment.

A healthy sense of self-confidence is all about having a balanced view of yourself — taking pride in your abilities while recognizing your flaws. Children with a healthy sense of self-confidence are able to feel good about themselves and know that they deserve respect from others. The importance of self-confidence should not be underestimated, as it has been strongly linked to happiness through multiple studies.

Students, especially during their adolescence, are more vulnerable and often seem to suffer from self-esteem and self-confidence issues. This might not only affect their socio personal relations but also their academic performance. All concerned stakeholders, including the parents, teachers, policymakers etc. must take note of such issues and the factors affecting them so that they make take appropriate measures to correct it at the initial stages. The findings of the present study will be helpful in further detailed exploration of important correlates of self- among adolescents as well help design measures to improve their self-confidence.

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