

A Comparative Study of Self-Perception Between Male and Female High Academic Achievers

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ABSTRACT

Self-perception is a person's view of himself or herself or of any of the mental or physical attributes that constitute the self. Self-perception is made up of two concepts- Self-regard and Self-acceptance. The present study aimed to measure and compare the self-perception between male and female High academic achievers. It was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference between the levels of self-perception of male and female students who are academically high achievers and there will be low levels of self-perception in female's students who are academically high achievers as compared to their male counterparts. The self-perception Measuring Scale by E. I. Sjostrom in 1962 was used to collect the data from the participants. Sample consisted of 50 male and 50 female students from different states. The obtained data was analysed through descriptive as well as inferential statistics (independent sample t-test). The findings revealed that male high-achiever students have a high level of self-perception than female High achiever students. However, the difference was not found to be statistically significant.

Keywords: Self-Perception, High-Achiever Students.

Humankind is a creative being who tries to understand the outside world in its ways. They are not just mechanical and passive beneficiaries of impetuses from the outside world (Mathew S. J., 2017). The perceptual experiences of human beings are not only a matter of varying complexities within the stimulus field and have only a neural basis but are also a matter of the perceiver's individuality or personal characteristics. These include the factors of motivations, expectations, values, attitudes, meanings, beliefs, etc. These play an important role in giving meaning to the external world. Human beings though similar otherwise, feel different ways about themselves. They make choices in diverse directions, which mostly depends on the way they understand themselves - "what qualities they think they hold, what they believe they are capable of, how they view they fare in comparison with others (Sharma H. L, 2014). Modern educational theorists and practitioners consider it a foundational need to develop positive self-perception among High achiever students.

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Bem's (1972) self-perception principle states that individuals come to “know” their attitudes, emotions, and other internal states partially by inferring them from observations of their overt behaviour and/or the circumstances in which this behaviour occurs. Self-perception is made up of two different concepts:

1. Self-regard
2. Self-acceptance

Self-regard measures affirmation of self because of worth or strengths. A person with high self-regard will be self-motivated, has higher self-esteem, and would be a go-getter. Such a person will have a high level of positive mental health, full of confidence determination, and self-worth.

Self-acceptance makes an individual accept himself or herself as the person the individual is. Every individual has a set of strengths or competencies v/s weaknesses or deficiencies. The basic competence of personality can't be changed, and self-acceptance leads to the acceptance of weakness. A person who accepts the weakness will further behave and manage the symptoms accordingly. A person who has better self-acceptance would be having mental health. High achievers are someone successful in their studies or their work, usually as a result of their efforts. High achievers will need to know what you expect of them and will need to be and find their work challenging and interesting. They also may need to be encouraged to take risks to help overcome any fear of failure.

In recent times, the majority of students in higher education institutions have smartphones that get them connected to social media. Easy access to social media and the availability of the internet ensure that students have unlimited opportunities to get engaged in social media. However, high academic achievers also have the same exposure to social media as other students but interestingly, they were not distracted and did not decrease their academic performance. Assuming the medical students are High-academic achievement, a study on medical students showed that pressure from academic studies motivated them to use social media and support each other (Hartnup, Dong, & Eisingerich, 2018). Moreover, high academic achievers were under represented in the existing literature which mainly focuses on undergraduate students, for example, the works by Whelan, Islam, and Brooks (2020), Lau (2017), and Khan, Kend, and Robertson (2016). Based on this argument, this research will be conducted to propose a conceptual framework that linked the influence of high academic achievers' social media usage with types of social media content on students' learning.

The ability to think about one's thinking allows the adolescent to develop concepts about the internal workings of the self-system (Ryner et al., 2001). Self-perceptions of competence and motivation all tend to be inter-correlated among school-going children. Although the direction of its effect is unsettled, students who feel positive about themselves are likely to be intrinsically motivated and tend to be academically competent. This dynamic network of self-related cognition, motivation, and academic performance.

Objectives

- To measure self-perception of male and female High academic achievers.
- To compare the levels of self-perception between male and female High academic achievers.

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Hypotheses

- There will be a significant difference between the levels of self-perception of male and female students who achieve academically high.
- There will be low levels of self-perception in academically high achiever male students as compared to their female counterparts.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Malhotra (2019) compared and contrasted the Aspiration Levels of high and low academic achievers from government and non-government schools. A sample of 600 senior secondary school students (300 government and 300 non-government) were selected by stratified random approach from various schools in Dehradun to determine the significant difference between high and low performers in government and non-government schools. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in aspiration levels between high academic achievers and low academic achievers in both government and non-government schools.

Maya, Sandra, Suci (2018) compared academic achievers' and underachievers' impressions of the educational environment, and to see if there are any gender differences in perceptions. The DREEM questionnaire was used in this cross-sectional study at Sam Ratulangi University (UNSRAT) Faculty of Medicine. This study included 105 medical students who were preparing to take the Indonesia Medical Licensing Exam (IMLE) in February 2017. SPSS was used to examine the data. When compared to academic achievers, the academic underachievers had a higher total median DREEM score (136.00). (126.00). When comparing the perceptions of male and female students, the mean score for female students was found to be higher.

Kabátek, Perales, (2021) reached upon the study of Academic Achievement of Children in Same -and Different-Sex-Parented Families. Using linked administrative data from different population registries ($n = 1,454,577$) from 2006 to 2018. The results indicate that children in same-sex-parented households out from children in different-sex-parented families on standardized test scores, high school graduation rates, and enrolment rates, according to the findings. These benefits apply to both male and female offspring, and they are more prominent in female than male same-sex parented families.

Alsaleh, Alabbasi, Ayoub, et al. (2021) explored the influence of birth order and family size on academic achievement, divergent thinking (DT), and problem finding (PF) with a sample of 156 gifted male and female Arab students ($M = 12.21$ years, $SD = 1.75$). In terms of academic achievement, first-born children had higher grade point averages (GPAs) than other-born children. Academic ability was also linked to family size; gifted kids from smaller households had considerably higher GPAs than gifted students from middle and large-sized families. Later-born gifted students scored higher in PF originality than first, second, third, and fourth-born children, according to follow-up analyses of variance. Smaller households produced gifted students who scored better on creativity. There were no significant effects of birth order or family size on fluency for both DT and PF, as well as DT originality.

Affandi, Husniati, Sapota (2021) explored the source of well-being for high achiever students. The research was conducted through a survey using a questionnaire adapted from Huebner's Multidimensional Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS). The survey was completed by 428 students in grades IV-VI in Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara, who are among the top 10 pupils in their class. After that, the data was evaluated using exploratory

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factor analysis. Physical and psychological safety and the availability of support for student personal growth were identified to be two sources of well-being for high achiever students in this study. According to the findings, high achiever kids demand that teachers and school workers provide a learning environment that allows pupils to reach their full potential without feeling threatened.

Alzeebaree, Zebari (2021) described the qualities of a good EFL teacher as seen by Kurdish high school pupils. A total of 122 eleventh-grade high school students from Duhok, Iraqi Kurdistan, took part in the study. A questionnaire was used to collect data, which was based on Park and Lee's (2006) description of EFL teacher qualities, which included three sections: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective abilities. The findings revealed that students valued English proficiency above all else. In addition, both boys and girls received the lowest mean English cultural ratings. The data revealed that the highest mean scores were for reading English fluently, managing the classroom effectively, and being confident and self-controlling.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and sampling technique

A total sample of 100 (50 male and 50 female) high achievers were studied for their self-perception in the present study from Haridwar district of Uttarakhand, India. The sampling was done by means of a purposive sampling technique keeping in view the inclusion criteria of the sample. Only those students were included in the study who fall in the age group of 13-19 years.

Variables:

- Independent Variable: Gender (Male and Female)
- Dependent Variable: Self-perception

Research Design

A two-group (males and females) research design was applied in conducting the present research.

Tools

- **Preliminary information Record:** The preliminary information was taken from the subject as their name, age, gender, class, SGPA, designation, area (rural or urban), and schools/university name.
- **Self-perception measuring scale (SPMS):** Self-perception Measuring Scale (SPMS) by E. I. Sjostrom in 1962 is a part of the Personal Orientation Inventory (Education and Industrial Testing Services, San Diego, (USA) which has 150 items and 10 sub-scales. Two of these sub-scales i.e., Self-regard and Self-acceptance with 40 items were used in the present study. The test items have two alternatives under each statement. The subject is required to tick mark (✓) the most appropriate answer. The reliability of the test was found by the test-retest method, and it was found to be .73. The validity of that questionnaire is very high.

Procedure of Data Collection

The data was collected individually from the subjects of different schools. Before proceeding further, the purpose of the research was told, and informed consent was also obtained from the subjects. It was also informed that they have a free will to participate in

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the research and it's going to be completely voluntary on their part. Thereafter, the questionnaire (Self-perception measuring scale) was shared with the subjects who consented to participate. The instructions were given to the subjects that they must complete this test in one go and should not leave any of the statements without answering. There are 40 statements, and every statement has two options. They are supposed to put a tick mark (✓) on the option which applies to them most. It was also told that their responses and names will be kept confidential and will be used only for this research. There are no right or wrong answers. There was no time limit but ordinarily, an individual took 10-15 minutes to complete the form. In between, there were some subjects who got confused in some statements after which the confusion was also resolved. After completing the test, they were thanked for their participation in the study. The obtained data were recorded in the master chart which was then processed statistically.

Statistical Treatment:

The obtained data was processed statistically by applying descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Mean, Standard Deviation, were calculated as descriptive statistics, whereas the independent samples t-test was applied as an inferential statistical device.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-value of Male and Female High-academic achievers.

| | Male | | Female | | df | t-value |
|------------------------|-------|-----|--------|------|----|---------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| Self-perception | 23.48 | 3.8 | 22.78 | 3.12 | 98 | 1.00 |

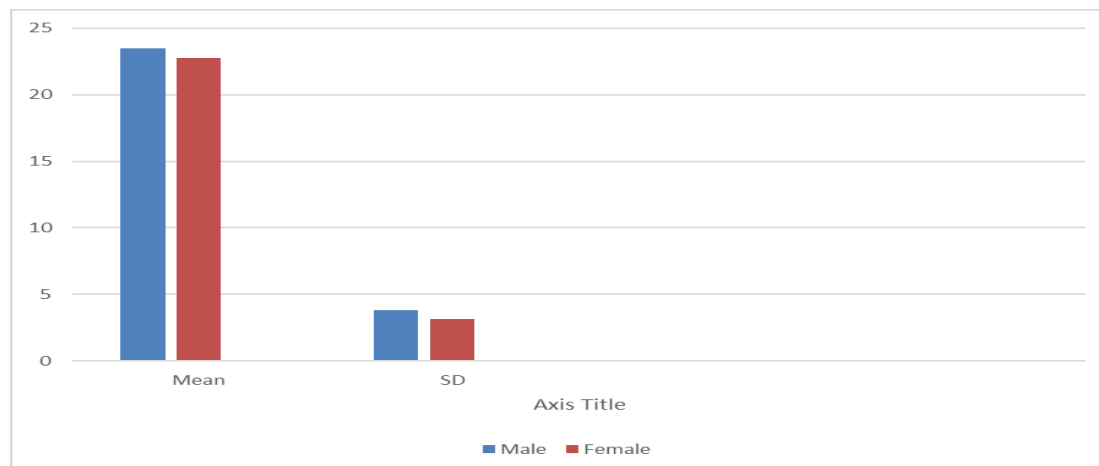


Figure:1 Comparison of self-perception between male and female high academic achievers.

As exhibited in table 1 and figure 1, the male high academic achievers ($M=23.48$) have better self-perception as compared to female high academic achievers ($M=22.78$). However, this difference is found to be not significant ($t=1.00$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted to compare self-perception between male and female high academic achievers. It was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference between the levels of self-perception of male and female students who achieve academically

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high. There will be low levels of self-perception in academically high achiever male students as compared to their female counterparts.

According to the obtained results from the subjects in the present study, male High achievers have better self –perception in comparison to the female students. Male students have more **Self-regard** and **Self-acceptance** than females. This means that male students are self-motivated, have higher self-esteem, and would be a go-getter. They will have a high level of positive mental health, better confidence determination, and self-worth. Apart from these, male students would accept themselves as an individual.

To conclude, it can be said that there are low levels of self-perception in academically high achiever female students as compared to their male counterparts. However, the difference was not found statistically significant. There could be number of factors responsible for low self-perception in female high achievers such as low self-esteem, low confidence, family pressure, and low level of positive mental health. On the contrary, all these factors on the higher could be responsible for better self-perception in the male students.

Limitations and Suggestions

1. The sample size was limited, which could be less representative of the population and may have made an impact on the outcome.
2. Since the area was limited to one district only, a larger area should have been picked, i.e., more districts, cities, and states.
3. Self-perception of students can also be studied in terms of many other variables such as their type of schools (private and government), achievement levels (average and low), type of areas (rural and urban) and economic backgrounds (low, middle and high), grades (high school and intermediate) and similar other variables.
4. To have a more representative sample, the subjects can be scrutinized for the sample on the basis of their opportunities of well-being training / psychological counselling, etc. in the past.
5. A further explorative study can be conducted to find out various factors influencing the Self-perception of male and female high-achievers specially to see what influences the self-perception in male students.

Implications of the study

The findings of the current study highlight the role of gender in self-perception of the academically High-achiever students. It raises a concern about low self-perception and the possible reasons behind it. The results reflect greater self-perception in male academically High-achiever students. These results open up the scope to find out reasons behind better self-perception in males which in turn calls for attention to low self-perception in female. It provides the foundation for generating similar circumstances for female academically high-achiever students by looking into how the circumstances for male and female students are different. The present research puts forward the evidence which can be of help to further in career, students as well as the policymakers in bringing significant positive changes in terms of improving and maintaining self-perception levels of the students. The results can be further generalized to an extent in other psychological conditions and Non-academically (Music, Sports, Dance, Painting, and several forms of art), besides academically High-achiever students. Directly or indirectly, the families of female academically High-achiever students also get the food for thought to get sensitized on this matter and an opportunity to take vital steps to contribute their bit in this direction. The present study also paves the way for further similar studies.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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