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## **Self-Esteem among Higher Secondary Level Students in Madrasahs of West Bengal**

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### **Abstract:**

*Self-esteem is an individual's positive (favourable or high), neutral, or negative attitude towards themselves (unfavourable or low). In this state, there are 614 recognised Madrasahs, of which 102 operate under the Senior Madrasah Education System and 423 operate under the High Madrasah Education System. In these madrasahs, a considerable number of students are pursuing secondary education. The problem of the study was titled "Self-Esteem among Senior High School Students in West Bengal Madrasahs." The present investigation was based on a cross-sectional survey. This study was conducted on a total sample of 500 students enrolled in classes XI and XII at West Bengal Board of Madrasah Education-affiliated schools (WBBME). To collect data on self-esteem, researchers adapted the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale into Bengali (1965). To collect data on additional demographic variables, researchers devised a detailed personal information form in Bengali for the samples. Version 26.0 of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. Discussions were based on data analysis.*

**Keywords: Self-esteem, Higher Secondary level, Madrasahs, West Bengal, Cross-sectional survey.**

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**Introduction:** As per the definition provided by Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, self-esteem refers to "a sense of contentment with one's own character and capabilities" (Oxford Advanced American Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.Com, n.d.). Self-esteem, as defined by the Oxford dictionary, refers to an individual's perception and assessment of themselves, which can range from positive (favourable or high), to neutral (neutral or low), or negative (Self-Esteem - Oxford Reference, n.d.). What are the core elements of self-esteem? Brandon outlined six fundamental principles that contribute to self-esteem: (1) Conscious living, (2) Self-acceptance, (3) Self-responsibility, (4) Self-assertiveness, (5)

Purposeful living, and (6) Personal integrity (Branden, 1994). Based on the discourse, it is evident that self-esteem is essentially an individual's personal evaluation of themselves. Harter (1985) introduced a comprehensive model of self-esteem consisting of five domains: academic proficiency, social recognition, physical attractiveness, athletic aptitude, and behavioural demeanour.

Adolescence, particularly its later stages, is the most pivotal and momentous phase in an individual's life. From an educational standpoint, this stage commences once a pupil finishes high school. In our country, it mostly includes classes IX through XI, which form the secondary education level. Class XI and class XII are pivotal for strategizing one's future profession and attaining individual and societal objectives. Thus, it is imperative for kids at this stage to possess a robust sense of self-esteem in order to fully recognise and utilise their abilities, potentials, prospects, and well-being. According to Zhao et al. (2021), self-esteem, academic self-efficacy, and perceived social support were found to be important factors influencing the level of academic engagement among adolescents. Hyseni Duraku et al. (2018) established a direct relationship between self-esteem and decreased psychological distress, indicating a positive link. Doodman et al. (2017) identified a positive link between academic achievement and self-esteem, indicating that higher levels of self-esteem are associated with better levels of academic achievement, and vice versa. Ogihara et al. (2016) found that self-esteem among elementary and middle school pupils declined, irrespective of gender or developmental stage. Reddy et al. (2015) found that students attending government schools and private schools exhibited similar levels of self-esteem and stress. Students from both government and private schools displayed typical levels of stress and self-esteem. Statistically significant correlations were found between improved pupil-peer and pupil-teacher connections and reduced levels of depression, anxiety, and social dysfunction, as well as increased levels of positive self-esteem and decreased levels of negative self-esteem. Abdel-Khalek et al. (2012) discovered a direct association between self-esteem and per capita income, as well as an inverse association between self-esteem and unemployment rate. Arslan et al. (2010) identified an association between self-esteem and the behaviours of conflict, emotional expression, self-disclosure, and life satisfaction. In their study titled "Perceived social support and self-esteem in adolescence," Ebru Ikiza and Cakar (2010) found a notable and favourable relationship between how teenagers perceive social support and their self-esteem. Alves-Martins et al. (2002) found that in the seventh grade, there were notable disparities in self-esteem between successful and failed pupils. However, these disparities cease to exist by the eighth and ninth grades. The term "madrasah" in Arabic has dual connotations: firstly, it denotes a generic educational institution, and secondly, it specifically denotes an establishment that offers comprehensive education encompassing both secular subjects and Islamic teachings (Blanchard, 2008). In West Bengal, the second interpretation of madrasah is more prevalent. As per the West Bengal Board of Madrasah Education, there are a total of 614 Madrasahs in this state. Out of these, 102 Madrasahs function under the Senior Madrasah Education System, while the

rest 423 run under the High Madrasah Education System. These madrasahs house a substantial population of secondary school pupils.

What is the current state of these adolescents' self-esteem? The researchers of this study were intrigued by this matter. However, there is a lack of research examining the self-esteem levels of teenage students attending madrasahs at the secondary education level. In order to fill this vacuum in knowledge, the researchers formulated the subsequent research inquiries:

- 1) What is the status of self-esteem among students studying at Higher Secondary level in Madrasahs of West Bengal?
- 2) Are there any differences in the levels of self-esteem among students studying at Higher Secondary level in Madrasahs of West Bengal with respect to their Gender, Habitat and Monthly family income?

In accord with the above identified research questions the problem of the study was defined as “**Self-Esteem among Higher Secondary Level Students in Madrasahs of West Bengal**”.

### **Objectives:**

1. To find out the rate of prevalence of self-esteem among higher secondary level students in madrasahs of West Bengal.
2. To compare the self-esteem among the students at higher secondary level in madrasahs of West Bengal on the basis of various demographic variables like gender, habitat, monthly family income.

### **Delimitations:**

The present study was delimited to the following:

1. Data were collected from five madrasahs of Howrah district of West Bengal.
2. Students admitted in the academic session of 2023-2024 in class XI and class XII at higher secondary level were selected as samples.
3. Only 500 samples were collected from both rural and urban areas.
4. The variables of the study were delimited to self-esteem, gender, habitat, monthly family income.

### **Hypotheses:**

- (i) **H<sub>01</sub>**: There is no relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in Madrasahs with regards to their gender.
- (ii) **H<sub>02</sub>**: There is no relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in Madrasahs with regards to their habitat.
- (iii) **H<sub>03</sub>**: There is no relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in Madrasahs with regards to their monthly family income.

**Study Design:** The current study was conducted using a cross-sectional survey methodology. The study's population comprised secondary-level pupils studying in West Bengal madrasahs. The study was done on a sample of 500 students who were enrolled in

grades XI and XII at schools connected with the West Bengal Board of Madrasah Education (WBBME) during the academic session of 2023-2024. Data was collected for Chengail High Madrasah, Sankrail Azizia High Madrasah, Khajutty High Madrasah, Olanpara High Madrasah, and Panchpara High Madrasah, which are schools located in the Howrah region. In order to gather information on self-esteem, researchers modified the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to be used in the Bengali language in 1965. The 4-point Likert scale consisted of 10 items, where 'Strongly Disagree' corresponded to 1 point, 'Disagree' to 2 points, 'Agree' to 3 points, and 'Strongly Agree' to 4 points. The scale's scoring range extended from 0 to 30. The scoring scale was uninterrupted. Greater scores correlated with an elevated perception of one's own value. Researchers created a meticulous personal information questionnaire in Bengali for participants, with the aim of gathering data on supplementary demographic factors such as gender, place of residence, and monthly family income of pupils. The data was analysed using SPSS, specifically version 26.0 of the statistical package for social sciences.

### Analyses

- **Analysis of self-esteem among the higher secondary level students in madrasahs on the basis of different variables using descriptive statistics**

Table 1. *Mean wise Distribution of Self-esteem Scores of Higher Secondary Level Students in Madrasahs on Basis of their Gender*

	Gender	N	Mean
Self-esteem	Female	288	19.00
	Male	212	17.37

Form table 1, it has been observed that among the samples there are 288 female students whose average self-esteem score is 19.00 and there are 212 male students whose average self-esteem score is 17.37. Therefore, it can be established that average Self-Esteem score of female students is better than average Self-Esteem score of male students.

Table 2. *Mean wise Distribution of Self-esteem Scores of Higher Secondary Level Students in Madrasahs on Basis of their Habitat*

	Habitat	N	Mean
Self-Esteem	Rural	372	18.09
	Semi-urban	128	18.94

Form table 2, it has been observed that among the samples there are 372 students from rural areas whose average self-esteem score is 18.09 and there are 128 students from semi-urban areas whose average self-esteem score is 18.94. Therefore, it can be established that average self-esteem score of students from are semi-urban areas are slightly better than average self-esteem score of students from rural areas.

Table 3. *Mean wise Distribution of Self-Esteem Scores of Higher Secondary Level Students in Madrasahs on Basis of their Monthly Family Income*

	Monthly Family Income Group	N	Mean
Self-Esteem	Medium	10	18.80
	Low	22	17.09
	Poor	468	18.36

Form table 3, it has been observed that among the samples there are 10 students from medium monthly family income group whose average self-esteem score is 18.80. There are 22 students from low monthly family income group whose average self-esteem score is 17.09. There are 468 students from poor monthly family income group whose average self-esteem score is 18.36. Therefore, it can be established that average self-esteem score of students from medium monthly family income group is bit better than the other two groups.

□ **Analysis of self-esteem among the higher secondary level students in madrasahs on the basis of different variables using inferential statistics**

**H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in madrasahs with regards to their gender.**

Table 4. *t-test Result Comparing Madrasahs' Higher Secondary Level Female and Male Students on Self-esteem Scores*

	Gender	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference	df	t	Sig. (2- tailed)
Self-Esteem	Female Male	1.636	.349	498	4.683	.000

Here the p value is .000. The null hypothesis can be discarded as calculated  $p < .05$ . Hence, it can be safely concluded that there is a statistically relationship in self-esteem among Higher Secondary level students in Madrasahs with regards to their Gender.

**H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in madrasahs with regards to their habitat.**

Table 5. *t-test Result Comparing Madrasahs' Higher Secondary Level Rural and Urban Students on Self-Esteem Scores*

	Habitat	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Esteem	Rural Semi-Urban	-.843	.402	498	-2.097	.037

Here the p value is .037. The null hypothesis can be discarded as calculated  $p < .05$ . Hence, it can be safely concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship in self-esteem among Higher Secondary level students in Madrasahs with regards to their Habitat.

**H<sub>03</sub>: There is no relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in madrasahs with regards to their monthly family income.**

Table 6. *Kruskal-Wallis H Test Comparing Madrasahs' Higher Secondary Level Students' Self-Esteem Scores across Categories of their Monthly Family Income*

	Monthly Family Income Group	Median	N	Test Statistics	df	Sig.
Self-Esteem	Medium Low Poor	19.00 17.00 18.00	500	3.170 <sup>a,b</sup>	2	.205

a- The test statistics is adjusted for ties.

b- Multiple comparisons are not performed because the overall test does not show significant differences across samples

Here the p value is .205. The null hypothesis can be retained as calculated  $p > .05$ . Hence, it can be safely concluded that there is no statistically relationship in self-esteem among Higher Secondary level students of Madrasahs with regards to their monthly family income.

**Conclusion:** Major findings of this study were:

- The average self-esteem score of female students is better than average self-esteem score of male students studying at higher secondary level in madrasahs of West Bengal.
- At higher secondary level in madrasahs of West Bengal, the average self-esteem score of students from are semi- urban areas are slightly better than average self-esteem score of students from rural areas.
- At higher secondary level in madrasahs of West Bengal, the average self-esteem score of students from medium monthly family income group is bit better than the students from low monthly family income group and also than the students from medium monthly family income group.

- There is a statistically relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in madrasahs with regards to their gender.
- There is a statistically significant relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students in madrasahs with regards to their habitat.
- There is no statistically relationship in self-esteem among higher secondary level students of madrasahs with regards to their monthly family income.

To enhance the self-esteem of madrasah pupils, teachers should provide training and assistance in cultivating positive emotions and managing unrealistic life aspirations. The present study on self-esteem among the higher secondary level students in madrasahs of West Bengal is an ongoing journey of exploration in this specific field of research. Therefore, various further studies could be conducted in future by other researchers considering different perspectives, different or more variables, different novel and valid measuring tools, more samples and more accurate statistical analyses.

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