

# A STUDY OF ANXIETY, SELF-CONCEPT AND GENDER DIFFERENCE AMONG YOUTH

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## **Abstract**

The sole aim of the present study is investigate the anxiety, concept and gender difference among youth. The randomly selected sample of this study is 150 (75 male and 75 female) selected from various colleges located in Chandigarh. The psychological measures like, Generalised Anxiety Disorder-GAD-7, (Lowe, Decker, Muller, et al.2008) and Personal Self Concept Questionnaire, Goi, Madariaga, Axpe, and Goi (2011) were used to assess the selected variables. The findings has been revealed that the anxiety and self concept are inversely correlated. this means that students who have high self-concepts also have low anxiety levels. Furthermore, there were no obvious gender variations in the way respondents felt about themselves and their level of worry. Overall, the relationship between anxiety and identity is a complex and subtle concept that is essential to our welfare and mental health.

**Key words:** anxiety, self-concept, gender variation, Youth

## **Introduction:**

Self-concept is a belief system; it is a complex, multi-level cognitive assessment of an individual's self and relationship to his environment. It's a crucial component of personality. Harter (1996)- 'The self-concept is our total image of us. It is our total picture of our abilities and traits. It is cognitive a construct hatch determines how we feel about ourselves and guides our actions'. • Purkey (1988) – 'Self-concept is defined as the totality of perceptions each person has of themselves'. • According to Symonds (1957) self is the way an individual reacts to himself. Self concept is related to: How a person perceives himself?, What he thinks about himself?, How he values himself?, How he enhances or defends himself?.

Self-concept is 'One's description and evaluation of oneself, including psychological and physical characteristics, qualities, skills, roles and so forth. Self concepts contribute to the individual's sense of identity over time, The influential self-efficacy researcher Roy Baumeister (1999) defines self-concept as follows: "The individual's belief about himself or herself, including the person's attributes and who and what the self is." A similar definition comes from Rosenberg's 1979 book on the topic; he says self-concept is: "...the totality of an individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object." Self-concept is related to several other "self" constructs, such as self-esteem, self-image, self efficacy, and self-awareness.

How you feel about your interactions with the world, such as whether you feel that you are contributing to society Because it influences our motives, attitudes, and behaviors, our opinion of ourselves is significant. It also has an impact on our perceptions of whom we believe ourselves to be, including our feelings of competence and self-worth. When we're just young and still going through the process of self-discovery and identity construction, our view of ourselves tends to be more changeable. These self-perceptions grow considerably more thorough and organized as we get older and learn more about who we are as individuals and what is important to us.

Anxiety is a natural and normal human emotion that is characterized by feelings of worry, nervousness, or unease about a perceived or anticipated threat or danger. It is a common response to stress, and in many cases, it can be beneficial, as it can help individuals to stay alert, focused, and motivated to take action to cope with challenges or danger. However, when anxiety becomes excessive or chronic, it can interfere with daily life and lead to the development of an anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders are a group of mental health conditions characterized by persistent and excessive anxiety and fear. Examples of anxiety disorders include generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and specific phobias.

Anxiety is characterized by uncomfortable activation of numerous physiological systems, and mentally, it is characterized by elevated arousal and apprehension twisted into excruciating worry—all to assist response to an unknown danger, whether real or imagined. A complex reaction to actual or imagined threats is anxiety. Changes in cognition, function, and behaviour may be involved. The fight-or-flight response, which is triggered by real or imagined danger, is a hormonal and chemical messenger that rushes into the brain and signals the brain to release adrenaline. This reaction may occur for some people in challenging social situations or when significant events or decisions are taking place. It is occasionally possible for anxiety symptoms to last longer or be more intense than the stressor or trigger that initially caused it. Additionally, physical symptoms like nausea and elevated blood pressure could appear. Through these reactions, anxiety becomes an anxiety disorder.

Zhan and colleagues (2021) investigated the stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms that different college student populations went through during the COVID-19 pandemic. The responses of 1,586 results revealed that 20.60% of those surveyed (SAS standard score of 50) indicated that they experienced anxiety.

The median was greater for females, students studying medicine, dropping out of school, and negative experience (P 0.05) than for positive experience. It may be said that during the COVID19 pandemic, college pupils experienced high levels of worry and anxiety. Gao and Ping (2020) also revealed that potential anxiety-related characteristics in first-year students and to assess gender differences in youth levels of depression, anxiety, and stress over the course of four academic years.

There will not be a significant difference in the self-concept of male and female college students based on gender, Malhotra, P. (2018). Bharathi, and Sreedevi, (2013), conducted the research to examine how teenagers view themselves. The self-concept of Forty youths from the two cities of Hyderabad, in the state of Telangana State, was examined using the self-concept scale developed by Saraswat in 1984. The study's findings showed that a higher proportion of teenagers had self-concept scores above average in the temperament (85), intellect (77.5), physical (60), and social (52.5) domains. In terms of selfconcept in education, about 47.5% of teenagers had both high and greater-than-average selfconcepts. Additionally, 57.5% of teenagers expressed high moral self-concepts. Self-concept among adolescents as a whole was found to be 27.5 percent high and 72.5 percent above average. As a result, the study may aid parents and instructors in preserving adolescents' positive self concept.

A Comparative Study of Self Concept Between Physical Education and Non-Physical Education Students (Singh, et al. 2013), researchers found no significant differences in self concept between physical education and non-physical education students in all dimensions. The mean self-concept value of the pupils as a whole shows significant disparities in the social, physical, temperamental, educational, ethical, and intellectual dimensions. In terms of the physical and temperamental aspects, male and female students' mean self-concept scores significantly differ from one another, but not in terms of the social, educational, moral, or intellectual dimensions.

### **Objectives:**

To study a significant relationship between self-concept, anxiety and gender difference among youth

To study the significant difference on the obtained the mean score of self-concept and anxiety among youth

### **Hypotheses:**

There is no significant relationship between self-concept, anxiety and gender difference among youth

There will be no significant difference on the obtained the mean score of self-concept and anxiety among youth

## Methodology

Method Present study follows a quantitative research design to study the correlation between Self-concept and Anxiety of college students. The sample is collected from the Indian population, college going individuals.

## Design

The research project uses a quantitative research approach. Two surveys, which were made into online applications for convenience, were used to gather the data. The information was gathered from 50 participants using convenience sampling. A consent form and some basic demographic data were collected from the participants.

## Sample

The randomly selected population for the present study is 175 (75 male and 75 female) selected from different colleges located in Chandigarh. The age range of the sample is 18-25 years. Verbal consent for the entire participant has been sought and all were assured about the anonymity of their participation in the present study and also about confidentiality of their results respectively.

## Tools:

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder-GAD-7**, (Lowe, Decker, Muller, et al.2008). A self-reported questionnaire called the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7) is used to diagnose and assess the severity of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). Seven items make up the GAD-7, which uses reported answer categories and scores to quantify the severity of various GAD symptoms. The total score, which is created by summing the points received for every one of all seven elements, serves as an indicator of assessment. the GAD-7 can determine whether a person's anxiety level is normal, slightly, moderately, or severely increased based on the normative data. Each of the seven items receives an addition score on the scale, with responses worth 0 to 3.

**Personal Self-Concept Questionnaire**, (Goi, Madariaga, Axpe, and Goi (2011) the sole aim of the Self-Concept Questionnaire (PSQ), is to develop a shorter assessment that accurately captured overall self-concept. During the creation of the Personal Self-concept (PSC) Questionnaire, whose final version had 18 instead of the original 22 items?

## RESULTS:

**Table-I: Mean, SD, Skewness on anxiety and self concept among youth**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	SK
Anxiety	75	52.18	5.97	1.03
Self Concept	75	5.13	3.15	0.57

It can be observed from table 2 that the mean score of anxiety is 52.18, the standard deviation is 5.97, skewness of anxiety scores is 1.03 which shows that the distribution is positively skewed, therefore, it can be said that level of self-concept is higher among youth. Mean score of self concept is 5.13, standard deviation is 3.15, skewness scores is 0.57, which shows that distribution is moderately skewed, therefore, it can be said that level of anxiety is moderate among college students.

**Table-II: Correlation of self concept, anxiety and gender difference among Youth**

Gender	Variables	n	Mean	r-value	Significance
Male	Self concept	75	32.91	-	ns
	Anxiety			-0.12989	<0.05
Female	Self Concept	75	34.67	-	ns
	Anxiety			0.62541	<0.05

The overall sample (n=75) mean came out to be 32.91 for males and 34.67 for females. The results revealed that there is a negative correlation for males ( $r = -0.12989$ ,  $p = <0.05$ ) and females ( $r = 0.62541$ ,  $p =$  - which is very low between Self-concept and Anxiety separately. So the null hypothesis (HO1) we formulated is there will be no significant relationship between self-concept and anxiety of male and female students of the college separately will be rejected as there is a negative relation for males and very low for females. Both the correlation between males' and females' self-concept and anxiety domains separately is not significant.

**Table III. T-value of males and females on Self-concept.**

Gender	n	Mean	SD	t-value	p
Male	75	58.68	50.23	1.91	< 0.05
Female	75	61.07	39.34		

The calculated value of t (1.918) is less than the critical value ( $t_{\text{crit}} = 2.010$ ) therefore Hypothesis H2 is not rejected. It further suggests that males and females do not differ significantly on the Self concept domain.

**Table IV. T-value of males and females on Anxiety.**

Gender	n	Mean	SD	t-value	p
Male	75	6.26	36.12	1.78	< 0.05
Female	75	8.33	40.17		

The calculated value of  $t$  (1.78) is less than the critical value ( $t\text{-crit} = 2.011$ ) therefore the Hypothesis H3 is not rejected. It further suggests that males and females do not differ significantly on Anxiety.

## DISCUSSION

It is hypothesized that “there exists no significant difference among the self concept and anxiety of females and of males separately”. To test the above hypothesis, mean and correlation were calculated for the variables SELF-concept and anxiety among male and female participants separately. In the case of males, the correlation between self-concept and anxiety came out to be negative ( $r = -0.12989$ ) and for females, the result showed a very low correlation ( $r = 0.06254$ ) and it is not significant at 0.05 level (See Table 3). The correlation suggests that the Null hypothesis we formulated will be rejected as it shows that there is a negative relationship. So, it is revealed that anxiety and self concept is having inverse relations.

Zuckerman (1989), questionnaire responses from 804 women and 127 men were compared to determine whether there were gender differences in the stress levels and responses of youth, as well as in the degree to which their self-esteem, interpersonal self-confidence, and self-concepts were related to their experiences with stress. In most areas of life, men and women revealed similar levels of stress, although women reported higher levels of stress related to family connections and worries regarding their mental health.

It further suggests that males and females do not differ significantly on self-concept levels. This points to the information that both men and women have the almost same level of self-concept. In the investigation conducted (Khan and Alam, 2015), 400 high school students (200 boys and 200 girls) between the ages of 16 and 17 were chosen at random from four distinct educational institutions in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh. to evaluate how high school pupils view themselves The Self-Concept Questionnaire, created (Saraswat 1984), was utilized. It offers a total self-concept score as well as six dimensions: physical, social, intellectual, moral, educational, and temperamental. The Achievement Motivation (n-Ach) Scale, created (Deo and Mohan 1985), was used to assess the level of achievement motivation among high school pupils. The relationship involving self-concept and achievement motivation was examined using Pearson's product-moment coefficient correlation, and the mean scores of boys and girls on these variables were compared using the  $t$ -test. The study's findings showed that there were no gender differences in all aspects of self-concept, including physical self-concept, intellectual self-concept, educational self-concept, and temperamental self-concept.

It implies that both males and females have almost the same amount of anxiety level. Cameron and Anu et. al. 2011, the prevalence of anxiety disorders is typically higher in women, but less is known about how gender influences the age of onset, chronicity, comorbidity, and burden of illness.

Using information from the Collaborative Psychiatric Epidemiology Studies, gender differences in DSM-IV anxiety disorders were investigated in a sizable adult sample (N = 20,013). Male: female prevalence ratios for any anxiety disorder were 1:1.7 over the course of a lifetime and 1:1.79 during a 12-month period. With the exception of social anxiety disorder, which showed no gender difference in prevalence, women were more likely to receive lifetime diagnoses for all of the anxiety disorders investigated. There were no gender variations in the illness's age of onset or degree of chronicity. However, women were more likely than males to have received a lifetime diagnosis of an anxiety condition.

Because of this, anxiety and self-concept are adversely related. The students who have an average, good, or very good self-concept are typically less worried and socially and academically well-adjusted. Students with lower-than-average self-esteem are more worried and less socially and academically balanced. The current study explores the connection between anxiety and one's self-concept. In order to support students' academic development, it also investigates the impacts of various dialectics of location, gender, and stream of study on higher secondary students' self concept. 800 children were selected as a sample from several Varanasi division schools. We investigated the association between self-concept and anxiety as well as the type of self-concept using basic statistical techniques like correlation of co-efficient and t-test. The study finds that a high level of anxiety negatively impacted a student's self-concept, and that this effect was not influenced by geography, gender, or study stream. Typically, students in the region had high self concepts.

### **Conclusion:**

A quantitative, random sampling design was used in the investigation of self concept, anxiety and gender difference among youth, the total 175 (75 male and 75 female) youth (age range-18-25 years) has been selected form different colleges of Chandigarh. The findings demonstrated that there was little correlation between anxiety and self-concept in college students. As self-concept and anxiety levels are inversely correlated, this means that students who have high self-concepts also have low anxiety levels. Psychologists can develop techniques to help people accomplish a more positive and wholesome sense of self and keep a low level of anxiety by understanding its various qualities of it, allowing them to function normally in daily life. Additionally, there were no obvious gender differences in terms of people's self-concept and anxiety.

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