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Analytical Review on Self- Concept among Residents of Mizoram University with Reference to Gender

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Abstract

Our sense of our own abilities and individuality is known as our self-concept. While our self-perception grows more structured, defined, and detailed as we age, our self-concept is still relatively vague and subject to change. It is a set of convictions about a person's character, unusual traits, and usual conduct. It is the capacity to engage with people, provide for basic necessities, be conscious of one's own emotional states, and feel about one's appearance, health, and general state of being, whether one succeeds or fails. The present study examined the level of self-concept among hostellers of Mizoram University, with special reference to gender. A descriptive survey method was adopted, and the sample consisted of 200 university hostellers, including 100 male and 100 female students, selected through convenient sampling from Chhawkhlei and Mawmrang Halls of Residence at Mizoram University. Data were collected using the Self-Concept Questionnaire developed by Pratibha Deo and analyzed through descriptive statistics and the t-test. The findings revealed that most of the hostellers exhibited a low level of self-concept. The analysis further showed that there was no statistically significant difference in self-concept between male and female hostellers. The study underscores the importance of organizing awareness initiatives, counselling support, and creating a positive hostel environment to promote healthy self-concept and overall student development.

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1. Introduction

In the psychology of the self, self-concept (also referred to as self-construction, self-identity, self-perspective, or self-structure) is defined as a collection of beliefs an individual holds about oneself. Generally, self-concept embodies the answer to the question, "Who am I?"

Self-concept is distinguishable from self-awareness, which refers to the extent to which self-knowledge is defined, consistent, and applicable to one's attitudes and dispositions. It also differs from self-esteem: self-concept represents the cognitive or descriptive aspect of the self (e.g., "I am a fast runner"), whereas self-esteem is evaluative in nature (e.g., "I feel good about being a fast runner").

Self-concept is composed of self-schemas and interacts with self-esteem, self-knowledge, and the social self to form the self as a whole. It includes past, present, and future selves, wherein future selves (or possible selves) represent individuals' perceptions of what they might become, wish to become, or fear becoming. These possible selves may function as incentives for certain behaviours. The way individuals perceive their past or future selves is closely related to their perception of their present self. Temporal self-appraisal theory suggests that individuals tend to maintain a positive self-evaluation by distancing themselves from negative self-perceptions and emphasizing positive ones. Consequently, individuals often view their past selves less favourably (e.g., "I am better than I used to be") and their future selves more positively (e.g., "I will be better than I am now"). Self-concept refers to the accumulation of knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes that individuals hold about themselves. It encompasses physical, psychological, and social attributes and is shaped by personal experiences, social interactions, and societal influences. Understanding self-concept is crucial in the field of psychology, as it significantly influences behaviour, emotions, and interpersonal relationships.

The self-concept can be broadly categorized into the following components:

- **Self-image:** The way an individual perceives oneself, including physical appearance, skills, and abilities.
- **Self-esteem:** The evaluative component of self-concept, reflecting an individual's overall sense of self-worth and satisfaction.
- **Ideal self:** The individual's perception of desired characteristics, values, and goals.
- **Self-identity:** The sense of continuity and coherence experienced by an individual across time and situations.

Rationale of the Study

Self-concept plays a critical role in shaping an individual's behaviour, academic performance, mental well-being, and interpersonal relationships. For university students, particularly those living away from home in hostels, the development of self-concept becomes even more significant due to exposure to a new social environment, academic pressures, and increasing independence. Mizoram University hosts a diverse student population, many of whom reside in university hostels. Hostel life can have both positive and negative impacts on a student's self-perception. While it can foster independence, social skills, and confidence, it may also lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, or identity-related challenges for some individuals. Despite the importance of self-concept in student life, limited research has focused on this area within the specific context of Mizoram University.

Understanding the level of self-concept among hostellers can provide valuable insights into their emotional and psychological well-being, identify areas requiring intervention, and assist university authorities in creating more supportive hostel environments. This study aims to address this gap by assessing the level of self-concept among hostellers of Mizoram University, examining patterns across gender, academic discipline, and year of study, and generating data that may inform student welfare programmes and counselling services.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the level of self-concept among residents of Mizoram University Hostel.
2. To compare the level of self-concept among residents of Mizoram University Hostels with reference to their gender.
3. To suggest measures for enhancing Self Concept among residents of Mizoram University Hostel.

Hypothesis of the Study

In connection to the second objective of the study, the following hypotheses was formulated for empirical testing: There is no significant difference in the self-concept among Mizoram University hostellers with reference to their gender.

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to the hostellers of Chhawkhlei and Mawmrang Hall of Residence at Mizoram University.

Review of Related Literature

Zahra et al (2010) ^[1] conducted a study on Relationship of Academic, Physical and Social Self-Concepts of Students with their Academic Achievement. The population consists of female bachelor degree students and a sample of 1500 students was selected by using two stage cluster sampling technique. The study revealed that there exists a significant but weak correlation between academic self-concept and academic achievement.

Dkhar (2011) ^[2] conducted a study on Self-concept and Academic Achievement of Students of Secondary Schools of Khliehriat Block, Jaintia Hills Meghalaya. The study showed that there is no significant difference in self-concept of boys and girls of secondary schools. It is also found that there is no significant difference in the academic achievement of boys and girls secondary schools of Khliehriat Block.

Singh and Singh (2012) ^[3] conducted a study on Emotional intelligence of adolescents in relation to their self-concept.

The population consists of adolescent's children studying in 9th and 10th classes. The sample of the study comprised of 400 adolescent children out of which 200 were males and 200 were females. The study found that male and female students did not differ significantly on self-concept.

Chaudhary (2014) ^[4] took up an investigation on the conceptual understanding in mathematics in relation to intelligence, self-concept and self-efficacy. After the investigation, it was found out that there was no significance difference between male and female in their self-concept. Therefore, null hypothesis was accepted.

Petkar (2015) ^[5] conducted a study on Self-concept of disciplined and undisciplined students of rural and urban areas. One of the objectives was to compare the self-concept of disciplined and undisciplined students of rural and urban areas. It was found that disciplined and undisciplined boys and girls of rural as well as urban areas differ in self-concept.

Kharmalki (2019) ^[6] conducted a study on Self-concept, defence mechanism and frustration tolerance amongst higher secondary students of East Khasi Hills. The population consisted of higher secondary students in East Khasi Hills. The findings of the study revealed that, majority of the students possess Above Average Self-concept indicating that the higher secondary students have a very high attitude towards self.

Methodology of the Study

Method of Study

Since the main objective of the study is to study the level of self-concept among Mizoram University hostellers, descriptive research approach was followed for the present study.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study includes 100 students (Male) of

Mawmrang Hall of Residence and 100 students (Female) of Chhawkhlei Hall of Residence. Snow ball sampling technique was followed for selection of the sample.

Tool Used

For the present study, Questionnaire to assess the level of Self Concept among Mizoram University Hosteller, developed by Dr. (Mrs) Pratibha Deo (Ex-Professor and Head Department of Education University of Bombay (MUMBAI), was used. The questionnaire consisted of 90 statements with response options ranging from *Very much like this* to *Not at all like this*, including *Much like this*, *Uncertain*, and *Not like this*.

Data Collection

For data collection, the investigator personally visited the sampled department and after getting permission from the head of the department, the questionnaire was distributed to the students. After each student responded to the questionnaire, the filled-up questionnaire was then collected by the investigator.

Statistical Techniques Used

The data collected were tabulated and then analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. For analysing the data, descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation and t-test were used.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

This section deals with the analysis of data collected from the students of Mizoram University Hostellers and their interpretation and comparison to fulfil the first and second objectives of the study.

Objective 1: Level of Self-Concept among Mizoram University Hostellers

The self-concept among Mizoram University hostellers on the choices along with percentage put in the parenthesis are presented in Table 1 followed by interpretation.

Table 1: Study level of Self-Concept among Mizoram University Hostellers

| Level of Self-Concept | Scoring key |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| High | 450 |
| Average | 300 |
| Low | 200 |

| Gender | Mean | SD | Level |
|--------|------|-------|-------|
| Male | 214 | 29.26 | Low |
| Female | 209 | 20.60 | Low |

The results indicate that both male and female hostellers of Mizoram University have low level of self-concept.

Objective 2: Comparison of Self-Concept among Mizoram University Hostellers

Self-concept among Mizoram University hostellers was

compared on the basis of gender. For this purpose, the mean, standard deviation, and *t*-test were calculated, and the results are presented in Table 2, followed by interpretation.

Table 2: Comparison of Self-Concept among Mizoram University Hostellers with reference to their gender

| Group Compared | N | Mean | SD | t value | Sig. Level |
|----------------|-----|------|-------|---------|------------|
| Male | 100 | 214 | 29.26 | 0.25 | NS |
| Female | 100 | 209 | 20.60 | | |

(NS=Not Significant)

Table 2 reveals that the *t* value relating to the comparison of self-concept among Mizoram University hostellers with reference to their gender is not significant at both levels. Therefore, the hypotheses, “*There is no significant difference in the self-concept among Mizoram University hostellers with reference to their gender*” is not rejected. It implies that there is no significant difference in the self-concept among male and female students of Mizoram University Hostellers.

Findings and Discussion

Major Findings of the Study

- Majority of the hostellers have low level of self-concept. It is therefore imperative to enhance and boost one’s self concept among students of Mizoram University residing in the hostels. The study’s findings suggest a connection between self-concept and several other developmental achievements. Positive peer and parent interactions and relationships, positive social development, ethnic identity development, protection against the emergence of a deviant identity and delinquent behaviours, reduced anxiety and depression, and increased satisfaction have all been empirically linked to the affective component of self-concept.
- It was found that there is no significant difference in the self-concept among Mizoram University hostellers. with reference to gender. However, the mean scores of hosteller boys was found to be higher as compared to girls among the residents of Mizoram University Hostel. Students that have a positive self-concept do well in both social and academic settings. Thus, both parents and teachers must use various methods and techniques to raise their self-esteem level.

Discussion on the Findings

The findings of the present study revealed that the majority of Mizoram University hostellers exhibited a low level of self-concept. This may be attributed to factors associated with hostel life, such as academic pressure, emotional adjustment, and living away from family support, which can influence students’ self-perception during the university years.

The study further indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in self-concept between male and female hostellers. This suggests that gender does not play a decisive role in shaping self-concept in the hostel environment of Mizoram University. Both male and female

students are exposed to similar academic demands and social conditions, which may result in comparable levels of self-concept. This finding is consistent with earlier studies conducted by **Singh and Singh (2012)** and **Chaudhary (2014)**, who also reported no significant gender differences in self-concept among students.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of creating a supportive hostel environment and providing counselling and self-awareness programmes to enhance students’ self-concept and psychological well-being.

Suggestions

- Hostellers should be encouraged to engage in self-discovery and self-awareness activities to develop a better understanding of themselves.
- Counselling programmes focusing on self-concept should be organized at both the undergraduate and community levels.
- Hostellers should be guided to strengthen their self-esteem and cultivate a positive outlook toward themselves and their abilities.
- Students should be encouraged to avoid unhealthy comparisons with others, as such comparisons may negatively affect their self-concept.
- Adapting to new obstacles in life is a crucial stage in developing your self-concept. Make a plan of action for handling any issues that may arise.
- Maintaining positive attitudes and relationships will be facilitated by being conscious of one’s own emotions. Leaders, for instance, are able to identify when they are getting annoyed during a disagreement with someone and can request some time to reflect. Being able to recognise and comprehend what you’re experiencing is crucial to having positive, productive conversations with those people around them.

Conclusion

Based on the overall findings of the study, it can be concluded that the residents of Mizoram university hostels exhibit a low level of self-concept. A low self-concept can significantly influence various aspects of an individual’s life, including decision-making, self-regulation, emotional well-being, and interpersonal relationships. Recognizing and addressing issues related to self-concept is therefore essential for promoting a healthy self-image and overall psychological

well-being. Therefore, residents of Mizoram University hostels should be encouraged to develop self-awareness and engage in positive practices that support the enhancement of their self-concept.

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