



Influence of locality on high school students' self-esteem: A study conducted at Lakhipur H.S. school and Rang sai High School in Goalpara district of Assam

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of locality on high school students' self-esteem. The research sample was drawn from two government or public schools in the Goalpara district of Assam. One school is in a rural area, and another is in an urban area of the district. A total of 105 high school students made up the sample for the study. A 23-item student self-esteem measurement scale has been used to understand the level of self-esteem among the students. This was done by the researchers with the help of the teachers at the school. To find out the level of self-esteem among students in rural and urban schools, mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis have been calculated from the scores of the students on the self-esteem scale. The study's findings indicate that locality has a significant influence on students' self-esteem in both schools.

Keywords: locality, self-esteem, high school, rural, urban and student

Introduction

Self-esteem is one of the significant factors in human development. It influences everyone, regardless of religion, race, caste, class, gender, ethnicity, and so on. People begin to form a sense of self and identity at different stages of their lives, from childhood to old age. Branden (1992) [1] defined self-esteem as "*Self-esteem is the disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with the challenges of life and as deserving of happiness.*" For Rosenberg (1965) [5], self-esteem is the positive or negative orientation towards one's self. Without a strong sense of self-esteem, an individual may feel lost and unable to make decisions or accept themselves for who they are. This lack of self-esteem can lead to a variety of mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, as well as physical health problems. This is why self-esteem is such an important concept: it provides individuals with a sense of security, control, and acceptance in a world that can often be overwhelming. Having a strong sense of self-esteem can provide students with a sense of purpose and direction, helping them to make choices and reach their goals in life.

Self-esteem is essential for high school students, as it gives them the confidence to push through difficult times and persevere when challenged both academically and socially. Self-esteem allows students to develop a sense of self-worth and belief in their own abilities. It gives them the confidence to make decisions, set goals, and face obstacles head-on. Self-esteem is especially important during the high school years, when students are in a period of personal development. There may be various factors that affect the self-esteem of high school students. Among the many factors, the locality dimension can be regarded as one of the most important factors that influence their self-esteem.

The self-esteem of the students may depend on the location of the school. The school experience is one of the significant determinants of students' sense of self. It affects the self-concept, values and self-esteem of students (Scott *et al.*, 1996) [6]. Depending on the location of the school, some students may be surrounded by a supportive environment

with access to educational resources, while other students may feel isolated and lack access to resources. As such, students from different localities may have different levels of self-esteem. This is because the environment in which one studies can play an important role in terms of influencing their self-esteem. The level of self-esteem among students can vary drastically depending on where their school is located. The students from rural areas may have a different level of self-esteem compared to urban or town area students, and the factors that influence their self-esteem may also vary. With the favourable environment, students can have access to educational resources that can further develop their self-esteem. In light of this, the study will try to understand the influence of locality on the students' self-esteem.

Review of Literature

Several research scholars around the world have studied the impact of school and its location on students' self-esteem. While most of these studies focus on the impact of the physical environment on students' self-esteem, some studies have looked at how social and cultural environments can affect students' self-esteem. According to Pushpalatha N. *et al.* (2016) [4], school has a major impact on students' self-esteem development. In addition to their parents, students spend a significant amount of time at school with their peers and teachers. Through classes and extracurricular activities, the school gives its students a wide range of experiences, which they use to compare themselves to their classmates. The school environment plays an essential role in shaping and developing students' self-esteem. All of these elements influence students' self-esteem. Moreover, self-esteem is influenced by the socio-economic background of the family as well as the influence of the media.

The size and location of the school have an impact on the self-esteem of high school students, according to Coladarc and Cobb (1996) [2]. The student's participation in extracurricular activities at school also affects his or her feelings of self-esteem. In addition, students in larger

schools had higher self-esteem than students in smaller schools. They discovered that student participation in extracurricular activities at school is frequently associated with self-esteem, particularly for students attending larger schools. Furthermore, they contend that the school environment has a significant effect on students' self-esteem.

According to Connor et al. (2004) [3], schools can have a major impact on an adolescent student's self-esteem development. Adolescents are high school student groups, and this stage is crucial for the development of healthy self-esteem. There is also a considerable disparity in self-esteem between students from the mainstream and those from the non-mainstream. The term mainstream generally denotes the urban areas and non-mainstream means remote or rural areas. The distinction between mainstream and non-mainstream students reflects the students' and schools' geographic location.

From the above review of the literature, it is clear that the location of the school has an important effect on the self-esteem of high school students. The findings suggest that the factors associated with a school's location can significantly impact students' sense of self-esteem, especially when it comes to socio-economic status, racial and ethnic diversity, and cultural resources.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to find out level of self-esteem of the students based on locality of the school. The research will also explore whether locality has any influence on the self-esteem of the high school students in the two schools.

Research Methodology

The study has been conducted in two schools in the Goalpara district of Assam. The Goalpara district is located in the western part of the state of Assam. Among the two schools, one school is from rural areas and another from urban areas. The name of the rural school is Rangasai High School and the name of town areas school is Lakhipur H.S. School. Both the schools are under the state government, and the medium of instruction at the school is Assamese. The study has been conducted among 105 students of two schools. Out 105 students, 50 of them are from Rangasai High School and 55 students are from Lakhipur H.S. School. The student sample has been selected by using random sampling method out of the total high school students from both schools.

The present research is both qualitative and quantitative. In order to find out the first objective, quantitative study has been employed and for the second objective entails the qualitative study. The research design for the study is explorative research design. The study seeks to explore whether locality of school has any influence on the self-esteem of the students. The data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data has been collected through fieldwork conducted by the researcher. The secondary data includes books, journal articles, research papers etc. Interview method and observation method has been used to collect data in the study. Unstructured interview method and non-participant observation method has been used in the study. A self-esteem measurement scale has been employed to found out the self-esteem of students in the two schools. Interview scheduled has been also as a tool for collecting primary data from the field.

Significance of the Study

The present research is significant for its investigation on the issue of locality dimension with regard to self-esteem of the students in Goalpara district. It will seek to understand the influence of locality on the self-esteem of the students. The locality of rural and urban has any influence on the development of self-esteem of high school students.

Limitations

The study has been conducted among the students of only two schools out of many in the district. The number of sample for the study is also small. Only government school students have been taken for the study, and students from private schools have not been taken for the study. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be taken as a representation of all students in the district.

The Relevance of Locality on Students' Self-esteem

The relevance of locality for students' self-esteem is huge. Locality is one of the pertinent factors that affect the self-esteem of students. Students in different areas experience different levels of self-esteem. Locality plays an important role in determining the kind of environment and people around students, which can have an effect on their self-esteem (Coladarci and Cobb, 1996) [2]. The high and low levels of self-esteem of the students may be affected by their locality. A student in an urban area may have a different level of self-esteem compared to a student in a rural area.

The location of the school may also become the reason for high or low self-esteem for some students. For instance, a student from a rural area may not have the same resources and opportunities as those in urban areas, thus causing them to have low self-esteem. This inequality in resources and opportunities can lead to a disparity in the self-esteem of rural and urban students. In addition, the social environment of urban and rural areas may also contribute to a student's self-esteem. Rural students may be exposed to limited social and cultural events, thus not having the opportunity to interact with those from different backgrounds. On the other hand, urban students have access to a variety of social and cultural events, allowing them to expand their worldview and develop social connections with peers from different backgrounds. This cultural and social exchange can foster feelings of self-confidence, allowing urban students to have higher levels of self-esteem than their rural counterparts. This is most likely due to the differences between urban and rural environments. Thus, locality dimension can provide us an insight in understanding its impact on the self-esteem of students.

Students' Level of Self-esteem

Students from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds tend to show different levels of self-esteem in society. It is imperative to understand the level of self-esteem of the students with respect to their nature of school. In order to determine the level of self-esteem of the students of Rangasai High School, the researcher administered Self-esteem measurement scale on 50 students and found out the Mean, Median, Standard Deviation (SD), Skewness and Kurtosis values of the students from the scores obtained in the Self-esteem scale. The following table 1.1 shows the value of Mean, Median, Standard Deviation (SD), Skewness and Kurtosis.

Table 1: Students’ Level of Self-esteem at Rang sai High School

Sl No	Variable	N	Mean	Median	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	Self-esteem	50	90.62	90	6.92	.95	2.46

(Source: Fieldwork)

Figure 1.1 depicts the above tabulated data in table 1.1.

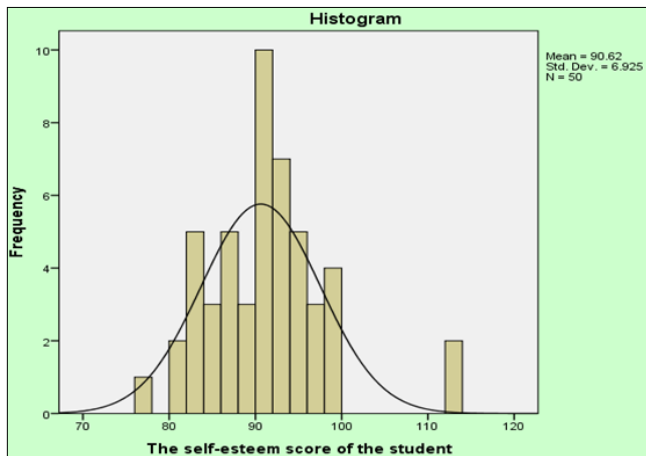


Fig 1: The Self-esteem Score of the Students at Rang sai High School

Table 1.1 shows the self-esteem scores of the students of rural high school which is known as Rang sai High School in the district of Goalpara. There have been 50 students selected for the study from the school. The students' mean, median, and standard deviation scores for self-esteem are 90.62, 90.00, and 6.92, respectively. The skewness score for self-esteem is 0.95, indicating that the distribution of self-esteem scores is positively skewed. It also denotes that the scores are gathered at the low end of the scale which is on the left side of the curve and spread out gradually towards the high end which is on the right side of the curve. In the positively skewed distribution, the value of mean is higher than the median value. The majority of students have scored around the scores 80-100. Only a few students have scored below 80 and also a few students have scored more than 100 in the self-esteem scale. Thus, it can be said that majority of students have obtained normal or medium level scores in the scale.

In the analysis of Kurtosis value using IBM SPSS 21 version, if the calculated value is 3, it is known as Mesokurtic, if the value is less than 3, it is known as Platykurtic, and if the calculated value is greater than 3, it is known as Leptokurtic. The kurtosis value of self-esteem of the rural high school students of Goalpara district is 2.46 which indicate that the distribution is platykurtic. Platykurtic distribution means the scores are scattered more evenly than the normal distribution and the shape of the curve is flatter than the normal one. As a result of the above study, it is apparent that the distribution of self-esteem scores among students of rural high school in Goalpara district is positively skewed and platykurtic in nature.

Similarly, in order to find out the students’ level of self-esteem at Lakhipur H.S. School in Goalpara district, the researcher has found out the Mean, Median, Standard Deviation (SD), Skewness and Kurtosis values of the students from the scores obtained in the Self-esteem scale. The following table 1.2 shows the value of Mean, Median, Standard Deviation (SD), Skewness and Kurtosis.

Table 2: Students’ Level of Self-esteem at Lakhipur H.S. School

Sl No	Variable	N	Mean	Median	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	Self-esteem	55	91.22	94	10.88	-.90	.58

(Source: Fieldwork)

The below figure 1.2 represents the above tabulated data in the table 1.2

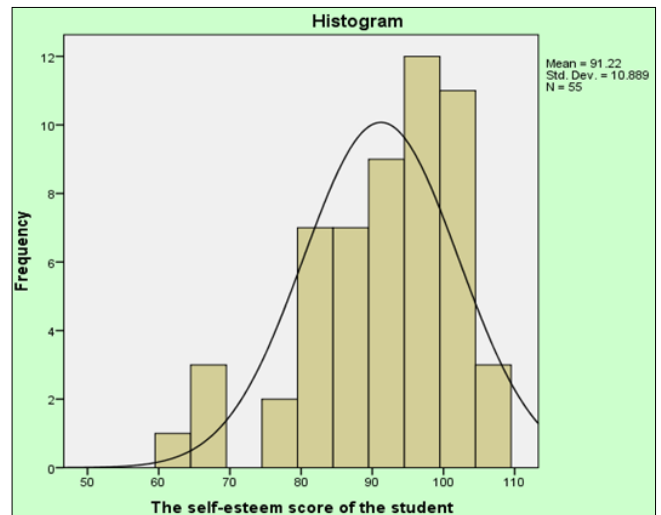


Fig 2: The Self-esteem Score of the Students at Lakhipur H.S. School

Table 1.2 shows the self-esteem scores of the students of urban areas’ high school which is known as Lakhipur H.S. School in Dibrugarh district of Assam. The total number of students selected from the school in the study is 55. The students' mean, median, and standard deviation scores for self-esteem are 91.22, 94.00, and 10.88, respectively. The skewness score for self-esteem is -.90, indicating that the distribution of self-esteem scores is negatively skewed. It also signifies that the scores are concentrated at the high end of the scale that is the right side of the curve and progressively spread out towards the low or left end. In the negatively skewed distribution, the value of median is higher than the mean value. The majority of the students have scored around 80-100 and a few have scored more than 100 in the self-esteem scale. On the other hand, a few others have scored below the range of 80. Thus, it can be said that majority of the urban areas’ high school students have obtained normal or medium level scores in the scale. The kurtosis value of self-esteem of the high school students of Lakhipur H.S. School in Goalpara district is 0.58, which indicates that the distribution is platykurtic. As a result of the above analysis of the study, it is apparent that the distribution of self-esteem scores of the Lakhipur H.S. School students in Goalpara district is negatively skewed and platykurtic in character.

Schools’ Location-wise Classification of Students’ Self-esteem

Based on their scores on the self-esteem measurement scale, students at Rang sai High School and Lakhipur H.S. School were classified as having high, low, or normal self-esteem. The following table 1.3 exhibits the classification of self-esteem among students from both schools.

Table 3: Classification of Students’ Self-esteem at Rang sai High School and Lakhipur H.S. School

Sl No	Name of the Schools	Students’ Self-esteem			Grand Total
		High Self-esteem	Low Self-esteem	Normal Self-esteem	
1.	Rang sai High School (Rural Area)	6 12%	2 4%	42 84%	50 100%
2.	Lakhipur H.S. School (Urban Area)	15 27.30%	9 16.40%	31 56.40%	55 100%
3.	Total	21 20%	11 10.47%	73 69.52%	105 100%

(Source: Fieldwork)

Table 1.3 shows the classification of students’ self-esteem as high, low, and normal for both schools. Among the 50 students respondents from Rang sai High School, 6 (12%) have high self-esteem, 2 (4%) have low self-esteem, and 42 (84%) have normal self-esteem. It has been seen that out of the total number of respondents in the school, most of the respondents have a normal level of self-esteem. On the other hand, out of the 55 students from Lakhipur H.S. School, 15 (27.30% of them) have high self-esteem, 9 (16.40%) have low self-esteem, and 31 (56.40%) have normal self-esteem. It has been observed that out of the total 105 respondents from both schools, 21 (20%) have high self-esteem, 11 (10.47%) have low self-esteem, and 73 (69.52%) have normal self-esteem. The above data reveals that the percentage of respondents with high self-esteem in the urban located school is greater than that in the rural located school. On the other hand, the percentage of students with low self-esteem in the urban school is higher than the rural school. The results of the study also show that the percentage of respondents with normal level of self-esteem in rural located high school is much greater than the urban areas’ school. In the following section, the influence of locality on self-esteem among students from both the school has been discussed.

Influence of Locality on Students’ Self-esteem

The locality dimension may have a variety of influences on students’ self-esteem. In the study, we classified students as having high, low, or normal self-esteem based on their self-esteem measurement scale scores. It was found that there were significant differences in self-esteem scores between rural and urban students. In light of this, we have discussed the influence of locality on students’ self-esteem in terms of locality (rural and urban areas) in the following sections.

Influence of locality on Rural High School Students’ Self-esteem

The influence of locality on having high self-esteem may differ from student to student. A few high self-esteem students have argued that locality does not affect their level of self-esteem. On the other hand, a few other students also acknowledge that locality does affect them to some extent, if not a great extent. Despite these differing opinions, most high self-esteem students are in agreement that the environment in which they live does have some influence on their self-esteem. This result of the study was also found by Pushpalatha N. *et al.* (2016) [4] in their study of self-esteem among school students. They agree that their local surroundings, such as the people in their community or the physical environment, have a direct impact on their self-esteem. In particular, the people in a student’s local community can shape their self-esteem in positive or negative ways.

For rural high school students who have low self-esteem, they often attribute their low self-esteem to their locality. For them, locality is one of the possible factors contributing

to their low self-esteem. Nevertheless, the degree to which locality affects one’s self-esteem is still a point of contention. The study has found that some students are from rural areas often find themselves lacking the same resources and opportunities as those from urban areas, leading to a feeling of being left out and isolated. This lack of resources can lead to a sense of inadequacy and a negative self-image. This feeling of inadequacy and low self-esteem is further exacerbated by the fact that rural students often have fewer opportunities to express their individual personalities, as they may feel a lack of access to other outlets such as recreation and cultural activities. Consequently, these students are more likely to experience feelings of exclusion and marginalization due to their lack of resources and access to educational and social activities that are common in urban areas. On the other hand, out of the 42 normal self-esteem students from the high school located in a rural area, most of them believe that locality and environment do have an influence on the students’ self-esteem. Only a few students have rejected the notion that the location of the school can affect their self-esteem. The majority of the students felt that their rural location was a disadvantage to them, as they believed it limited the resources and opportunities available to them. This suggests that location and environment play a crucial role in how students develop their self-esteem. By analysing the results of the study, it is evident that environmental factors and locality are influential in determining a student’s self-esteem in a rural area.

Influence of locality on Urban High School Students’ Self-esteem

Several responses have been gathered from students about how location affects the self-esteem of high school students in an urban area. The present research has found that, for many urban students, the area or locality in which they grow up plays a major role in the development of their self-esteem. This research finding also resembles the findings of Connor *et al.* (2004) [3], who studied the impact of self-esteem on students. Growing up in an urban environment can lead to a variety of experiences that can have both positive and negative effects on one’s self-esteem. These positive and negative experiences can include both the physical environment, such as unsafe neighbor hoods or a lack of educational resources, and the social environment, such as bullying or peer pressure. It is evident that the location of an urban area can greatly influence the self-esteem of a high school student.

The study found that students with high self-esteem are influenced by their surroundings. It has a significant impact on the students’ strong self-esteem. A few students’ high self-esteem is unaffected by their location. According to the findings of the study, students with high self-esteem were more likely to be influenced by their surroundings, which had a greater impact on their overall confidence. While locality did have a slight influence on some students with high self-esteem, it was not as significant as the overall

environment in which they were placed. It has also been found that, for a few high self-esteem students, locality has no effect on their self-esteem. On the other hand, students with low self-esteem are also influenced, to some extent or to a great extent, by the locality of the school. All of the low self-esteem students from the urban school believe that their locality has an impact on them. These findings demonstrate that, while a certain number of students with high self-esteem are unaffected by their locality, many low self-esteem students believe that their locality does in fact impact their sense of self. Similarly, students with normal self-esteem also recognise that self-esteem is affected by locality to some or a great extent. All of the normal self-esteem students from the urban school have stated that the school environment and locality have an impact on their self-esteem.

Conclusion

The study has shown that there is a link between the locality of the school or students and their sense of self-esteem. The locality has a major impact on their self-esteem. Specifically, it was found that the environment in which the students grew up played a significant role in shaping their self-esteem. The locality affects all the students, irrespective of high, low, or normal self-esteem, in both rural and urban areas. The study also suggests that those students who grew up in less affluent localities were more likely to have lower self-esteem than those who grew up in more affluent localities. This signifies that the environment can have a major effect on the self-esteem of students.

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