

Literature Review and Instruments in the Study of Self-Concept Emphasizing the Perspective of Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT: The Purpose of the paper is to review the literature on self-concept. Besides, it tries to focus the instruments in the field of research of self-concept. It has given emphasis on the perspective of Bangladesh in both the subjects of discussion. It is revealed in present study that self-concept as one of the significant factors for an individual that can change his or her belief, attitude, perception and reaction towards private and social life and surroundings. This paper successively explained the characteristics of self-concept, elements of self-concept, review of literature and instruments in the study of self-concept. This paper will provide a concise idea to the researchers regarding the studies of self-concept which will create interest amongst the researchers to study further ahead on different issues correlated to the self-concept in the perspective of Bangladesh.

KEY WORDS: Self-concept, Characteristics of Self-concept, Elements of Self-concept, Instruments in the Study of Self Concept.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Self-concept refers to the person's judgment of his or her own competence or skills in relation to others (Scott 2002). Combs and associates (1971) cited that the most significant and single influencing factor of behavior is the self-concept. Situations might change from time to time or location to location but the central beliefs that individual have about themselves are remains present in shaping their behavior. Seiler and Beall (2011) plotted that self-identity or self-concept is a perceived self of a person that contains of a comprehensive and organized beliefs and attitudes about own-self. The self is presented as a fundamental matter from the very beginning in personality theories in the field of psychology. The self-concept is said to be a set of organized self-attitudes that are comparatively established and characteristic of an individual (Demo, 1992).

Characteristics of Self-concept

Five critical characteristics of self-concept can be compiled and highlighted from various research findings: (a) The summation of descriptive and evaluative factors of self-description (Shavelson et al., 1976), (b) The presence of developmental transformations in the structure of self-concept (Harter, 1986), (c) The character of self-concept as an intermediating variable that helps the attainment of other required outcomes (Byrne, 1996), (d) The cultural aspects have great effect in developing the self-concept, and (e) Contribution of both inner (cognitive) and outer (social) forces which affect self-concept (Hoge&Renzulli, 1991).

Elements of Self-concept

Self-concept is often regarded as consisting with three elements such as; the self-perception, the self-image and the self-esteem. These elements are stated here:

Self-Perception

Self-perception theory argues that we observe how we are acting, and draw conclusions from this understanding about what we are like. Bem (1967) suggested that how we perceive ourselves is an important part of the self-concept.

Self-Image

The self-image is a factual self-portrait which includes the information about the body, its height, weight and structure; the person's liking and disliking; his past experiences and so on. This idea includes some sub factors of general self-concept. Such factors are: Physical Self Image, Psychological Self Image, Field Self Image, Basic Self Image, Ideal Self Image, Situational Self Image, Social Self Image etc. Rogers (1961) found that a significant relationship existed between the general self-concept and other self-factors and achievements.

Self-Esteem

Self-concept is the way to think about own-self. It is dynamic, unique and always evolving. This cognitive thinking of oneself influences a person's identity, self-esteem, body image, and his role in society. As a global and general understanding of oneself, self-concept shapes and defines who we are, the decisions we make, and the relationships we form. Self-concept is probably the basis for all motivated behavior (Franken, 1994). Self-esteem is a personal opinion of oneself which is shaped by individual's relationship with others, experiences, and accomplishment in life events.

Role of Academic Performance in Self-concept Development

While discussing the role of education in development of self-concept, then two different thoughts come up in the mind. Firstly, the self-concept affects academic experience and secondly, the education affects self-concept. These two have reciprocal effect on each other. The study of literature shows positive correlation between self-concept and academic performance. However, we can't decide which comes first, positive self-concept or high academic achievement (Ahmed, 2014).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature of self-concept is very rich and enormous. A large number of researches and investigations have reported important findings about different aspects of self-concept. A large number of studies have demonstrated that sex contributes sufficient difference for the assessment of self-concept. For example, Hattie (1992) conducted an empirical study to show the differential effect of gender on self-concept. It was found that females expressed more role conflict than males. The investigator identified various factors for these gender differences. Firstly, it was due to minority group status in the society. Secondly, females were found socially and economically dependent as compared to males. On the basis of these observations, the investigator has concluded that females possess lower self-concept than the males.

Starobin and Laanan (2005) studied the confidence levels and self-concept of students as contributing factors to determine academic achievement of students in science and mathematics. The result found that the self-concept pertaining to science and mathematics education is varied among students. Sax (1994) investigated factors predicting mathematics self-concept and their gender differences by using a national sample of approximately 15,000 students drawn from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) 1985 Freshman Survey and 1989 Follow-up Survey. It was concluded that female students had low self-concept (confident) in their mathematical abilities than their male counterparts, and the gender variance increased as they progressed through college.

Matovu (2012) conducted a study on 394 samples of university students; males and females from different levels of study and faculties in a public university in Malaysia and the results revealed that there was a statistically significant effect of gender on academic self-concept and academic achievement. Crain and Bracken (1994) explained gender as a moderating variable in self-concept. The findings of their study showed that boys rated their physical self-concept significantly in higher degree than the girls.

Marsh et al. (1991) examined children's domain specific self-concept. The results showed that girls expressed lower self-concept in physical ability but higher self-concept in physical appearance and reading as compared to boys. Byrne and Shavelson (1987) conducted an empirical study on self-concept and found that boys expressed higher self-concept than girls in the areas of mathematics, general self, physical appearance and physical ability but girls expressed higher self-concept in the areas of reading and general school. Wigfield et al. (1991) found that girls expressed stronger self-concept in language and arts than do boys.

Kaur et al. (2009) stated that it would not be surprised that the root of self-concept is laid in family experiences and a favourable home environment constitutes of good parent-child relationship. Several researchers found that the home environment has vital influence over self-concept in one way or the other (Foluke-Henderson, 2007).

Dinah (2004) indicated that there is a significant relationship between home environment and the self-concept. Adolescent's emotional self-concept was found to be affected by religion, supervision at home by parent or guardian and the number of siblings in the family.

Chohan and Khan (2010) conducted a study on 305 samples of grade 4 public school students to examine the linkage between academic achievement and educational support provided to the child at home and, to determine whether this support directly or indirectly affects child's self-concept. The students who have or have not parental support at home were compared on two measures, (a) the annual school result report and, (b) the self-concept scale. The self-concept was measured twice. Firstly, before one month of annual school examination and secondly, after one month of announcement of annual results. The findings of the study revealed that parents' contribution to their children's education at home has a consistent and positive effect on academic achievement and on the self-concept.

Self-concept is influenced by experiences in the home, school, and community. At home, the authoritative parenting style can provide support, acceptance, and give-and-take to promote the development of

adolescent self-concept (Van Dijk et al., 2014). Interactions at school and educational institution also influence how adolescents view themselves. African American middle school students experience with racial discrimination at school are associated with poor academic self-concepts, but a strong connection to their ethnic group and a feeling of similarity with African American culture can buffer the negative impact of discrimination (Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006).

Adolescents develop a positive sense of self-concept when they evaluate themselves favorably in the areas that they view as important. For example, sports accomplishments are more closely associated with positive physical self-concept in adolescent athletes, who tend to highly value physical athleticism, than non-athletes, who tend to place less importance on athleticism (Wagnsson et al., 2014). Similarly, adolescents with high academic self-concept tend to spend more time and effort on schoolwork and study as well as perceived academics as more important, and demonstrate high academic achievement (Valentine et al., 2004). For example, a study of Dutch, Moroccan, Turkish, and Surinamese adolescents living in the Netherlands, as well as adolescents from China, Australia, Germany, and the United States, confirmed that the overall quality of the parent-adolescent relationship predicted self-concept and self-esteem (Harris et al., 2015).

Relationships with parents have a powerful impact on adolescents' views of themselves; however, peers also matter in this regard. Adolescents who feel supported and well-liked by peers tend to show high self-concept and self-esteem (Litwack et al., 2010). The culture fosters a different conception of self (Mehrad, 2016). Kaur et al. (2009) found a significant positive relationship of high socio-economic status, home environment, components of protectiveness, conformity, reward, and nurturance with self-concept, thereby; it is suggested that use of rewards and nurturance from parents should be done for development of positive self-concept among adolescents.

There are few studies conducted on self-concept in the perspective of Bangladesh. However, this paper is going to state those studies here. Shahrer and Enam (2012) conducted a study to explore the effects of social context and academic achievement on the self-concept of children with 240 selected respondents in Bangladesh. Results showed that the socially advantaged children expressed significantly higher self-concept than socially disadvantaged children and high achievers possessed significantly higher self-concepts as compared to low achievers. Again, interaction effect of a two-way analysis of variance involving social context and academic achievement was also statistically significant.

Enam et al. (2011) conducted an empirical investigation on self-concept as related to gender, parental profession and academic achievement among early-adolescent boys and girls in various institutions of Rajshahi city. The results showed significantly higher self-concept of girls than boys. In case of academic achievement high achievers expressed significantly more positive self-concept than low achievers. In case of parental service, high achiever boys and high achiever girls expressed significantly more positive self-concept followed by their counterpart low achievers. In case of parental business, it was found that high achiever girls expressed significantly more positive self-concept than low achiever girls. However, no significant mean difference was obtained between high achiever boys and low achiever boys in case of parental business.

Sagar (2014) conducted a study to investigate whether self-concept has any significant relationship with academic achievement of the secondary school students or not in Dhaka city. Results indicated that self-concept had only slightly positive association with academic achievement of the students.

Enam (2006) conducted a research and found that children of middle-class family expressed highest self-concept followed by the children of high-class family and least by the children of low-class family. Ahmed (2014) designed a study to investigate the creativity and self-concept of secondary school students of Bangladesh with reference to gender, academic achievement and socio-economic status. The study was conducted on 320 secondary school students (160 Boys and 160 girls) selected purposively from Rajshahi City, Bangladesh. The results showed that boys possessed more creative abilities and higher self-concept than girls. The study also indicated that high achiever students possessed more creative abilities and higher self-concept than low achiever students and the respondents of upper middle socio-economic status possessed more creative abilities and higher self-concept than the respondents belong to lower middle socio-economic status. The research also displayed that the different dimensions of self-concept (i.e., physical self-concept, educational self-concept, scholastic competence, moral self-concept, social self-concept and global self-worth) were stronger predictor to explain the creativity of secondary school students (Ahmed, 2014).

Talukder and Parvin (2011) conducted a study to explore the relationship of medical students' self-concept with their academic achievement in three dimensions of self-concept such as personal, family and social self-concept. The result showed that there was significant difference between dimensions of self-concept of students according to gender. The research finding also showed that there was positive correlation between dimensions of self-concept with academic achievement of students.

III. INSTRUMENTS IN THE STUDY OF SELF CONCEPT

The development of instrument used in the study of self-concept has a long history. In its initial stage, self-concept originated in philosophy, sociology and then it came in psychology. James W. (1892) measured

conscious self as potentials of successful individuals. Rogers (1951) explained self-concept as cognitive construct. Sullivan (1953) conceptualized self-concept as affective construct. Rosenberg (1989) constructed instruments for measuring self-concept as a psychological construct in cognitive and affective areas and that began to proliferate the instruments for measuring self-concept. In contrast to the cognitivist perspective, some investigators conceptualized self-concept as a behavioral construct (Boersma&Chapman, 1992) and developed instruments for measuring self-concept that integrated behavioral principles (Bracken, 1992).

The methodology of self-concept took many forms. Specific forms of self-concept assessment include semantic differentials, adjective check list, drawing task, projective tests, actual-ideal measures, third-party report and questionnaires (Keith & Bracken, 1996). For example, Semantic Differential Technique consists of bipolar presentation of adjectives such as happy-sad, strong-weak etc. (Osgood et al., 1957). The adjective checklist was a frequently used technique to study self-concept during the 1950s and 1960s. Marsh (1988) used Self-Description Questionnaire (SDQ-I) and Saraswat (1984) used Self Concept Questionnaire (SCQ) as instrument to study on self-concept. Enam (2005) adapted Bengali version of SDQ-I to study self-concept in the perspective of Bangladesh.

Projective tests such as Rorschach Ink-Blot Test, the Thematic Apperception Test, and Behavioral Interpretation Inventory had been used in the assessment of the self; however, these procedures were generally considered peripheral measures of self-concept (Keith & Bracken, 1996). Drawing tasks are also used to infer self-concept among young children (Machover, 1949). The child is instructed to draw a picture of a person. Child's self-concept is inferred from this drawing. However, the most widely used instrument for assessing self-concept is the self-report questionnaire (Keith & Bracken, 1996). Sagar (2014) used the Bangla version of the Piers Harris Children's Self-concept Scale in his study on students' self-concept and academic achievement in Bangladesh.

Several researchers found seven characteristics of self-concept as psychological instrument (Shavelson et al., 1976). These are (i) organization, (ii) multifaceted nature, (iii) hierarchical structure, (iv) stability, (v) developmental progression, (vi) an evaluative component and (vii) differentiable characteristics.

The Self-Concept Scale (SCS) has been developed by Ahmed et. al. (2017) in the perspective of Bangladesh to study self-concept that provides six separate dimensions which include (i) physical self-concept, (ii) educational self-concept, (iii) scholastic competence, (iv) moral self-concept, (v) social self-concept and (vi) global self-worth. These dimensions also give a total self-concept score. This scale is the most comprehensive and indigenous instrument in the field of study of self-concept in Bangladesh.

IV. SCORING TECHNIQUE USED IN THE INSTRUMENT OF SELF-CONCEPT

Five-point measurement technique is followed in the self-concept scale. Ahmed et al. (2017) rationalized in favor of using this technique in their instrument named as Self Concept Scale (SCS). It is found that the two methods are used frequently for the purposes of scoring; the 'Methods of Equal Appearing Intervals' developed by Thurstone and Chave (1929) and the 'Methods of Summated Ratings' developed by Likert (1932). Both the methods have been widely used and both of the methods yield high correlation (Edwards and Kenney, 1946). Investigators who have used the Likert method seem to be in agreement that it is simpler than the methods of Equal Appearing Intervals.

V. CONCLUSION

Self-concept is one of the major components within the individual that shapes his goal of life. Moreover, it should be measured as a psychological construct that can impact on individuals' attitudes and perceptions toward their life and surroundings. At times it changes the approach of their behavior and relationship with people around them in various cultures and societies. In fact, knowing the self and its correct development can be worthy for human being.

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