



## Perceived parenting and self-concept among adolescents: An empirical study

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### Abstract

The present study aimed to explore the correlation between self-concept and perceived parenting among 60 adolescent participants, consisting of 30 males and 30 females. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing validated measurement tools. The self-concept questionnaire developed by Dr. Raj Kumar Sarswat and the perceived parenting scale by R.L. Bhardwaj and H. Sharma were employed for data collection. The results indicated a positive correlation between self-concept and both maternal and paternal parenting styles. Additionally, most dimensions of perceived parenting were found to be significantly correlated with self-concept across various dimensions. It was observed that male adolescents had a higher self-concept compared to female adolescents, with the physical dimension also being higher in males. However, no significant differences were noted in terms of education, temperament, intelligence, morality, and social dimensions between the genders. These findings shed light on the relationship between self-concept and perceived parenting, emphasizing the influence of parental behaviour on the development of adolescents' self-perception.

**Keywords:** Parenting, self-concept, gender, differences wellbeing, self-perceptions

### Introduction

Adolescence is a crucial phase of development marked by notable transformations in identity establishment, self-conception, and interpersonal connections. The family environment, parenting style, and behaviours significantly influence the development of adolescents' self-concept. Self-concept is the assessment and understanding of oneself, including areas such as academic ability, physical appearance, social aptitude, and emotional health (Harter, 2008) [8]. Adolescents' self-concept formation is significantly influenced by the perceived quality of parenting.

Perceived parenting refers to adolescents' subjective evaluation and interpretation of their parents' attitudes, behaviours, and interactions. Mr. J. P Badgujar & Dr. Nisha Mundada, (2014) [17] identified several dimensions of parenting, including parental warmth, support, involvement, control, and psychological autonomy. Studies indicate that various parenting styles, including authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful, can impact the self-concept of adolescents.

The impact of perceived parenting on different aspects of adolescent development, such as self-concept, has been widely acknowledged. A plethora of theoretical frameworks and models have been suggested to elucidate the correlation between perceived parenting and self-concept. The Social Learning Theory is a notable theoretical framework that posits that children acquire their self-concept through observational learning and social interactions within the family. As per the theoretical framework, adolescent's positive self-concept is fostered by parenting behaviours that are affirmative and supportive in nature, such as exhibiting warmth, acceptance, and providing encouragement. On the contrary, adverse parenting practises, such as censure, repudiation, and excessive regulation, have the potential to result in reduced self-worth and unfavourable self-evaluation.

The Attachment Theory builds upon the Social Learning Theory and highlights the significance of the parent-child

relationship in shaping the self-concept of adolescents. Research has indicated that attachment relationships that exhibit sensitivity, responsiveness, and emotional support are linked to elevated levels of self-esteem and favourable self-perception. Conversely, attachment patterns characterised by insecurity, such as avoidant or anxious attachment, have been associated with diminished levels of self-esteem and unfavourable self-perception, as posited by Singh, (2021) [21] and Khojah & Jamal, (2020) [11]

Additionally, the Self-Determination Theory emphasises the significance of parenting that promotes autonomy in cultivating a favourable self-concept in adolescents. According to Ryan and Deci's (2006) [19] research, parents who support autonomy offer their adolescent children the chance to express themselves, make independent decisions, and acknowledge their viewpoints. This approach results in an increased sense of self-worth and competence among adolescents.

Prior empirical research has consistently demonstrated a correlation between perceived parental behaviour and self-concept in adolescent populations. Kaya, (2020) [10] discovered a positive correlation between adolescents' self-esteem and self-perception with perceived parental support and warmth. Kumala & Afriani, (2023) [12] provided evidence that authoritative parenting, which entails a combination of high levels of warmth and responsiveness along with appropriate levels of control, exhibited a positive correlation with the self-concept of adolescents across multiple domains.

The current investigation endeavours to enhance comprehension of the correlation between perceived parenting and self-concept in adolescents by addressing existing gaps in the literature. The objective of this study is to enhance the current knowledge base and provide insights into interventions that aim to foster positive self-concept and well-being among adolescents, by employing a quantitative research design and a varied sample.

**Method**

**Hypothesis**

**1H<sub>0</sub>:** There will be no influence of parenting on the self-concept of adolescents.

**2H<sub>0</sub>:** There will be no differences in the self-concept of male and female adolescents.

**Sample and sampling technique**

The study involved adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 years, selected from Delhi government schools, with the exclusion criteria being any type of disability and adolescents raised by a single parent. Purposive sampling technique used for this study

**Measures**

▪ **Self-concept questionnaire by Dr Raj k. Saraswat (1984)**

The self-concept scale consists of 48 items that assess self-perceptions across six areas: physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral, and intellectual. The scale demonstrates good reliability with a coefficient of 0.88, indicating high consistency of scores. Additionally, it exhibits good validity with a coefficient of 0.8, suggesting that it effectively measures the intended construct. In summary, this comprehensive scale provides reliable and valid measurements of self-concept Across multiple domains.

▪ **Parenting scale by R.L. Bhardwaj (2016)**

The scale consists of 40 items and aims to assess individuals' perceptions of their own upbringing by their parents across eight dichotomous parenting modes: I. rejection vs. acceptance, II. Carelessness vs. protection, III. Neglect vs. indulgence, IV. utopian expectations vs. realism, V. lenient standard vs. moralism, VI. Freedom vs. discipline, VII. faulty role expectations vs. realistic role expectations, and VIII. marital conflict vs. marital adjustment. It measures the overall role of mothering, fathering, and parenting. The scale demonstrates good reliability with a coefficient of .72 and validity with a coefficient of .75.

**Procedure**

The data collection process involved the systematic administration of a self-report questionnaire within a group setting, targeting adolescents aged 14 to 18 from Delhi government schools who met specific criteria. To participate, individuals provided informed consent, ensuring that they fully understood the research's purpose and the voluntary nature of their involvement. For analysing the collected data, the relationship between variables was assessed using Pearson correlation, while t-tests were employed to compare means. The statistical analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 23.

**Result**

**Table 1:** Correlation between Self-concept and Mother Parenting (N=60)

Mother Parenting Self-Concept	Rejection vs. acceptance	Carelessness vs. protection	Neglect vs. indulgence	Utopian vs. realism	Lenient vs. moralist	Freedom vs. drip line	Faulty role vs. realistic role	Martial conflict vs. adjustment	Full Scale Mother Parenting
Physical	0.089	0.157	0.119	0.036	0.100	0.186	0.238	0.223	0.220
Social	-0.076	-0.154	0.077	0.126	-0.038	-0.023	0.122	-0.080	-0.001
Temperament	0.182	.260*	0.422**	0.129	.320*	0.182	0.201	0.367**	0.432**
Education	0.152	.331**	0.186	-0.120	0.003	0.204	0.103	-0.033	0.183
Moral	0.312*	0.308*	.263*	0.150	.411**	0.186	0.243	.395**	0.452**
Intellectual	0.130	0.032	0.106	0.067	0.086	0.182	0.333**	-0.150	0.144
Full Scale Self Concept	0.262*	0.317*	0.390**	0.127	0.294*	.304*	0.406**	0.254*	0.478**

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)  
 \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The table 1 data reveals a positive correlation between full-scale self-concept and mother's parenting, with a coefficient of 0.478, which is significant at  $p < 0.01$ . Additionally, full-scale Self-concept is significantly correlated with various dimensions of parenting, except for+ the Utopian vs. Realism dimension. These correlations include Rejection vs. Acceptance (0.262,  $p < 0.05$ ), Carelessness vs. Protection (0.317,  $p < 0.5$ ), Neglect vs. Indulgence (0.390,  $p < 0.01$ ), Lenient vs. Moralism (0.294,  $p < 0.5$ ), Freedom vs. Dripline (0.406,  $p < 0.1$ ), and Faulty Role vs. Realistic. Moreover, full-scale mother parenting exhibits significant correlations with Temperament (0.433,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Moral (0.453  $p < .01$ ) dimensions.

Temperament dimension displays positive and significant relationships with Carelessness vs. Protection (0.260,  $p < 0.05$ ), Lenient vs. Moralism (0.320,  $p < 0.05$ ), and Marital Conflict vs. Adjustment (0.367,  $p < 0.01$ ). Education shows a correlation of 0.331 at  $p < 0.01$  with Carelessness vs. Protection. The moral dimension demonstrates significant correlations with Rejection vs. Acceptance (0.312,  $p < 0.05$ ), Carelessness vs. Protection (0.263,  $p < 0.05$ ), Lenient vs. Moralism (0.411,  $p < 0.05$ ), and Marital Conflict (0.395,  $p < 0.01$ ). Furthermore, the intellectual dimension displays a significant correlation of 0.333 with Faulty Role vs. Realistic dimension at  $p < 0.01$ .

**Table 2:** Correlation between self-concept and father parenting (N=60)

Father Parenting Self-concept	Rejection vs. acceptance	Carelessness vs. protection	Neglect vs. indulgence	Utopian vs. realism	Lenient vs. moralist	Freedom vs. dripline	Faulty role vs. realistic	Martial conflict vs adjustment	Full Scale Father Parenting
Physical	0.09	0.14	0.168	0.083	0.116	0.11	0.21	0.218	0.229
Social	-0.082	-0.123	0.034	0.083	0.024	-0.003	0.126	-0.073	-0.006

Temperament	0.158	0.232	0.323*	0.078	0.343**	0.2040	0.314*	0.385**	0.423**
Education	0.223	0.334**	0.24	-0.047	-0.047	0.176	0.136	-0.029	0.198
Moral	.321*	.266*	0.227	0.168	0.415**	0.169	.283*	.396**	0.465**
Intellectual	0.157	0.057	0.026	0.133	0.045	0.276*	0.305*	-0.148	0.16
Full Scale Self Concept	0.288*	0.306*	0.344**	0.162	0.301*	0.302*	0.451**	0.263*	0.491**

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 presents significant findings indicating a positive correlation between full-scale Self-concept and full-scale Father parenting, with a correlation coefficient of 0.491, significant at  $p < 0.01$ . It's noteworthy that full-scale Self-concept demonstrates significant positive correlations with various dimensions of Father parenting, except for the Utopian vs. Realism dimension. Specifically, Rejection vs. Acceptance (0.288,  $p < 0.05$ ), Carelessness vs. Protection (0.306,  $p < 0.05$ ), Neglect vs. Indulgence (0.344,  $p < 0.01$ ), Lenient vs. Moralism (0.301,  $p < 0.05$ ), Freedom vs. Discipline (0.302,  $p < 0.05$ ), and Faulty Role vs. Realistic (0.451,  $p < 0.01$ ). Additionally, there is a significant relationship between full-scale Father parenting and Temperament dimension (0.423,  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as Moral dimension (0.465,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Furthermore, the Self-concept's Temperament dimension

exhibits significant correlations with Lenient vs. Moralism (0.343,  $p < 0.01$ ), Faulty Role vs. Realistic (0.314,  $p < 0.05$ ), and Marital Conflict vs. Adjustment (0.385,  $p < 0.01$ ). Education shows a significant correlation with Carelessness vs. Protection (0.344,  $p < 0.01$ ), while the Moral dimension is significantly correlated with Rejection vs. Acceptance (0.321,  $p < 0.05$ ), Carelessness vs. Protection (0.266,  $p < 0.05$ ), Lenient vs. Moralism (0.415,  $p < 0.01$ ), Faulty Role vs. Realistic (0.283,  $p < 0.05$ ), and Marital Conflict vs. Adjustment (0.396,  $p < 0.01$ ). Additionally, the Intellectual dimension shows positive and significant correlations with Freedom vs. Discipline (0.276,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Faulty Role vs. Realistic (0.305,  $p < 0.05$ ).

It's worth noting that the Physical and Social dimensions do not exhibit significant correlations with the any dimensions of Father parenting.

**Table 3:** Self-concept comparison male and female (Male=30, Female= 30)

Comparison of Self-concept male and female							
Variables	gender	Means	S. D	S. E	t- Value	Significances level	df
Physical	Male	30.8667	4.21601	0.76973	2.25765	.027747*	58
	Female	28.6667	3.27302	0.59757			
Social	Male	30.2667	4.06782	0.74268	0.77482	.220797	58
	Female	30.5333	3.21348	0.58670			
Temperament	Male	30.7000	4.22758	0.77185	0.24995	0.80345	58
	Female	30.9333	2.87598	0.52508			
Education	Male	31.6333	4.46815	0.81577	1.5361	0.1299	58
	female	30.1667	2.71755	0.49615			
Moral	Male	31.8000	3.57578	0.65285	1.97058	0.0523	58
	Female	29.9333	3.75943	0.68638			
Intellectual	Male	30.6333	3.31645	0.60550	-0.65339	0.51609	58
	Female	30.1000	2.99828	0.54741			
Full scale self-concept	Male	185.80	11.6245	2.1223	2.4188	.01873*	58
	Female	179.23	9.2724	1.6929			

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 data highlights notable differences between males and females in both full-scale Self-concept and the "Physical" dimension. In full-scale self-concept, males (185.80) significantly outscore females (179.23), with a t-value of 2.4188 and a significant p-value of 0.01873. Similarly, in the "Physical" dimension, males (30.87) score significantly higher than females (28.67), with a t-value of 2.26 and a significant p-value of 0.0277 ( $p > 0.0187$ ). No other dimensions exhibit statistically significant differences between male and female Self-concept dimension's means.

**Discussion**

The results of our current study revealed correlation between perceived parenting and the self-concept of Indian adolescents. These findings align with previous research that has also reported comparable outcomes when exploring this connection. In a study conducted by Zakeri and Karimpour (2011) [23] it was found that parental involvement

and support played a significant role in shaping the self-concept of Indian adolescents, with those perceiving higher levels of parental involvement and support exhibiting elevated self-esteem and a more positive self-concept. Building upon this research, Babbar S. & Dhankar (2021) [2]. explored the impact of parenting styles on the self-concept of Indian adolescents, revealing that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and reasonable discipline, positively correlated with a healthy self-concept, while authoritarian and neglectful parenting styles had adverse effects. Additionally, Seyed-Hossein & Mirzamani (2005) investigated the influence of parental expectations on Indian adolescents' self-concept, finding that excessively high or unrealistic parental expectations were associated with lower self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy. These studies collectively emphasize the consistent relationship between perceived parenting and self-concept among Indian adolescents, with positive

parenting behaviours fostering a healthier self-concept, while negative or neglectful parenting behaviours hinder its development.

In addition to the primary discovery, the paper has delved into various perceived parenting styles, examining their connection with six aspects of self-concept. Both mother and father parenting approaches, including acceptance, protective instincts, indulgence, realistic goal-setting, moral guidance, and discipline, demonstrate a positive correlation with self-concept across multiple dimensions.

The study found that both mother and father's acceptance, love, and warmth were significantly correlated with adolescents' estimation of their moral worth and their ability to make moral judgments. This suggests that when parents exhibit acceptance and warmth towards their children, adolescents develop a higher sense of their own moral values and right and wrong decision-making capabilities (Ms. Sneha Hazra & Ms. Shalini Mittal, 2018) <sup>[18]</sup>. Furthermore, the perception of being protected by parents was associated with higher estimations of temperament, educational capabilities, participation in extracurricular activities, and moral worth. When adolescents perceive their parents as protective, they tend to have a better understanding of their own emotions, excel academically, engage in diverse activities, and have a stronger moral compass (Leung, Kwok, *et al.*, 1998; Ms. Sneha Hazra & Ms. Shalini Mittal, 2018) <sup>[18]</sup>; Segrin, & Flora, 2019) <sup>[14, 20]</sup>. Interestingly, the parenting style characterized by indulgence also showed positive correlations with temperament and moral worth. This implies that adolescents who perceive their parents as indulgent tend to have a favourable temperament and a strong sense of social moral values (Martinez-Escudero *et al.*, 2020; Danzig *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[5, 16]</sup>. However, it is important to note that excessive indulgence without appropriate boundaries may lead to negative consequences for adolescents' development (Darling & Steinberg, 2018). Moreover, moralism parenting, defined by emphasis on moral values and principles, demonstrated positive correlations with temperament and moral worth. Adolescents who experience moralistic parenting tend to possess a robust temperament and a clear understanding of right and wrong (Darling *et al.*, 2008, Danzig *et al.* 2015) <sup>[5, 6]</sup>. Parents with realistic expectations also exhibited a significant positive correlation with the child's awareness of their intelligence and estimation of problem-solving abilities. This suggests that when parents have reasonable expectations for their children, adolescents develop a better understanding of their own intellectual capabilities and problem-solving skills (Landry *et al.*, 2006) <sup>[13]</sup>. Lastly, adolescents' perception of their parents' marital relationship displayed a positive correlation with temperament and moral worth. When adolescents perceive their parents' marriage as positive and harmonious, they tend to have a more favourable temperament and a stronger sense of identity (Amato, 2014; Harold *et al.*, 2017) <sup>[1, 7]</sup>.

It is worth highlighting the substantial correlation observed between a child's perceived emotional state, specifically their temperament dimension, and the extent to which their father demonstrates realistic role-playing in parenting. The process of learning through observing others has been extensively studied and constitutes a fundamental element of foundational theories in child development, such as Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1972) and Social

Referencing (Campos & Steinberg, 1981). Children not only witness and learn from adults' emotional expressions but also from their efforts to manage their own emotions. Through the observation of emotional modelling, children develop an understanding of the circumstances that are likely to trigger specific emotions and the typical responses and outcomes associated with emotional expressions.

In conclusion, this study investigated the associations between perceived parenting styles and self-concept dimensions in adolescents. The findings suggest that positive parenting dimensions, such as acceptance, protection, indulgence, moralism, realistic expectations, and marital harmony, have significant positive correlations with various aspects of self-concept in adolescents. These correlations highlight the importance of parenting behaviours in shaping adolescents' self-perception and moral development.

### Gender comparison of self-concept

The purpose of this research study was to examine the differences in male self-concept between male and female adolescents, with a focus on understanding whether there is a difference in self-concept between female and male adolescents. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the gender differences in self-concept during adolescence. The results of the study revealed that male adolescents demonstrated a significantly higher full-scale self-concept compared to female adolescents. This finding aligns with previous research that suggests males tend to have a more positive self-concept than females during adolescence (Kaur & Singh, 2017; Singh, Goyal & Singh, 2016; Bhat & Netra Gaonkar, 2014) <sup>[3, 9]</sup>. One possible explanation for this difference could be related to societal expectations and gender roles. From an early age, boys are often encouraged to be more assertive, confident, and independent, which may contribute to the development of a stronger self-concept. Moreover, the influence of media and societal messages regarding gender stereotypes may also play a role in shaping self-concept differences between male and female adolescents. For instance, boys are often exposed to media portrayals of successful and powerful male figures, which can positively impact their self-perception. Conversely, girls may be exposed to objectifying and unrealistic representations of femininity, leading to lower self-esteem and self-concept (Miller, 2013). Additionally, the study explores gender differences in six dimensions of self-concept, namely Social, Temperament, Education, Moral, Intellectual, and Physical. The findings revealed that no significant gender differences were observed in Social, Temperament, Education, Moral, and Intellectual dimensions. However, a significant gender difference was found in the Physical dimension, indicating that male adolescents tend to have higher physical self-concept compared to their female counterparts. These results align with previous research studies that have also reported minimal or no gender differences in several dimensions of self-concept (Wilgenbusch & Merrell (1999) <sup>[22]</sup>; Bhatia, Suruchi *et al.* 2022) <sup>[4]</sup>. For instance, Marcic, R., & Grum, D. K. (2011) <sup>[5]</sup> conducted a study and found no substantial gender differences in social position dimension and intelligence dimension among adolescents. Similarly, Bhatia *et al.* (2022) <sup>[4]</sup> found no significant gender differences in moral, intelligence, social and temperament self-concept among a sample of young adults. On the

contrary, the findings regarding gender differences in the Physical dimension of self-concept support the existing literature. Research has consistently shown that males typically perceive themselves as having a higher physical self-concept compared to females (Marsh & Hattie, 1998). This difference can be attributed to societal and cultural factors that emphasize physical strength and athletic abilities in males (Marsh, 1996). These cultural influences may shape the way individuals perceive and rate their physical self-concept, leading to divergent results between genders. In conclusion, this study found no significant gender differences in the Social, Temperament, Education, Moral, and Intellectual dimensions of self-concept. However, a notable gender difference was observed in the Physical dimension, with male adolescents reporting higher levels of physical self-concept. These findings contribute to the existing literature on gender differences in self-concept and highlight the importance of understanding the nuances of self-perception among adolescents. Further research in this area could shed light on the underlying factors that shape self-concept and how it varies across genders.

### Limitations

Generalizing the findings of this study to a broader population is challenging due to the study's limited sample size and its restriction to Delhi state. Furthermore, the study's scope was limited to two specific factors: perceived parenting and self-concept. It did not include other important demographic variables. Subsequent research could investigate the interplay of parenting dynamics with additional factors such as locus of control, career decision-making, and more, in order to obtain a more comprehensive and realistic understanding of the subject.

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