

## Gender Role in Global Personal Self-Esteem and Narcissism among Nepalese School Adolescents

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** *Global personal self-esteem and narcissism with reference to gender role among school adolescents was studied in Kathmandu. The general aim of this research was to explore the correlation in global personal self-esteem and narcissism with response to gender among Nepalese school adolescents.*

**Methodology:** *The study was correlational in design employing a pen-and-paper self-report survey. Within the survey, instruments (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale 1979 / RSES and Narcissistic Personality Inventory 1981/ NPI) measured the global personal self-esteem and narcissism. Participants were drawn from thirty (fifteen public and fifteen private) schools of Kathmandu. These schools were chosen in random selection. The number of participations was 936 school students.*

**Results:** *The study investigated the prevalence of global personal self-esteem in the school with reference to gender. The result from the survey indicates that there is no significant difference between self-esteem and gender. On the other hand, girls are reported slightly higher narcissistic behaviour than boys.*

**Conclusion:** *Self-esteem is how people feel about themselves generally. This study explored the prevalence rates of global personal self-esteem with reference to gender. It showed that there is no significant correlation between them. On the other hand, narcissism is a psychological condition defined as a total obsession with self, to the exclusion of almost all other interaction with people. The present study explored the prevalence rates of narcissism with reference to gender. It showed that girls reported slightly higher narcissistic behaviour than boys' which*

*contradicts the previous findings. Why it is found so in the Nepalese context is left for further research.*

**Key words:** Gender role, global personal self-esteem, narcissism

## **Introduction**

Brown (1998) defined self-esteem as a global personality trait that is relatively enduring across time and situations— a term to describe how people feel about themselves generally. Gender differences have been becoming a great interest to the researchers in the field of psychology. Gender has an impact on various aspects of adolescents and can also affect changes in self-esteem during the adolescent years. Gender refers to “the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis” (Health Canada, 2000). A number of factors including biological, cognitive, social, and environmental factors contribute to influence an adolescent's personal development and self-esteem (Kearney-Cooke, 1999).

Gender-based beliefs are mostly derived from gender role stereotypes existing in every society. Great consistency in standards of desirable gender-role behaviour has been found in both within and across different cultures. Eagly and Wood, (1991) have highlighted some expected characteristic features related to gender role. For example, males are expected to be objective, independent, assertive, logical and competitive whereas females are expected to be more passive, sensitive, illogical, dependent, accommodating and supportive. However, a little change has been seen over the past two decades regarding such beliefs within the developed societies and apparently around the world as well. Gender socialization has created expectations for the way women and men behave, think and feel about themselves. For women, one's family, peer support, reflected appraisals and family relationships are important determinants of self-esteem. Parental support and family connectedness are especially important for girls. On other hand feelings of mastery, self-actualization and academic performance are more important for males.

Narcissism is an inflated sense of self-importance and it is an extreme preoccupation of self (Doty & Fenlason, 2013). While going on the root of the term, it is derived from the Greek mythological word Narcissus. It means a young man falls in love of self-image (Davison & Neale, 1998); the term generally describes an exaggerated self-love (Reber, 1995).

The focus of the present study, however, was not upon the clinical or abnormal psychological aspects of personality or the self and it should be noted that most of the research in the field of narcissism and its correlates has generally employed nonclinical samples (Papps & O'Carroll, 1998). To be more precise, certain narcissistic characteristics typically present as continua, as do many other psychological constructs including self-esteem (Hoyle, Kernis, Leary, & Baldwin,

1999). Correspondingly, Baumeister et. al. (1996) considers specific narcissistic tendencies to be present to a measurable degree in people with certain self- presentational styles.

Furthermore, and of particular interest, the statement in the DSM-IV- TR that narcissistic traits are common in adolescents, although these traits do not necessarily result in later development of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Given this conceptualization, particularly in the context of the present study's sample, it warrants an exploration of the relationship between narcissism and gender role.

### **General objective**

The general aim of this research was to explore the gender role in global personal self-esteem and narcissism among Nepalese school adolescents.

The specific objectives of this research can be described as:

To build knowledge based on the phenomena of global personal self-esteem and narcissism with reference to gender in school level.

### **Hypothesis**

Gravetter and Forzano (2003) mention that before a research idea can be evaluated, it needs to be transformed into hypotheses. These hypotheses are statements about the relationship between variables. The hypotheses of this study are as follow:

Gender role is significant in global personal self-esteem and narcissism.

There would be a significant positive correlation between gender and global personal self-esteem.

There would be a significant positive correlation between gender and narcissism.

## **Methods**

### **Design and Participants**

The study was correlational in design employing a pen-and-paper self-report survey. Within the survey, two separate instruments (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale 1979 / RSES and Narcissistic Personality Inventory 1981/ NPI) measured the variables global personal self-esteem and narcissism. There are a number of methodological considerations, beginning with issues surrounding the consent procedures and the form of survey (i.e., self-report) employed in the present study that require consideration. Participants were drawn from thirty schools: fifteen governments funded and fifteen private schools from Kathmandu, Nepal. These schools were chosen in random selection. The respondents were between 12 years to 18 years. The total

number of students was 936. The following table no. 1 illustrates the data of respondents' grade, age and gender.

Table no. 1 Respondents' grade, age and gender cross tabulation

		Grade		<b>Total</b>
		<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Age</b>	12	33	1	34
	13	168	4	172
	14	176	63	239
	15	73	192	265
	16	18	166	184
	17	3	35	38
	18	0	4	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>936</b>
		Grade		<b>Total</b>
		<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	
Gender	Boy	228	241	469
	Girl	243	224	467
<b>Total</b>		<b>471</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>936</b>

### **Materials**

All constructs were measured using pen-and-paper self-report questionnaires. Each of the two scales began on a separate page with its own preamble to introduce the scale, resulting in a questionnaire battery including an instruction/cover sheet. For the measure of personal self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale / RSES (Rosenberg, 1979) was used. The scale consists of ten items which was used in the pilot study and main study. The 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a widely used, brief, and easily administered one-dimensional measure of personal global self-esteem with a reported alpha coefficient of .77 (Keith & Bracken, 1996). In the original form of the RSES, respondents are asked to indicate to what extent they agree with the listed statements using a 4-point scale like Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The response format was modified from the original to a 5-point Likert-type scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

In the case of narcissism, the nonclinical 40-item Narcissistic Personality Inventory / NPI (Raskin & Hall, 1981) scale measured the narcissism in the present study. Originally, it was a 54-itemscale, which was used in clinical diagnostic procedure for Narcissistic Personality Disorder/NPD (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The modified scale measures the individual differences in nonclinical narcissism and is the most broadly used narcissism inventory (John & Robins, 1994). The present study followed Raskin and Hall's (1981) the

commonly used 40-item NPI inventory that has a forced-choice format and individuals with high scores generally report high global personal self-esteem and are self-confident. They appear to be aggressive, highly competitive, egotistical, socially manipulative, and lacking in empathy (Raskin & Novacek, 1989).

### **Procedure**

During the scheduled lesson, the researcher and class teacher distributed surveys to consenting students. Students were told to ask the researcher for assistance at any time if they experienced difficulties with the questionnaire. The researcher also reinforced the anonymity of the process and students' right to decline or cease participation at any time. Participants were told the importance of truthful responses and that they were to answer the questions without conferring or copying. The class teacher, who remained in the classroom during data collection, gave those students who had declined to participate other quiet activities. Completed surveys were collected by the researcher and sealed in unmarked envelopes; the classroom survey process took on average approximately 30 minutes.

### **Results**

#### **Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis 1 reported that there would be a significant positive correlation between gender and global personal self-esteem. ANOVA test with gender as an independent variable and global personal self-esteem as a dependent variable, results showed that mean scores of boys was 22.5846 and girls was 22.6832. It also did not support the predicted hypothesis. The following table no. 2 shows the result in detail.

*Table no. 2 (Gender-wise mean scores of global personal self-esteem)*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Boy	467	22.5846	5.02342	.23246	22.1278	23.0414	10.00	40.00
Girl	464	22.6832	4.65863	.21627	22.2582	23.1082	10.00	37.00
Total	931	22.6337	4.84270	.15871	22.3223	22.9452	10.00	40.00
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square			F	Sig.
Between Groups		2.263	1	2.263			.096	.756
Within Groups		21807.838	929	23.475				
Total		21810.101	930					

In terms of narcissism, the hypothesis 2, there would be a significant positive correlation between gender and narcissism, ANOVA test with gender as an independent variable and narcissism as a dependent variable, result showed that mean scores of boys was 62.0968 and girls was 62.5773. The p value of the results is 0.021, which is  $<0.05$ . It supports the predicted hypothesis. The following table no. 3 shows the result in detail.

*Table no. 3 (Gender-wise mean scores of narcissism)*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Boy	465	62.0968	3.45994	.16045	61.7815	62.4121	47.00	74.00
Girl	459	62.5773	3.75157	.17511	62.2332	62.9215	44.00	71.00
Total	924	62.3355	3.61380	.11889	62.1022	62.5688	44.00	74.00
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
Between Groups		65.517	1	65.517	5.378	.021		
Within Groups		11244.976	923	12.183				
Total		11310.493	924					

## Discussion

The goal of this study was to explore the gender relationship on global personal self-esteem and narcissism among the school adolescents. Above mentioned results showed mixed results than from existing literature. The results between gender and global personal self-esteem are matched with previous findings. However, the results of narcissism with reference to gender are not matched with previous findings.

The results showed that there is no significant positive correlation between gender and global personal self-esteem ( $p>0.05$ , i. e. 0.756). The results were close to the results found by Coopersmith(1967). Moreover, the results were matched with Skaalvik(1990) and Simon and Simon (1975) who found no significant difference between males and females in self-esteem.

On the other hand, the results on narcissism and gender, showed that there is significant correlation between gender and narcissism ( $p<0.05$ , i.e. 0.021). The present finding on narcissism contradict with Grijalva et al. (2014) reviews on gender role on narcissism. Thus, there could have further research on it in the context of Nepalese school environments.

## Conclusion

Thus, self-esteem is how people feel about themselves generally. This study explored the prevalence rates of global personal self-esteem with reference to gender. It showed that there is

no significant correlation between them. On the other hand, narcissism is a psychological condition defined as a total obsession with self, to the exclusion of almost all other interaction with people. Narcissism is often characterized by a lack of empathy for others, an immature sense of humour, sadistic or destructive tendencies towards other people, and a compulsion to satisfy personal needs without regard for others. The present study explored the prevalence rates of narcissism with reference to gender. It showed that girls are reported slightly higher narcissistic behaviour than boys which contradicts the previous findings. Why it is found so in the Nepalese context is left for further research.

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