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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Academic Achievement

1.1.2 Meaning

A academic achievement can be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extracurricular activities. It includes excellence inspiring, behavior, confidence, communication, punctuality, skill, assertiveness, arts, culture and the like.

According to Steinberger (1993) "Academic achievement encompasses student ability and performance; it is multidimensional; it is intricately related to human growth and cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development; it reflects the whole child; it is not related to a single instance, but occurs across time and levels, through a student’s life in public school and on into post-secondary years and working life." Merriam Webster defines academic achievement as "the quality and quantity of a student's work."

1.1.2 Factors influencing Academic achievement /performance

Number of factors that determine the level and quality of students' academic performance are analyzed from four perspectives:

- Student level factors — including the student’s own physical health and social and emotional wellbeing
• Career level factors — such as socioeconomic status, and the physical and mental health of careers
• Family and household environment factors
• School environment factors.

Student level factors

School attendance: Improvements in school attendance remain a key strategy for addressing low academic performance of Aboriginal students. Data modeling shows that students absent from school for 105 days or more were two times more likely to have low academic performance compared with students that were absent for 10 days or less.

Risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioral difficulties: The academic performance of Aboriginal students is substantially lower in the presence of an emotional or behavioral difficulty. Students at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were over two and half times more likely to be rated at low academic performance relative to students rated at low risk of such difficulties.

Career education: Higher levels of career education were a protective factor in terms of the academic performance of students. Students in the primary care of a person who had completed 13 or more years of schooling were over two times less likely to have low academic performance than students whose primary career had between 1–9 years of education.
Lack of association between student’s physical health and academic performance; Associations between a range of physical health indicators and Aboriginal students’ academic performance were also tested. Of the physical health factors tested, only two were found to be significantly associated with academic performance — students that had trouble saying certain sounds; and students that needed help with the basics of daily living such as eating, dressing and bathing.

Speech difficulties; Students that had trouble saying certain sounds were one and a half times more likely to have low academic performance than students who did not have trouble saying certain sounds.

Main language spoken in the classroom; Students that spoke Aboriginal English in the classroom were over two times more likely to be rated at low academic performance than students who spoke English in the classroom.

Where the student usually studies; Students that usually did their homework or study in homework classes were over two times more likely to have low academic performance relative to students that usually studied at home.

Family and household factors

Gambling; It is a cause of problems in the household. Students living in households where gambling was a cause of problems were over two times more likely to have low academic performance relative to students living in households where gambling did not cause problems.
School environment factors

**Student to teacher ratio;** Students attending schools where the student to teacher ratio was 20 or more were 1.8 times less likely to have low academic performance than students attending schools where this ratio was 10 or less.

**Unexplained absence from school ;** Students with more than 10 days of unexplained absence from school were almost two times more likely to have low academic performance than students who did not have any unexplained absence.

**School suspension;** Students suspended from school on two or more occasions were over three times more likely to have low academic performance than students who had never been suspended.

### 1.1.3 Study habits and academic performance

Study habits elicit and guide one's cognitive processes during learning and it plays a very crucial role in the academic performance of students. In view of this, some researchers (Bernard, 1990; Kendler, 1995; Onotsa & Okpala, 1985) have shown that students’ academic performance is the product of an inter-play of factors like good and effective study habits and skills, teachers’ relationship with students and conducive school or home environment. Available literature on study habits however, indicates that successful studying and understanding what is taught in schools are paramount to obtaining good academic performance and participating fully in society.
Asaqwara (1994) opined that a good study habit means overcoming all the competing attractions with the study environment both internal and external such as watching movies while studying, noise, reading other books, discussions and the state of mind of the learner. Mazuar (2000), Asaqwara (1994) and Iheanacho (2002) further stressed the effect of bad study habits and postulated that bad study habits make studies rigorous and painful. Amongst other drawbacks in the system of education, the study habits of students play a vital role in reflecting the standard of education and the student’s individual performance. Sorenson (1991) while outlining the good basic study habits stated that one must study with the primary intention of understanding. This requires one not to hurry in getting through, instead sustained concentration is necessary. Crow and Crow (1992) opined that effective habits of study include plan/place, a definite time table and taking brief of well-organized notes. According to Patel (1976), study habits include:

- Home environment and planning of work
- Reading and note-taking habits
- Planning of subjects
- Habits of concentration
- Preparation for examination
- General habits and attitudes
- School environment
1.2 Study Habits

1.2.1 Concept of Study Habits

Study Habits has been defined in Dictionary of Education as the Students way of study, it can be effective and ineffective etc. To elaborate Study habits are the methods of learning or Acknowledgement, which has been used by a student.

According to Good [1973] the term study habits as: the students’ way of study whether systematic, efficient or inefficient etc.’’ good study habits are perceived to be the determinants of the academic performance. That is why efforts are made to be the determinants of the academic performance. That is why efforts are made to develop and improve study habits of students. University students have to face the emotional causes due to several reasons. They have poor study habits and show poor academic performance motivation. A great deal of evidence is present to show the positive correlation between study habits and academic achievement. And the main purpose of Study guidance is to enable the students to see a clear picture of the information regarding to every aspect of his study system and study problems. Ansari found that study habits and study behavior are both significant variables which determine the academic performance of the students.

Armstrong [1956] declares the study habits as the connection between learning readiness’s with an activity in form of a process. Mostly it is for the acknowledgement based on some specific goal and compulsory exercises.
Azikiwe (1998, p. 106) on the other hand, sees study habits as “the adopted way and manner a student plans his private readings, after classroom learning so as to master the subject. According to Azikiwe, good study habits are “good asset to learners because they (habits) assist students to attain mastery in areas of specialization and consequent excellent performance, while the opposite constitute constraints to learning and performance leading to failure.” The main purpose of instruction is to enable students to learn, whereas the teacher’s task is to facilitate the learning process and help students develop study habits and right attitude towards learning.

Kemjika (1998) said for study habit to be considered effective, the following fundamental components and more should be evidently present; drawing up and abiding to daily study schedule, full involvement in teaching and learning processes, inculcating good reading habits, promptly doing and turning in class work and assignment, jotting down points while the teacher is teaching and during private studies. Good study habits are essential ingredients for excellent academic performances for every student.

1.2.2. Study Habits of Students and their Significance

In context of significance of study habits Bojuwuye (1993) asserted that one major area in which students need preparation in order to improve their performance is in learning how to study and that lack of effective study habits is a common educational problem among junior high school students. Jacobson (1980) contended that students who allotted greater amount of time to study exhibit greater performance gains. Although Svensson (1997) agreed that the relationship between study habits and academic performance of
students is paramount. Svensson criticized earlier research efforts based on the fact that the variables used were theoretically imposed on the phenomena.

For study to be effective, Freeman and Morss (1993) have observed that it should be regular, intense and should cover long periods. The habits of studying must be a sustainable one, for that matter students must see the need to develop good study habits. It is believed that good study habits and positive attitude towards learning proven in many studies enhance the processes of learning particular skills, including reasoning skills. Good study habits lead to enhancement in learning, as “ability improves and sharpens through mastery of principles and by means of training, exercise and constancy of application” (Ortinero, 2000, p. 56). Weiner’s (1972) study postulates that ability, as well as effort given by students to their studies, affects the acquisition of thinking skills and academic performance.

The student’s approach to learning is highly individualistic with a wide variation of techniques. One student may prefer the quiet library, another student the lounge, one may underline a text, another takes note, one may study intensively for several hours, another may take several breaks Onyejiaku (1987). The variations are endless and the education felt that the study process could be more productive if learners were taught specific skills and techniques which would formalize the study process and thereby make it more efficient. In the process of learning, habitual ways of exercising and practicing their abilities of learning are considered as study habits of learners. The pattern of behavior adopted by students in the pursuit of their studies is considered under the caption of their study habits (Jacobson, 1980)).
The efficient acquisition of knowledge depends upon the methods of acquiring study habits. It is important and desirable that a probe into the pattern of study habits of students be made. Kholi (1997) researched into the difference between Indian and Euro-American students in their study habits and indicated that Indian student needs to be spoon-fed, but the Euro-American student prefers independent study under the supervision of his or her teacher or master.

**1.2.3. Developing Good Study Habits**

Students in their childhood have more interest and self-discipline in everything and if parents and teachers inculcate in them good habits, it will be useful in their future studies. According to Kemjika (1998), these are some points to be used in developing good study habits among students:

- Prepare a plan of action and budget the time properly for a day and a week as well.
- Give more time for studying difficult subjects in the time schedule and follow it as sincerely.
- Favorable environment gives good concentration.
- While studying, hold the book at an angle and about 25cm distance.
- Break the whole material into small paragraphs, practice summarizing each paragraph quickly in the mind.
- Develop the attitude of questioning yourself and others about the point that you have read.
- Prepare brief notes of what you read, besides noting down the name of the book and page numbers in it, if using other books.
- For rechecking, it is better you underline the important points, topics and questions.
- Memorize the formula, principles, symbols and rules that are needed again and again.

1.2.4 Factors Influencing Study Habits

The important factors that influence study habits of students are:

**Home**

Home is the first school for every child and the mother is the first teacher. If the home environment is good, automatically the child’s nature in school will be good as well. Hence, the relationship with family members such as parents, brothers and sisters influence the child’s performance.

**School environment**

After the home, the child spends more time in school and for that matter the school environment should be good. The teachers and the peer group also play an important role in the child’s study habits. Parents should keep an eye on the friends of their children because with good friends, the child learns good habits.
Curriculum

Curriculum is also one of the factors for developing good study habits. Curriculum should be constructed on the standards of the child.

Personality of the student

Besides the above, personality of the student is a very important factor in developing good study habits. If the student gets easily adjusted with the environment, that student develops good study habits.

Intelligence

If personality factors are good, the intelligence factors are also good. Intelligence also plays a pivotal role in developing good study habits of the student. It is general observation that intelligent students stand in top positions.

Community

Community is another important factor for developing good study habits. Community has to arrange the community centers such as library facilities, community resource centers, and information centers among others. A good community provides necessary facilities for the development of good study habits.

Gender

The study habits of males and females in junior high schools have been widely studied, in part because schools try to improve student’s success and
retention rates. A recent study done in Iowa by a nationally recognized consulting firm specializing in higher education (Noel-Levitz, 2007) indicated that first-year females bring stronger study habits to college, whereas first-year males bring more confidence to their math and science classes. Wrenn and Humber (1991) in their study on low and high scholarship found that women are poorer than men in study skills. Vedavalli (1994) found that male college students had better study habits than female college students. Florence and Ronald (1994) on the other hand, observed that the SSHA scores of elementary boys differed from that of the girls and study habits are more popular in girls than boys. Patel (1981) however, suggested that girls of both rural and urban areas were far better in study habits than boys of those areas. To sum the literature up, some studies reveal that sex has an independent effect on study habits.

**Socio-economic Status of Parents**

Socio-economic status refers to the position that an individual and family occupies with reference to prevailing average standards, cultural possession and participation in group activity of community. According to Chaudhari (1998), socio-economic status includes both the social and economic status of the individual in the group. The variations in performance of students are also due to the differences in socio-economic status of students, differential treatment given by parents, parent’s educational level, and influence of the surroundings and so on. Vijayalaxmi and Natesan (1992) studied factors influencing academic performance of students from Coimbatore, 100 students studying in XI standard were selected for the study of which 50
were boys and 50 were girls. To assess the socio-economic status of the subjects, the socio-economic status scale developed by Vendal (1981) was used. To assess the academic performance of the students, the total marks obtained by the students in the quarterly and half yearly examination was taken. Findings showed that girls had a higher mean academic performance compared to boys.

The type of intellectual environment in the home will definitely have an impact on the performance of the student and this intellectual environment in turn is determined by intellectual level of parents, parent’s education, occupation, income, size of the family. Adolescents are highly influenced by society, socio-economic status, self-concept, study habits, emotional maturity, which may enhance their academic performance or may disturb their academic performance during high school period. Manchala (1996) reported in a study that there was no significant influence of mother’s occupation on study habits of students, but father’s occupation had significant influence on the study habits of students. Rao (1998) also in a research found that there existed no difference either between students of employed and non-employed mothers in their study habits.

1.3. Self-Concept

Every individual exists in a constantly changing world of experience of which he is the center. It is his basic tendency and striving to know and understand himself as well as his environment. He reacts to his environment as he experiences and perceived it. Due to constant interactions with his
environment, gradually the form of his ‘self’ is differentiated and developed. In this process, an integrated, organized and unique self-structure comes out. All his behavior is directed towards actualizing, preserving and enhancing this self-structure. That part of self-structure which the individual perceives as a set of specific and relatively stable self-characteristics formulates his self-concept.

Rogers, in his 1947 Presidential address to the American Psychology Association, noted that the ‘self’ had come back into Psychology. The concept of self had fallen into disrepute in Psychology, possibly due to the dominance of Behaviorism, but was coming back as a legitimate research concern by the late 1940s. Rogers (1951) defined self-concept as “an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissible of awareness. It is composed of such elements as the perceptions of one’s characteristics and abilities; the perception and concept of the self in relation to others and to the environment; the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects; and goals and ideals which are perceived as having positive or negative valence.”

The extensive interest in self has a long history; theoretically the notion of the self can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. The formulation by Mead and Cooley (1934, 1902) provided a fruitful basis for empirical work; nevertheless the notion of the self-concept did not become a research concern until the 1940s.
Virtually all investigators agree that two distinct aspects of the self, first identified by philosopher James (1890) more than a century ago, emerge and become more refined with age. The first is the ‘I’ or the existential self. It includes the following realizations: That the self is separate from the surrounding world, can act on and gain a sense of control over its environment, has a private inner life not accessible to others, and maintains continuous existence over time. The second facet of the self is the ‘me’, a reflective observer that treats the self as an object of knowledge and evaluation by sizing up its diverse attributes. Self-understanding begins with the dawning of self-awareness in the second year of life (Lewis & Brooks, 1979) and gradually evolves into a rich, multifaceted view of the self’s characteristics and capacities over childhood and adolescence. ‘I’ and ‘me’ are intimately intertwined and influence each other.

The notion ‘self’ received utmost importance in Client – centered therapy, the pioneer of which was Carl R. Rogers (1951). According to him the best vantage point for understanding behavior is from the internal frame of reference of the individual himself. Self-concept is the central construct of Roger’s theory. It may be conceived of as an organized gestalt comprising:

- The individual’s perception of himself and the values attached to them.
- The individual’s perception of himself in relation to other persons and the values attached to them.
- The individual’s perception of various aspects of the environment and the values attached to them.
According to Roger’s self-theory, self-concept is not self-awareness or consciousness. It is the conceptual gestalt concerning oneself which need not always be in awareness, but available to awareness. A person may not always be aware of his feelings or attitudes that may lie deep but on which he can fall back as and when he wants to use. Perceptions and values attached to the self modify from time to time. The individual’s behaviour and gratification of needs are normally consistent with his self-concept. When a strong need conflicts with a person’s self-concept, he might adopt devious measures to find gratification of his behaviour consistent with his self-concept. Maneuvering of perceptions to secure apparent consistency leads to maladjustment. Among the most influential works in stimulating research on self-concept was that of Snygg and Coombs (1949). They presented a method of predicting individual behaviour in specific situations, which assumed that an individual’s personal frame of reference is a crucial factor in his or her behaviour.

Figure 1-1: Diagrammatic Representation of the ‘self-structure’ by Snygg and Combs (1959)
In particular, they declared the ‘phenomenal field’ that part which the individual experiences as ‘characteristic of himself.’ All behaviour is directed towards the goal of preserving and enhancing the phenomenal-self. It includes the self-concept and those aspects of life which are not a part of the ‘real-self’ but are in some way related to it: one’s family, career, home, school, clothing and the like. The environment that the individual perceives or notices is termed as the ‘phenomenal environment’.

The self arises in the course of interaction in a pre-existing symbolic environment; it is the most significant product of early socialization. Mead (1934) says that “There is a social process out of which selves arise and within which further differentiation, evolution and organization take place. Discussion of the development of self must also include the views of Cooley (1902). According to Cooley, the self is any idea or system of ideas with which is associated the appropriate attitude we call self-feeling. The self is the result of the individual’s imaginative processes and emotions as he or she interacts with others; it is reflected or ‘looking-glass self’ composed of three principal elements; “The imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his judgment of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling such as pride” In simplest terms, according to Mead (1934), to have a self is to have the capacity to respond to, and direct one’s own behaviour. One can behave towards oneself as one can towards any other social object. One can evaluate, blame, encourage and despair about oneself; one can alter one’s behaviour. And in the process of observing, responding to, and directing one’s behaviour, one’s structure of attitudes towards self is changing. It is important to keep in mind that behaviour towards the self does
not occur in a vacuum; one is behaving towards oneself in the context of interaction with others.

The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (1968), describes self as a “Development formulation in the psychological makeup of the individual, consisting of interrelated attitudes that the individual has acquired in relation to his own body and its parts, to his capacities and to objects, which define and regulate his relatedness to them in ‘concrete situations and activities. The attitudes that compose the self-system are, therefore the individual’s cherished commitments, stands on particular issues, acceptances, rejections, reciprocal expectations (roles) in interpersonal and group relations, identification”.

As Gordon (1968) has put it, “The self is a complex process of continuing interpretive activity – simultaneously the person’s located stream of consciousness (both reflexive and non-reflexive including perceiving, thinking, planning and evaluation, choosing etc) and the resultant structure of self-conceptions (The special systems of self referential meanings available to this active consciousness)”.

Self-concept is often described as a global entity; how people feel about themselves in general, but it has also been described as made up on multiple self-conceptions, with concepts developed in relation to different roles (Griffin, Chassin & Young, 1981; Burkitt, 1991; Rowan & Cooper, 1998). Thus self-concept may be generally and situational specific. Strang (1957) has identified transitory or temporary self-concepts also, besides the overall
basic self-concept. These ideas of self are influenced by the mood of the moment or by recent or continuing experience.

1.3.1 Self-esteem: The evaluative side of self-concept

Self-esteem represents how much a person likes, accepts and respects himself overall as a person; it includes the judgment we make about our worth and the feelings associated with those judgments. Knowing who you are and liking how you are represent two different things. Although adolescents become increasingly accurate in understanding who they are (their self-concept), this knowledge does guarantee that they like themselves (their self-esteem) any better. The cognitive sophistication – increased accuracy in understanding themselves, allows them to differentiate various aspects of self-esteem, for eg an adolescent may have high self-esteem in terms of academic performance but lower self-esteem in terms of relationship with others (Feldman, 1977).

According to Rosenberg (1979), “a person with high self-esteem is fundamentally satisfied with the type of person he is, yet he may acknowledge his faults while hoping to overcome them”. High self-esteem implies a realistic evaluation of the self’s characteristics and competencies, coupled with attitude of self-acceptance and self-respect.

Self-esteem ranks among the most important aspects of children’s social cognitive development. Children’s evaluations of their own competencies affect their emotional experiences and future behaviour and similar situations as well as their long-term psychological adjustment. Self-esteem originates
early in life, and its structure becomes increasingly elaborate over years (Stipek et al, 1992).

1.3.2 The Determinants of Self-esteem.

Researchers have studied the multifaceted nature of self-esteem by applying methods like Factor Analysis to children’s ratings of themselves on many characteristics. Harter’s (1990) findings revealed that before age 7, children distinguish how well others like them (social acceptance) from how “good” they are at doing things (competence). By 7-8 years, children have formed at least three separate self-esteem – academic, physical and social, that become more refined with age (Marsh, 1990). Further more, school age children combine their separate self-evaluations into a general appraisal of themselves – an overall sense of self worth. Consequently during middle childhood self-esteem takes on the hierarchical structure as shown in the figure. With the arrival of adolescence, several new dimensions of self-esteem are added – close friendship, job competence, romantic appeal etc. that reflect salient concerns of this period.

For James (1890), global self-esteem reflects the ratio of a person’s perceptions of competence or success in discrete domains relative to the importance of success in these domains. Harter (1986) included the scholastic competence, athletic competence, social acceptance, physical appearance and behavioural conduct domains and found that competence (low discrepancy) in the domains deemed important is associated with high levels of self-esteem. There is number of evidence that discrepancy between actual and ideal self-concept clearly exert a powerful influence on self-
esteem (Higgins, 1987; Simmons and Blyth; 1987; Tesser and Campbell, 1983).

Findings with adolescents also support the Cooley’s (1902) postulation that the origins of self-esteem lay in an individual’s perceptions of what significant-others thought of the self, which Mead (1934) termed as ‘perspective-taking skills’. Perspective taking improves greatly over middle childhood and adolescence. Consequently, older children are better at reading the messages they receive from others and incorporating these into their self-definitions. Adolescent who feels that he or she is receiving the positive regard of significant others (e.g. parents and peers) will express positive regard for the self in the form of self-esteem. With regard to the relative impact of different sources of social support on global self worth, Rosenberg(1979) has suggested a developmental shift, in that for young children, perceived parental attitudes towards the self are of almost exclusive significance, whereas among older children and adolescents, peer judgments gain increasing importance.

There is considerable consensus that physical appearance significantly contributes to self-esteem during adolescence (Harter, 1989; Simmons and Rosenberg, 1975). Although physical attractiveness clearly touted in our society (Elkind, 1984), it not only reflects societal emphasis on the importance of good looks, there may; be a more basic relationship between the outer self, reflected in the appearance, and the inner self, namely global feelings of self-esteem. Developmentally, physical capabilities represent the first sense of self to emerge moreover, from an early age the physical or outer
self is a salient dimension that provokes evaluative reactions from others (Langlois, 1981), reactions that may well be incorporated into the emerging sense of inner self.

1.3.3. Changes in global self-esteem.

Self-esteem once established does not remain stable throughout. In early childhood, it’s very high then it drops over the first few years of elementary school as children start making social comparisons—that is judge their abilities, behavior, appearance, and other characteristics in relation to those of others (Stipek and McIver, 1989; Ruble et al, 1980). Once children enter school they receive frequent feedback about themselves in relation to their classmates. In addition they become cognitively better able to make sense of such information. As a result self-esteem adjusts to a more realistic level that matches the opinions of others as well as objective performance. Self-esteem undergoes change during adolescence; longitudinal studies reveal gradual, consistent improvements in self-esteem over grades 7-12 (McCarthy and Hoge, 1982); there are several reasons for such gains:

- There may be increasing realism about the ideal self, reducing the real ideal discrepancy.
- Increased autonomy and freedom of choice over the adolescence years may also play a role. If the individual has more opportunities to select valued performance domains in which he or she is competent, self-esteem will be increased.
• Relatively increased role taking ability may lead the adolescent to behave in more social acceptable ways that enhance the evaluation of the self by others.

The rise in the self-worth suggests that for most young people, becoming adolescent leads to feelings of pride and self-confidence. A study of self-esteem in 10 industrialized countries showed that the majority of teenagers had an optimistic outlook on life, a positive attitude towards school and work, faith in their ability to cope with life problems (Offer, 1988).

The picture of change in self-esteem during early adolescence is less sanguine. Simmons and Blyth (1987) suggested a developmental readiness hypothesis for this, that children can be thrust into environments before they are psychologically equipped to handle the new social and academic demands.

With regards to timing of puberty, early maturing girls fare the worst; they are more dissatisfied with their body image, which exerts and influence on their self-esteem. They do not fit the cultural stereotypes of female attractiveness and are not yet emotionally prepared to deal with social expectations (Peterson and Taylor, 1980).

Negative self-perceptions lead to more predictable behaviour than positive self-perceptions. Presumably, this happens because negative self views involve more tightly organized schemas than positive ones; as a result, someone with generally high self-esteem can interpret a success in a variety
of ways, but someone with low self-esteem tends to over generalize the implications of a failure.

Credible feedback indicating that one has some of the characteristics of his or her ideal self is a positive experience, while feedback indicating the presence of undesired characteristics is negative. It also matters whether one’s “good” or “Bad” qualities are common or rare. The lowest level of self-esteem is found among those who perceive their liked characteristics to be quite common and their unlinked characteristics to be relatively rare.

1.3.4. Self-esteem and Social Comparison.

Social comparison is a major determinant of how we evaluate ourselves. Depending on our comparison group, specific success and failures may contribute to high or low self-evaluation or be completely irrelevant.

Several lines of research help clarify some of the ways in which these complex social comparisons operate. When we compare ourselves to other, our self-esteem goes up; when we perceive some inadequacy in them – a contrast effect happens. When, however, the comparison is with someone to whom we feel close, our esteem goes up; when we perceive something very good about them- an assimilation effect happens. In a similar way, a person who compare unfavorable within group members experiences lower self-esteem and increased depression much more than if the unfavorable comparison is with out-group members.

Self-esteem should not be considered as in immutable trait but rather the processes responsible for its potential change must be illuminated. Only by
understanding these processes, the strategies to maintain or enhance self-esteem can be sought. Strategies implied by Harter’s research (1986) include valuing the individual’s areas of competence and discounting domains in which he is not competent, selecting social comparison groups that are more similar to the self, as well as interacting with peers who can provide support and affirmation that can be internalized in the form of positive regard for the self.

1.3.5 Measuring Self-Concept.

The idea of self-concept has been discussed in detail; but to be useful in science, an idea must have an objective referent: there must be a method of measuring it and a number of methods have been devised to measure or estimate the self-concept. Though none of them captures the idea in its entirety, but most seem to catch enough of it to demonstrate that the self-concept is an important personality variable. All measurements of the self-concept include the idea of desirability and undesirability. Desirability may be evaluated as an abstract social norm (something which the society values positively or negatively) or else in terms of the personal qualities of the subjects. Some widely used techniques to measure self-concept are: -
Likert Type Scales:

In tests using Likert-type scales, subjects are given a set of statements and asked to rate them on a five point or seven point scale such as seldom, occasionally, about half the time, for e.g.

I don’t doubt my worth as an individual even if others do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very much like me</th>
<th>Like me</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Unlike me</th>
<th>Very much unlike me</th>
</tr>
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Q-Sort technique:

In the Q-sort method, subjects are given a set of cards (with statements of adjectives), which are to be placed in piles along some dimension such as “most like me” at the other. This technique lends itself particularly well to measuring discrepancy between the individuals perception of his real and ideal selves.

The Semantic Differential:

This technique was created by Osgood and his associates(1957) to measure the meaning of various phenomena to an individual. Each subject is to place a check in one of the seven spaces for each dimension as per which of the paired (polar) adjectives is closer to his or her self-concept, for e.g.
I am

Good ---------------------------------------- Bad
Smart ----------------------------------------- Stupid
Kind ----------------------------------------- Cruel

The scale can be used to measure both the “real” and “ideal self”.

Checklist:

This method employs checklist of statement or adjectives and the subjects are asked to check those, which apply to them or to their ideal self.

Projective and open-ended techniques:

A number of projective and open-ended techniques have been employed to study the self, including the Thematic Apperception Test and Rorschach Test. The former involves ambiguous pictures about which subjects are to write stories while the latter employs ten standard inkblots in which subjects see various things. A test which is relatively easy to administer, which requires relatively little time and which lends itself to larger and smaller groups of subjects is the Twenty-statements test (TST), sometimes called the “Who am I” test. This measure was designed by sociologist in the symbolic interactions tradition. The TST was developed by Kuhn and first systematically tested by Kuhn and McPartland (1954, 1968-76).