



## A comparative study on self-esteem among tribal and non-tribal students in Udupi Taluk, Karnataka, India

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### ABSTRACT

Self esteem is defined as the positive or negative attitude about self, the degree of liking or satisfaction within self, and owns feeling of perceived worth as compared with others. Healthy self-esteem is important to be successful and happy throughout one's life. The aim of this study was to compare the self esteem among tribal and non-tribal student in Udupi Taluk. A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in November 2012 in government school of Brahmavar, Udupi Taluk. Study participants were students of class eight, nine and ten. One school was randomly selected from the list of government schools in Brahmavar. The size of the sample was 76 which includes 38 from tribal category and 38 from general category and the sampling design was purposive sampling. Rosenberg's scale was used to assess the self esteem of students. Questionnaires were self administered. Permission was taken from the principle of school. Data was entered and analyzed using SPSS version 15. Results are reported as frequency and proportion. Independent t test was used to compare the self esteem of tribal and non tribal student. Study found that more than two third of the tribal student had low self esteem. There was statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.001$ ) in self esteem between tribal and non tribal students.

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### INTRODUCTION

Tribal constitute 8.6% of total population of India whereas in Karnataka 6.6% of state population is tribal.<sup>1</sup> According to census 2001 Udupi district has 0.42 lakh scheduled tribe population. The largest scheduled tribe groups in Udupi are Koraga, Marati and Naikda.<sup>2</sup>

Self esteem is defined as the positive or negative attitude about self, the degree of liking or satisfaction within self, and owns feeling of perceived worth as compared with others. Generally self esteem is referred as positive evaluation of one's self in all respects.<sup>3</sup>

Self-esteem is viewed as "a feeling of self-appreciation." in field of psychology.<sup>4</sup> Maslow states that psychological health is not possible unless essential core of individual is fundamentally accepted, loved and respected by others or his/herself.<sup>5</sup> Research conducted in Indian context suggests that the main causes of low self esteem is discriminate on the basis of race and caste, comparison with others, physical appearance, financial and social position, negative experiences, poverty and punishments.<sup>6,7,8,9</sup>

Self-esteem is strongly related to happiness but the research has not clearly established causation that high self-esteem does lead to greater happiness. Low

self-esteem is more likely than high to lead to depression under some circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

Low self-esteem has many different manifestations; withdrawal, depression and lack of self-confidence are all symptoms of low self-esteem. Many adolescents express anger and frustration because they do not complete certain tasks easily or efficiently. When these feelings are turned inward they reinforce feeling of low self-esteem.<sup>11</sup>

Education is means to overcome social exclusion of disadvantaged group and it is a tool to reduce inequalities in the society. Scheduled tribes face many barriers in attaining education.<sup>12</sup> Studies have shown that social support is positively related to the self-esteem of student and self-esteem is positively associated with academic outcomes.<sup>13,14</sup>

Healthy self-esteem is important to be successful and happy throughout one's life.

The aim of this study was to compare the self esteem among tribal and non-tribal students in Udipi Taluk.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in November 2012 in government school of Brahmavar, Udipi Taluk. Study participants were students of class eight, nine and ten. One school was randomly selected from the list of government schools in Brahmavar. The size of the sample was 76 which includes 38 from tribal category and 38 from general category and the sampling design was purposive sampling. A semi structured questionnaire was developed after literature review and pilot study was done to validate the tool. The Rosenberg's scale was used to assess the self esteem of students which consist of 10 questions. The 10- item Likert scale is answered on a four point scale - from strongly agree

to strongly disagree.<sup>3</sup> In this study the Cronbach's alpha for Rosenberg's scale was 0.72 which is considered to be significant. It was translated into local Kannada language for better understanding of questionnaire by the student. Questionnaires were self administered. Permission was taken from the principle of school. Study forms were coded to ensure confidentiality of data. The collected data was entered and analyzed using SPSS version 15. Results are reported as frequency and proportion. Independent t-test was used to compare the self esteem of tribal and non tribal student. p value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

#### RESULTS

In nontribal 100% of the students liked going to school and 73.7% of the respondents were confident. Among non tribal 60.5% of the students had grade more than 60 percent while in tribal 34.2% of the respondents had grade more than 60 percent (**Table 1**).

Among tribal students 71.1% of the students had low self esteem while in non tribal 15.8% of the students had low self esteem (**Table 2**).

Non tribal group had higher (19.42) mean score in self esteem scale compared to (12.36) tribal group which was found to be statistically significant using independent sample t-test ( $t = -7.19, 74 \text{ df}, p < .001$ ) (**Table 3**).

*(for tables see next page)*

Table 1 Baseline characteristics of the respondents

Variables	Tribal n (%)	Non tribal n (%)
Age	13.61±.94	13.92±.99
Sex		
Male	22(57.9)	13(34.2)
Female	16(42.1)	25(65.8)
Like going school		
Yes	32(84.2)	38(100)
No	6(15.8)	0(0)
Like yourself		
Yes	26(68.4)	32(84.2)
No	12 (31.6)	6(15.8)
Feeling confident		
Yes	23(60.5)	28(73.7)
No	15(39.5)	10(26.3)
Can handle situation		
Yes	23(60.5)	30(78.1)
No	15(39.5)	8(21.1)
Always achieve goals		
Yes	21(55.3)	24(63.2)
No	17(44.7)	14(36.8)
Grades		
<35%	8(21)	1(2.6)
36-60%	17(44.8)	14(36.9)
>60%	13(34.2)	23(60.5)
Total	38(100)	38(100)

Table 2 Distribution of respondents on the basis of score obtained on Rosenberg scale

Variables	Tribal n (%)	Non Tribal n (%)	Total n (%)
Self Esteem			
Low (Below 15)	27(71.1)	6(15.8)	33(43.4)
Moderate (15-25)	11(28.9)	31(81.6)	42(55.3)
High (Above 25)	0(0)	1(2.6)	1(1.3)

Table 3 Comparing the self esteem level among tribal and nontribal student based on Rosenberg's scale

Group	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	p value
Tribal	12.36	4.64	<0.001*
Non Tribal	19.42	3.86	

## DISCUSSION

In the present study more than two third of the respondents had low self esteem. From this study it is illustrated that there is a significant difference in the self esteem level between the tribal and non- tribal students. There are very less study conducted in India focusing in this issue hence this component of mental well being should be emphasized. Sample size was small and was taken from a single school so it is considered as the limitation of the study.

## CONCLUSION

To develop the self esteem and to boost up the confidence of tribal children, schools should develop

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an interactive and social learning environment. Counseling sessions are to be conducted for the students who have low self esteem to motivate and support them. Immediate actions are to be taken as its effect can have lifelong impact.

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