



A Study Of The Relationship Between Adolescents' Emotional States And Their Attitudes Towards Their Anthropometric Characteristics

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ABSTRACT

This article studies the emotional states and anthropometric (physical) indicators of adolescents, as well as their self-perceptions. The study analyzed the relationship between adolescents' self-esteem, emotional sensitivity, and physical parameters (height, weight, body composition). The results demonstrated that the emotional stability and self-esteem of adolescents are closely interconnected with their physical characteristics, which is significant for the development of psychological and medical interventions.

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Adolescence is one of the most distinct stages in a person's life, marked by its sharper and more complex transition from childhood to youth compared to other periods. The adolescent period corresponds to the years of study in grades 5-8 of secondary school and covers the ages from eleven or twelve to fourteen or fifteen. In some children, however, it may be observed 1-2 years earlier or later. Considering this, it can be said that in some children (most often girls), adolescence begins at the age of 9-10, while in others it can last until the age of 16-17. The onset of adolescence in girls occurs one to two years earlier than in boys. The special status of adolescence in the child's developmental cycle is also referred to by terms such as "transitional period," "difficult period," and "crisis period."

The difficulty and complexity of the adolescent period are linked to many psychological, physiological, and social factors. All aspects of development that occur at this age—physical, mental, moral, social, and so on—also change in substance, as they are associated with the transition from one period of life to another. Qualitatively new formations appear in all areas; elements of maturity emerge as a result of the body's restructuring, the development of self-awareness, changes in the nature of relationships with adults and peers and the methods of social interaction with them, and shifts in interests, cognitive activities, and educational pursuits. Moral states that mediate behavior, activities, and relationships are observed, as well as various contradictory feelings and situations within them.

The primary factor in the development of an adolescent's personality is the restructuring of their system of interests and social orientation; their self-awareness, self-esteem, and values change. They exhibit greater social activity directed toward themselves (predicting their personality and future through attempts to realize their intentions), and their systems of goals and tasks are transformed as they seek to internalize values and establish satisfactory relationships with adults and peers. For the adolescent, their own "self" and the significance of this "self" grows. However, the process of transformation is a prolonged one. It depends on many conditions and therefore can be uneven across the board. This explains, on the one hand, the coexistence of "childhood" and "adulthood" within an adolescent, and on the other, the significant

differences in the developmental levels of various aspects of maturity among adolescents of the same chronological age. This is because two opposing forces are present in the lives of modern schoolchildren: 1) factors that hinder the development of maturity (such as providing children only with academic work in the absence of other consistent and serious responsibilities, and the tendency of many parents to shield children from household chores, worries, and anxieties, and to be overprotective in all matters); 2) factors that accelerate maturity (a large flow of information, accelerated physical development and puberty, the heavy workload of many parents, and, as a result, the early independence of children). All of this creates a wide variety of conditions that determine development.

The general trajectory of development in adolescents can vary, and each trajectory can have many variations.

Adolescence is considered a difficult and critical period. This assessment is primarily related to the numerous qualitative changes that occur during this time, which sometimes radically disrupt the child's previous characteristics, interests, and attitudes. This can happen over a relatively short period, often unexpectedly, having a spasmodic and stormy impact on the developmental process. Secondly, the ongoing changes are often accompanied by, on the one hand, the emergence of significant subjective difficulties for the adolescent, and on the other hand, by challenges in their upbringing. The adolescent becomes resistant to adult influence; they develop various forms of disobedience, opposition, and discontent (stubbornness, rudeness, negativism, obstinacy, withdrawal, and secretiveness).

For more than a quarter of a century, there have been theoretical debates about the roles of biological and social factors in the emergence of key developmental phenomena during adolescence.

The issue of the biological factor in adolescent development arises from the fact that it is at this age that fundamental changes occur in the child's body on the path to biological maturity, and the process of puberty begins. All of this is underpinned by the morphological and physiological restructuring of the body. The onset of this bodily restructuring is associated with the activation of the pituitary gland, especially its anterior lobe, whose hormones stimulate tissue growth and the activity of other important endocrine glands (the gonads, thyroid, and adrenal glands).

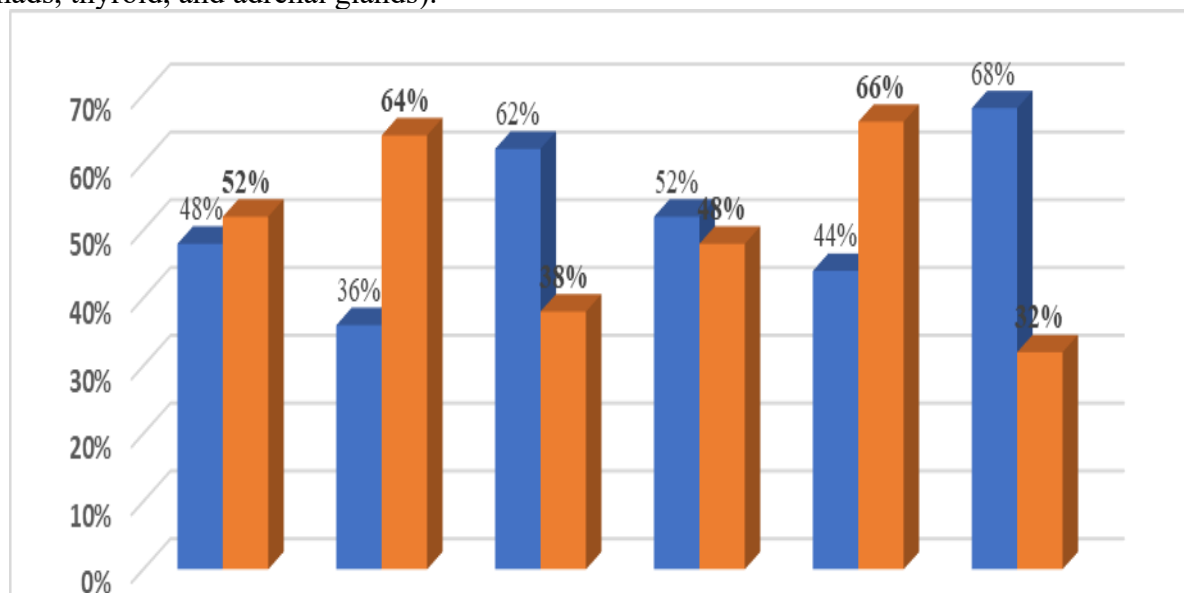


Figure 1: "Attitude Towards Oneself"

According to the results in Figure 1, a psychological interpretation of the respondents' answers to determine their "self-attitude" reveals that 48% of adolescent girls and 52% of adolescent boys answered our question with "I accept myself in most cases." This suggests that during adolescence, the level of self-acceptance does not differ drastically between genders, but slight variations in prevalence exist due to the influence of certain psychological factors.

From a psychological perspective, this situation is explained by the unique developmental stage of adolescence. During this period, an individual is in the process of forming their "self-concept," where self-acceptance becomes more dependent on external evaluations, peer opinions, and social comparisons. The

relatively higher level of self-acceptance in boys can be attributed to their less emotional response to social pressure, a tendency toward independence, and a propensity for a more realistic or stable assessment of their own capabilities. For girls, the process of self-acceptance may be linked more to emotional sensitivity, appearance, and a heightened focus on social standards. This leads them to rely more heavily on social comparison in their self-assessment, resulting in a slightly lower expression of self-acceptance. Furthermore, the modern social environment, particularly the influence of social networks, plays a significant role in shaping adolescents' attitudes toward themselves. Constant comparison with idealized standards of appearance and success creates considerable psychological pressure on self-esteem. This can complicate the process of self-acceptance, especially for girls. In general, this minor difference between boys and girls is explained by the overall psychological development characteristic of adolescence, gender-specific levels of emotional sensitivity, and the influence of the social environment. The results indicate that self-acceptance is a complex psychological process that depends more on an individual's psychological characteristics and social experiences rather than on their gender.

Table 1
Results of the "Self-Attitude" Assessment by Variable

Variables	r	p
"I accept myself in most cases" ↔ "I don't accept myself in most cases"	-0.72	<0.01
"I accept myself in many cases" ↔ "I tend to compare myself with others"	0.61	<0.01
"I accept myself more often" ↔ "There are more positive thoughts about me"	0.85	<0.01
"I accept myself in most cases" ↔ "I am satisfied with my body"	0.78	<0.01
"I accept myself in many cases" ↔ "There are frequent cases of low self-esteem"	-0.69	<0.01
"I don't accept myself in most cases" ↔ "Low self-esteem is common"	0.73	<0.01
"There are more positive opinions about myself" ↔ "There are frequent cases of low self-esteem"	-0.64	<0.01
"I am satisfied with my body" ↔ "Low self-esteem is common"	-0.71	<0.01

The results of the correlational analysis showed that there are significant psychological relationships among the indicators that constitute adolescents' self-attitudes. Specifically, a negative correlation ($r = -0.72$; $p < 0.01$) was found between the indicators "I accept myself in most cases" and "I do not accept myself in most cases," which indicates that self-acceptance and self-rejection are opposing psychological poles. In other words, as an individual's level of self-acceptance increases, the tendency for self-rejection decreases. Furthermore, the indicator "I accept myself in most cases" showed a high positive correlation with "I have more positive thoughts about myself" ($r = 0.85$; $p < 0.01$) and "I am satisfied with my body" ($r = 0.78$; $p < 0.01$). This result confirms that a positive "self-concept" and satisfaction with one's body image play a crucial role in the foundation of self-acceptance. That is, the more positively a person evaluates themselves, the higher their level of self-satisfaction becomes.

Additionally, the indicator "I am inclined to compare myself with others" showed a positive correlation ($r = 0.61$; $p < 0.01$) with "I accept myself in most cases." This suggests that during adolescence, social comparison plays an important role in the process of personal identification. Adolescents form their "self" image by comparing themselves with their peers, which directly influences the process of self-acceptance.

At the same time, the indicator "instances of low self-esteem occur frequently" showed a negative correlation ($r = -0.69$; $p < 0.01$) with "I accept myself in most cases," implying that low self-esteem reduces an individual's level of self-acceptance. Conversely, a state of low self-esteem showed a positive correlation

($r = 0.73$; $p < 0.01$) with "I do not accept myself in most cases," which confirms the intensification of a negative self-attitude.

The negative correlation between "more positive thoughts" and "low self-esteem" ($r = -0.64$; $p < 0.01$) indicates that an individual's positive cognitive appraisals ensure psychological stability. Concurrently, the negative correlation between "satisfaction with body image" and "low self-esteem" ($r = -0.71$; $p < 0.01$) signifies that adolescents' satisfaction with their physical appearance has a considerable impact on their overall self-esteem.

In conclusion, the results of the correlational analysis demonstrate that adolescents' attitude towards themselves is a multicomponent psychological system. Within this system, cognitive appraisal, emotional satisfaction, social comparison, and attitude toward body image are intrinsically linked, and they play a vital role in the formation of an individual's "self-concept."

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