# Self-Concept among Adolescent Female Students at Puberty

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#### **Dedication**

To my dear mother...

For her support & encouragement

To my lovely family ...

For their support & encouragement

To my friends ...

For their support, encouragement

«I, assistance

#### **ABSTRACT**

Self-concept has been one of the most researched topics of adolescent development. The aim of this study was to investigate changes in adolescent female students' self-concept associated with puberty; through assessment of their self-esteem, social relations, and body image. The research hypotheses were that puberty was associated with negative changes in adolescent females' self-esteem, social relations, and positive changes in body image. The study was conducted in two settings preparatory schools, one private and one governmental. The subjects were 316 adolescent female students from these two schools, 158 from each. Within each school, 79 pre-pubertal and 79 post-pubertal girls were selected.

Adolescent females aged between 11-14 years in preparatory schools were the subjects of this study. They were subjected to 1- Self-administrated questionnaire. 2- Tennessee Scale for self-concept. The study revealed that puberty was associated with negative changes in adolescent females' body image in the private school, while it was associated with negative changes in adolescent females' family relations and body image in the governmental school, and the differences were significant, also, there was a positive relation between educated mothers and family relations among adolescent females after menarche, the

work of the mother affected positively the adolescent females' self-esteem, family relations, and body image before menarche. The high scholastic achievement level affected positively adolescents' family relations and body image before menarche, their self-esteem after menarche.

It was recommended that adolescent girls need more psychological care in the governmental school than in the private one. There is a necessity to improve the role of the nurses, psychosocial workers and teachers to evaluate the adolescent students' problems in schools. Changing pubertal status, and the different effects on female students, must be taken into account in planning educational programs in schools. Psychosocial counseling for adolescents' parents, social workers, teachers and community mental health nurses who are working in the schools to teach them physiological an psychological changes and to help their students how to face these problems.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The hopes, challenges, fear, and successes of adolescence have been romanticized or dramatized in novels, short stories, and news articles. It is a commonplace to survey a newsstand and to find a magazine article describing the "stormy years" of adolescence, the new crazes or fades of youth, or the "explosion" of problems with teenagers.

Until the past 20-25 years, when medical, biological, and social scientists began to study intensively the adolescent period, there was relatively little sound scientific information available to verify or refute the literary characterizations of adolescence. Today, however, such information does exist, and it is clear that although adolescence presents many challenges, the evidence is not consistent with the frequently reported belief that adolescence is protracted period of storm and stress for most individuals (*Petersen*, 1983; *Montemayor et al*, 1990; *Lerner et al*, 1991).

Adolescence was defined as the period within the life span when most of a person's biological, cognitive, psychological, and social characteristics are changing from what is typically

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considered child-like to what is considered adult-like (*Lerner and Galambus*, 1998). Meanwhile, *Jaffe* (1998) defined adolescence as the life period that begins with the onset of puberty or the shift to the middle school and ends when an individual is economically self-sufficient and has taken on several adult roles.

Abd Elsameee (2002) defined adolescence as; the real birth for the individual as oneself. Also is a mixture from "childhood" in its way to terminate and "maturity" in its way to begin; i.e. It extends from puberty to maturity, so, with that meaning it extends until the individual reaches to 21 years old.

Adolescence may be defined as teen years or teen ages, because some scientists consider adolescence is a period from thirteen to nineteen years old (*Sayed*, 2001).

Puberty is the term used to designate the marked physical maturation that occurs in almost every system of the body in girls at about age 10, although the actual age of onset varies greatly (*Tanner*, 1962). Meanwhile, *Santrock* (1993), defined puberty as a rapid change to physical maturation involving hormonal and bodily changes that occur primarily during early adolescence. Also, puberty is the term used for the time when the body is changing from the body of a child to the