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# SOCIAL COMPARISON, SELF- CONCEPT AND MOOD IN ADULTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Importance of understanding of self

**self-concept**

**depression**

## Role of social comparison

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# **SOCIAL COMPARISON IN INDIVIDUALS WITH DOWN SYNDROME**

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**Issue of mental age**

**Glenn & Cunningham (2004) study**

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# PARTICIPANTS

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N = 40 individuals with Down syndrome and their parents

19 adolescents (11 females) in the study aged between 12 and 17 years ( $M = 15$  yrs 0 mnths,  $SD = 1.52$  yrs)

21 adult participants (8 females) who ranged in age from 25 to 51 years ( $M = 34$  yrs, 9 mnths,  $SD = 7.53$  yrs).

25 (62%) attended special school as most recent form of schooling

5 adults were attending post-school educational programs

39 were living in the family home; one was living in supported accommodation.

28 (70%) had no or only minor health problems; 12 (30%) were reported to have several or serious health problems.

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# MEASURES

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*Social Comparison Scale* (Allan & Gilbert, 1995)

*Self-Perception Profile for Children* (Harter, 1985)

*Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale* (Zung, 1965)

*Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test , Third Edition, Form B;* (Dunn & Dunn, 1997)

*Mood, Interest and Pleasure Questionnaire* (Ross & Oliver, 2003) \*

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# PROCEDURES

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Initial modifications to instruments

Measure of acquiescence

Pilot study

Ethical clearance

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# PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

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6 individuals with Down syndrome judged to be acquiescent

Mood and Interest subscales of MPIQ highly correlated ( $r = .78$ ) so used total score

Comparison of adolescents and adults

Examined internal consistencies of scales

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# DETAILS OF MODIFICATIONS TO SCALES

Scale	Alpha	Modification	New Alpha
Social Comp.	.60	Removed items 4 & 11	.67
Global self-concept	.38	Retained only +ve items	.63
Zung	.56	Removed items 8 & 17	.62
MIPQ	.94	Nil	.94



# MEANS (STANDARD DEVIATIONS) AND RANGES OF MEASURES

Scale	Mean (SD)	Study Range	Possible range
Social Comp.	28.74 (5.43)	18-36	9-36
Global self- concept	3.20 (0.85)	1-4	1-4
Zung	5.38 (2.83)	1-11	0-17
MIPQ	97.68 (12.73)	68-123	25-125

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# PARENTAL REPORTS RE SOCIAL COMPARISON

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Twenty-two participants (11 adolescents, 11 adults) were reported to make social comparisons.

14 (64%) positive (downward)

3 (14%) negative (upward) comparisons

3 (14%) made neutral (lateral) comparisons

2 (9%) made both positive and negative comparisons.

Comparisons were made with ;

siblings [7 (32%) ]

others with Down syndrome [6 (25%)]

people of the same age [5 (22%) ]

other people with a disability [3 (14%) ]

television personalities [1 (6%) ]

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# SOCIAL ACTIVITY

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Average number of social activities per week was 5-6

- interaction with family (64%), sport (18%), interaction with friends (11%) and watching television at home (7%).

Average number of close friends parents/guardians reported for their child was 2.15 ( $SD = 2.52$ ).

	SCS	Global Self-concept	Zung	MIPQ	Social Activity	No. of friends	PPVT VAE
SCS	1						
S-C	.35*	1					
Zung	-.41**	-.25	1				
MIPQ	.28	.11	-.30	1			
Soc Act	-.53**	.08	.31	.12	1		
Friends	-.06	.11	.01	-.32*	-.12	1	
PPVT	.29	.07	-.42**	.25	-.24	.03	1

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# DISCUSSION

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## Veracity of results

- poor internal consistencies
- discrepancy between parental report and performance in interview
- range of scores

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## DISCUSSION cont.

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Group made positive social comparisons, were not depressed and were reported to display positive mood.

More engagement in social activities associated with more negative social comparison.

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# LIMITATIONS

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- low internal consistency of the instruments
- incomplete data set from parents
- likelihood that those who agreed to participate in the study differ systematically from those who did not
- sample does not represent those individuals who live away from their family home.

It seems very probable that some of the associations identified in this study are mediated by other factors; however, the small sample size did not allow investigations of these.

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# CONCLUSIONS

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Need to consider these findings with a great deal of caution

Issue(s) worthy of further investigation

Need to focus on developing methods/instruments that can assist us to understand self-processes in those with intellectual disability

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