

Relationship between Self-Esteem and Ink Body Art

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ABSTRACT

The present exploratory study attempted to understand the relationship between self-esteem and ink body art. The sample for the study was selected using purposive sampling; consisting of two groups of participants: with ink body art (N=30), and with no ink body art (N=30); with the age range of 18 to 30 years. The participants' global self-esteem was assessed using Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale developed by Morris Rosenberg (1965); and the state self-esteem was assessed using The State Self-Esteem Scale developed by Heatherton and Polivy (1991) which measured 3 components of self-esteem: Performance, Social, and Appearance. To further analyze the perception of the participants towards ink body art, an open ended questionnaire made of 3 questions asking the participants about their perception of tattoos, whether they think that tattoos enhance self-esteem; and regarding getting more tattoos. For data analysis, mean, SD, percentages and t-test were used. The findings of the study suggested that there is no significant difference in the global self-esteem of the participants with ink body art, and without ink body art. However, an individual's state self-esteem is temporarily enhanced by getting ink body art as suggested by the results on the State Self-Esteem Scale of the participants with ink body art, and without ink body art. These results are significant to the contemporary prevalence of tattoos in socioeconomically developed societies.

Keywords: *Self-Esteem, Ink Body Art, State Self-Esteem, Global Self-Esteem*

When young children are asked "What is *Self*?" they answer by indicating towards their own bodies. The notion of self first starts with the body; with one's physical self. As a child starts to grow up, the notions of selfhood go beyond the physical self; he or she starts focusing on other aspects of self including social identity, personal values, reputation, and other factors. For older children and adults, self is something that exists "inside" and hence it is a concept that cannot be physically expressed, and remains separated from the physical body

There is probably a core aspect of self that remains constant throughout one's life, but different parts and versions of an individual's self are apparent in different circumstances. Moreover, selves also sometimes change fundamentally, thereby changing even the most stable or constant part of it.

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It is important to draw an initial distinction between the two terms: “self” and “self-concept.” According to James (1890) and Mead (1934), “Self is a reflexive phenomenon that develops in social interaction and is based on the social character of human language.” It signifies one’s concept of one as a physical, social, and moral being.

According to Rosenberg (1979), self refers to the entirety of an individual’s feelings and thoughts, where he or she refers to himself or herself as an object.

Self-concept is "the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence" (Purkey, 1988).

However, it is important to note that self-concept and self-esteem are different from one another. The self-concept is a set of ideas that rather describe oneself and not judge. Self-esteem, on the other hand, refers to one’s evaluation of one’s own qualities. The present research is mainly focused on the nature of self-esteem.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem includes emotions and feelings such as pride, agony, victory, and embarrassment. One’s self-esteem may be reflected in their behaviour. Synonyms or near-synonyms of self -esteem are self-worth, self-regard, self-love, self- respect.

In the mid 1960s, Morris Rosenberg and other social-learning theorists defined self- esteem as a “stable sense of personal worth or worthiness.” Even though this definition became the most frequently used description of the “self” for any research, it was considered to be very permeable and inclusive.

Self-esteem is defined as the belief that a person is accepted, connected, unique, powerful, and capable (Branden, 1969).

Roots of Self-Esteem. After several years of research, Coopersmith (1967) proposed three different factors that are conducive to the development of high self-esteem among children.

The first one being unconditional positive regard, which means that the parents or others in the environment of the child should convey to him/her that he/she, is loved regardless. Many parents give an impression to their child which suggests that he/she is only loved if they engage in good behaviour. However, for building a healthy sense of self, it is very important for the child to know that the love from the parents would remain the same regardless of his or her behaviour.

The second factor, which according to Coopersmith played a role in enhancing a child’s self-esteem, is the existence of clear and strong standards. The parents should set forth firm and definite criteria which tell the child how he or she needs to behave. The child then becomes aware of what he or she is permitted to do.

The third factor includes parents giving their child freedom and respect for the behaviour falls under the limits of the child. The parents should engage in showing some positive approval when the child manages to live up to their expectations.

The first and the second features may seem seemingly contradict each other. The first suggests loving the child regardless and the second calls for setting up limits and rules for the child’s actions and behaviours. In order to resolve these contrasting features, the parents need

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to know that it is okay for them to disapprove of some of their child's behaviours; but even so, they should not stop the expression of love towards the child.

The construction of self-esteem begins in early childhood; however, it continues to modify itself throughout the course of one's life. A study by Robins, Gosling, Potter, Tracy, and Trzesniewski (2002) emphasises on the life course of self-esteem. According to this study, self-esteem is relatively high during childhood; in fact, children tend to hold very positive, confident, and unrealistic views about themselves. During adolescence, however, the self-esteem lowers. Adolescents tend to worry about how others view them and constantly indulge in behaviours that get others to like them. After adolescence, the self-esteem of an individual gradually rises during the early adulthood and reaches its highest point in the midlife. It could be surprising that self-esteem is the highest among people in their early 60s. Then, it drops significantly as people reach their 70s and 80s. This probably happens because of multiple factors, such as physical impairments, loss of occupational roles, or perhaps the death of the spouse.

People with high self-esteem often value their opinions better, consider themselves to be worthy of good relationships, and believe in their problem solving abilities. They build a healthy balance where they like who they are but also continue to believe that there is still scope for them to develop and grow. Healthy self-esteem helps an individual in having a positive notion about themselves and believing that they deserve the love and acceptance by others around them. People with high self-esteem often tend to persevere in difficult life situations, as compared to the ones with a poor sense of self. However, individuals with low self-esteem do not consider that they have positive characteristics and feel ashamed, frustrated, embarrassed, and guilty about themselves. They also may behave in negative and self-defeating ways, thereby confirming their poor opinions about themselves. People with low self-esteem are unlikely to feel happy in life; and are more engaged in social and emotional problems, as compared to the people with high self-esteem. They tend to have a very yielding approach towards tough life situations, and hence, they do not show the perseverance and motivation to overcome challenges. They are also more prone to being emotionally exploited by the people around them, as they tend to believe they that are not worthy of a good treatment, and lack resilience in the face of a difficult situation.

People with an inflated sense of self that emerges because of their narcissistic attitude and not real accomplishment also face multiple difficulties in life. These people tend to overestimate themselves, as in, they become conceited and self obsessed. Because they are too content with themselves, they view themselves as more worthy of resources than others, as a result of which, they sometimes come across as haughty in front of others. They may also exhibit "externalisation", which means that they believe that all the problems experienced by them are caused by shortcomings of others, and there is nothing that they need to change about themselves. Sometimes, people with an inflated sense of self indulge in relegating others, as they consider themselves to be above all. These people tend to accomplish less in life as compared to people with a normal sense of self; especially when it comes to forming serious intimate relationships in life.

The above mentioned inferences lead to emergence of two important questions. First, are people with a high self-esteem better off in life as compared to the ones with a lower self-esteem? Second, are these people better off only because of their high self-esteem? These two questions have been attempted to be resolved by various studies. The answer to the first question appears to be an affirmative. However, the answer to the second question is 'no.'

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High self-esteem makes people feel good about themselves. These individuals constantly rate themselves as doing well in various aspects. They consider themselves as more popular among their friends, better-looking, more intelligent, and happier.

However, these patterns tell us more about how people with high self-esteem flatter themselves than what it is like in reality. Most of these seeming advantages of high self-esteem disappear once the researchers get different objective measures. Thus, people with high self-esteem rate themselves to be more intelligent than people with low self-esteem, but actual IQ tests show no such significant differences between the two.

Similarly, people with high self-esteem rate themselves to be better looking than people with low self-esteem. But when judges evaluate photographs for facial beauty, it is not necessary that people with high self-esteem are more attractive than the people with low self-esteem (Diener, Wolsic, and Fujita 1995; Gabriel et al., 1994).

Even though there are quite a lot reasons to believe that a higher sense of self facilitates better performance of the child in school, it is not always necessary. Doing well in school might result in a slight enhancement in self-esteem, or having a good family background or high intelligence might lead to success in school thereby developing a high self-esteem, but it is found that self-esteem might not always have such impacts on school performance (Backman, and O'Malley, 1977, 1986; Maruyama, Rubin, and Kingsbury, 1981; Pottebaum, Keith, and Ehly, 1986; Rosenberg, Schooler, and Schoenbach, 1989).

Laboratory studies have tried to test the effects of self-esteem by making strangers meet and get acquainted, and later rate their impressions of each other. People with high self-esteem were more likely to think that they made a better impression on others as compared to people with low self-esteem, but their interaction partners gave them a similar rating to the ones with low self-esteem (Brockner, and Lloyd, 1986; Campbell, and Fehr, 1990). In addition to this, people with low self-esteem often tend to be liked more than the ones with high self-esteem, especially if one with low self-esteem has been criticised or insulted. People with high self-esteem mostly react to criticisms or threats in an extremely unpleasant manner, thereby leaving a bad impression on others (Heatherton, and Vohs, 2000).

A study conducted by Baumeister, Smart, and Boden (1996) found massive evidence against the theory that suggests that low self-esteem facilitates violence. Generally, when people with an inflated sense of self encounter someone or a situation which challenges their high self-esteem, they tend to exhibit violence. This study concluded that when one feels that his or her ego is being threatened, it leads to them behaving in a violent and aggressive manner. However, not all the people with a high self-esteem cause violence, the ones who have an inflated, exaggerated, and narcissistic sense of self are the ones that are truly dangerous.

In a world where people focus on boosting their self-esteem more than concentrating on becoming a better individual, achieving a balanced and an appropriate appraisal of oneself is extremely difficult. Focusing on self-esteem has merely become a matter of thinking that you are better than people around you.

Why do we need to construct Self-Esteem? Everyone likes enhancing their self-esteem. People are welcoming towards anything that gives a boost to their self-esteem, and barely anyone enjoys if anything reduces their self-esteem. There are several explanations as to why people try to enhance their sense of self.

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One of these explanations suggests that human beings often use self-esteem as a tool to counter their fear of death (Becker, 1973; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon; 1986; Pyszczynski, Greenberg, and Solomon, 1997). However, this view has been criticised by researchers on the ground that self-esteem and death anxiety do not correlate. In fact, further findings suggest that high self-esteem strengthens one's attachment towards his or her life, instead of diminishing it, which would in turn make death seem worse. The proponents of this view defend this by stating that self-esteem tends to reduce the anxiety that the thought of death induces (Greenberg, Solomon, et al., 1992).

Another view suggests that self-esteem is significant in helping one cope with trauma, misfortunes, and stress (Steele, 1988). It could be possible that self-esteem can be of a very little value under normal circumstances, but at the time of adversity, it helps people in boosting their spirits. Hence, self-esteem is a valuable source. This theory does reflect upon the limited benefits of self-esteem, especially the emotional gains and enhancing one's capacity in the face of stressful situations, but it is not clear if people only want self-esteem to help them in coping with the shortcomings they experience in their lives. Even when they are through good times, they want a high self-esteem.

The third view states that self-esteem is a "*sociometer*", which refers to an intrinsic evaluation of how well one is related to another human being (Leary, Tambor, Terdal, and Down, 1995). There are numerous studies that provide evidence for the fact that forming good social relationships and getting along well with others are facilitative to good health, happiness, and well being. Humans are significantly motivated by the basic need to belong (Baumeister, and Leary, 1995). In order to justify this theory, Leary and his colleagues (1995) showed that self-esteem is enhanced with the events that are associated with social incorporation – such as, being accepted by others, seen as attractive, proving one's competence and so on. Moreover, events that are associated with social rejection can also lead to the lowering of one's self-esteem.

Identity. Any statement that answers the question "Who am I?" forms the identity component of self. There are two major defining criteria for identity – *continuity*, and *differentiation*.

Continuity refers to uniformity over time. People often change in various ways as time passes by, but they tend to retain some continuity of their identities, for e.g. continuing to have the same parents. *Differentiation* refers to the characteristics which are subjective to an individual, thereby distinguishing him or her from other people.

Being identified with a particular family distinguishes one with the other non-members.

Any factor that enhances continuity and differentiation helps in further defining identity. Multiple sources of continuity and differentiation lead to the formation of a furnished and strong sense of identity. Strong family ties, a stable home, a secure job, healthy relationships, established reputation, and other such things make one's identity secure, and someone who has these things intact is unlikely to suffer with identity issues. One reason why identity has become a major concern in the contemporary world is because the things that once provided with continuity and differentiation, no longer do so (Baumeister, 1986). For example, in earlier times, people generally lived in the same locale for their entire lives, with the same neighbours and relatives. But today, people are more mobile, so home and friendship networks are no longer a source of stability anymore, like they used to be.

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Even though the make-up of everyone's identity is different, there are certain features that are common. Identity included three major types of constructs. Firstly, one's interpersonal self: how others know you, your reputation, your interpersonal style and so forth. Secondly, it includes the concept of personality – what you may become. Thirdly, it included one's general values, morals, priorities and so on.

Identity Crises. The notion of “Identity Crises” is more or less a modern phenomenon. For example, people in the middle ages did not go through anything even resembling identity crises. In the 1940s, Erik Erikson devised the term “Identity Crisis.” He believed that nearly everyone went through this crisis in adolescence; however in many cases this could be unconscious, which explains why people are not often aware of it.

In 1960s, psychologists researched upon the concept of ‘identity crisis’ and abandoned the original theory given by Erik Erikson, which suggested that everyone goes through this type of crisis in their lives. Instead, they began to think that some people go through their lives without ever having such crisis, whereas others go through a significant crisis in their lives. Thus, researchers became interested in comparing the lives of people who had gone through identity crisis, against the ones who did not have them.

A classification of people based on identity crisis was developed by James Marcia (1966, 1967). Four types of people were categorised, based on two dimensions: firstly, if one has ever gone through an active period of identity crisis in their lives; and secondly, if one has a stable personality based on strong commitments.

Following are the four categories of people:

Identity Achieved: Crisis plus Commitment: People who have gone through identity crisis, and resolved it are classified as identity-achieved. They are often regarded as mature and capable individuals, as their identities are a mere product of personal struggle.

Moratorium: Crisis but no Commitment: When there is an evidence of identity crisis but strong commitments are lacking, then the individual is classified as having “moratorium” status. It generally means that the identity crisis is currently in progress, and these people are actively struggling to form an identity. The individuals are often thoughtful and indulge in exploring new ideas and lifestyles. They also sometimes change their personalities on a day to day basis; they try to understand how different ways of being make them feel and the kind of reactions they get from other people. The term “Moratorium” comes from Erikson's term “psychosocial moratorium”, which was used by him to refer to the modern status of adolescence, wherein one is psychologically grown in many respects but is not well integrated in the society. Rather, one is left with minimal obligations and commitments so that one is free to try out different ways of forming an identity.

Foreclosure: Commitment without Crisis: When an individual has a committed and stable identity but there is no particular sign of having a crisis, he or she is classified as “foreclosure” status. In most of the cases, these people have remained the same way their parents brought them up, with minor modifications, usually those that are approved by their parents. All children are mostly classified as having “foreclosure identities” until an identity crisis starts, and if one never experiences an identity crisis, he/she remains in the foreclosure status. Foreclosure status is very complex. On the surface, these people tend to showcase maturity; they tend to have adult opinions and values even in their teens. But it's mostly a

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chimera, simply because maturity is accepted by the parents rather than acquired personally. When closely looked upon, many people with foreclosure identities turn out to be adamant, stringent, and unbending. They are generally poles apart from people who have “moratorium” personalities; they are not interested in exploring new ideas and experiences. People with this kind of identity may experience difficulties in life when they come across stressful situations or try to form intimate relationships.

Identity Crisis: Neither Crisis nor Commitment: People of this category are the ones, who have neither experienced an identity crisis, nor remained in “foreclosure status” in the commitments they were brought up with. These “identity diffuse” people lack commitment and stability but they do not seem to mind it, thus, they do not engage in any struggle to form an identity. Identity diffusion can result in the development psychological illness. This could be because the people who are mentally dysfunctional do not engage in resolving the issues with their identities and are most comfortable with having a vague position in the society. They could also be called “perpetual teenagers” as they thrive on the uncommitted lifestyle of adolescence, and continue it long after others have formed adult identities.

Even though it's surprising, but many studies have suggested that identity crisis is good for you, even though it is not something that one would prefer going through. Research shows that the people who go through an identity crisis in their lives, and successfully resolve it reach “identity-achieved status” – they are superior to others on many regards, including academic achievement in college, ambition and motivation, and they have the ability to adapt and perform efficiently in difficult situations (Bernard, 1981; Bourne, 1978).

When researches tried to understand the nature and the course of identity crisis, they found out that there are at least two major types of identity crisis; they are *identity deficit* and *identity conflict* (Baumeister, Shapiro, and Tice, 1985; Baumeister 1986).

Identity deficit occurs when an individual has a tough time dealing with life and making important decisions. This type of identity crisis may be caused by reaching a particular point in life where one needs to make a major decision, but does not have satisfactory inner basis for making them. Adolescence could be an appropriate example of such a stage in life – one in this stage needs to make major decisions about their adult life, career, and spouse – but such decisions are extremely challenging to be made, one does not have enough information. This type of identity crisis generally arises when one starts to reject the values or ambitions they have been taught or have held for long; this facilitates to identity deficit. Emotionally, identity deficit may seem like a roller-coaster ride – from despair to euphoria in rapidly.

Identity conflict is the exact opposite of identity deficit. Incompatibility or inconsistency between two parts of self; result in identity conflict. In most of the cases, these parts of self are not initially in conflict with each other; however, life circumstances tend to bring them to conflict. This identity crisis refers to an individual having several identities which do not come to terms with one another regarding a major decision in life. However, identity conflict is not as emotionally exhausting as identity deficit. People with identity conflict do often suffer, as they feel that they are betraying a major part of themselves and others as well. They do not tend to show openness to new ideas, which is typical in people going through identity deficit. There is also no evidence that suggests that identity conflict can be good for an individual. The resolution of identity conflict is a difficult process as sometimes people going through it need to renounce some important parts of them. And in other cases, people are required to make various compromises.

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Identity crisis, whether deficit or conflict, is an extremely challenging period in one's life. It requires one to change their sense of self and adjust to different life situations.

Although, they might be painful, some people do manage to overcome these phases. In addition to this, an individual is better off after going through a crisis.

Self-Enhancement. Whenever people interpret or manipulate evidence about them in order to enhance their image of self, they engage in self-enhancement. Self-enhancement refers to the process of creating a notion about oneself that one is a proficient and worthy, notwithstanding what others around him or her might think. It is also related to a self-protection motive. People tend to engage in self-protection when they try to deny some undesirable aspects about themselves. It refers to claiming as much as one can about their strengths and achievements.

People with low self-esteem are often found defending any such situation that threatens to harm their self-esteem; and as they gain understanding of behaviours like self-acceptance, self-reliance, self-assertiveness, their self-esteem starts to increase. Many a times, individuals who are low on self-esteem tend to strive for authority and control over the others. When these people find out that they lack certain characteristics in some particular areas, they tend to engage in behaviours that help them in achieving goals that make them feel superior to others. Alfred Adler (1870, 1937) found that if an individual feels weak or inferior to others in certain qualities, they are likely to compensate to hide their weaknesses. He further stated that these people, in most cases, are not even aware that they are compensating. There can be *positive* or *negative compensation* for deficits. Negative compensation either manifests itself as overcompensation, or as, under compensation – when one goes out of one's way to feel superior to others, it demonstrates overcompensation; and when one displays helplessness and a general fear of life, it displays under compensation. Positive compensation occurs when an individual has the insight about his/her source of inferiority, and is consciously aware about his/her actions that intend to compensate for the inferiority.

Body Art. Body Art refers to the practice of making art on the human body. It is marked by the adornment of the physical body using multiple techniques – body piercing, tattooing, cosmetic tattooing, scarification, branding, body painting, and shaping (e.g. corsets). The present study solely focussed on body ink art - tattoos.

Today, body art is increasing in number. According to an article, "*If Tattoos could Talk*", written by Farrell (2013), while the design of the ink body art is decided on the basis of the motivation of the individual who is getting it, all tattoos modify self-esteem along with bodies; they tend to make up for something that is inadequate or missing.

They elevate the image one carries of oneself; body appreciation is healthy and motivating for people. Tattoos also sometimes offer to stop time, as it implies that one is in an eternal present. Tattoos, for many, also indicate independence and individuality.

An article called "*Skin Deep: The Tale of India's Tattoo Tradition*", written by Sanchari Pal (2016), suggests that ink body art has always been prevalent in the Indian society; evident from the mountainous regions of the northeast to the deserts of Rann of Kutch far west. The author further talks about how the concept of tattoos has undergone a great transformation over the years – from tattooing for beauty and traditions to tattooing for fashion and beliefs. Tattoos have now become a blend of creativity and fashion. In today's world, they have

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become a means of expressing one's beliefs, memories, and a particular phase in life that one has gone through or is going through.

Another article called "*Tattoo Psychology: Art or Self Destruction? Modern-Day Social Branding*", written by Reef Karim (2013), suggests that people get tattoos for many reasons – artistic freedom, self-expression, rebellion, to enhance one's sexual appeal, for spiritual or cultural traditions, to visually display a personal narrative, addiction, and identification with a particular group. Karim further elaborated that the meaning of tattoos is very subjective, for some people, who get designs that are symbolic of significant relationships in their lives or ancient sayings or religious scriptures, tattoos signify permanent remembrance; other people may get tattoos to enhance their sexual prowess. Research on tattoos reveal that adults with tattoos are more sexually active than the ones who do not have tattoos

(Nowosielski, Sipiński, Kuczerawy, Kozłowska, Skrzypulec; 2013).

A study conducted by Koch, Roberts, Armstrong, Owen (2015) on 2395 respondents from six American universities, found that women with multiple tattoos reported higher self-esteem as compared to anyone else in the study.

Rationale of the Present Study:

The aim of the present exploratory study is to understand the relationship between self-esteem and ink body art. Studies have not been conducted in the Indian society to understand the relationship between self-esteem and body art. Therefore, the present study was carried out with the aim to gain more insight on the same, with mainly focussing on body ink art. The sample of the present study was chosen from the Indian population, with the age of the participants ranging between 18 to 30 years, and the education background of the respondents ranged from under-graduation to post-graduation. People belonging to this age gap are mostly moving towards their early adulthood. Most of these people at this particular stage in life are very concerned with their appearance, and try to enhance it in order to be liked by others. One of the factors that enhance an individual's self-esteem is a welcoming social environment, which consistently appreciates and validates them. Hence, the focus of the current study was to understand the relationship between ink body art and self-esteem, by comparing the self-esteem of people with and without ink body art, and at the same time trying to understand whether people who have tattoos have a high self-esteem because of their indulgence in ink body art.

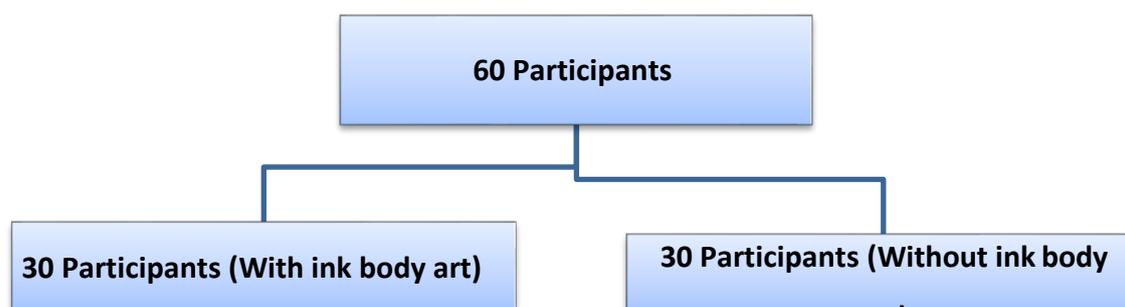
METHOD

Participant

For the present study, purposive sampling was used to collect the data. The sample consisted of two groups of participants, with the age range of 18 to 30 years, belonging to the urban Indian society. The socioeconomic status of the sample ranged between middle to upper middle class, with education background of the respondents ranging from under-graduation to post-graduation. The occupation of the sample included both working and student respondents. The first group (N=30) consisted of participants who had ink body art. The second group (N=30) consisted of participants who did not have ink.

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Figure 1
Categorization of Participants



Design

In the present comparative study, simple ex post facto design, which included two groups, and qualitative as well as quantitative methods were used.

Tools Used

1. **Socio-Demographic sheet:** A Socio-Demographic sheet was developed by the researcher to get the following details from the participants - name, email address, age, gender, education, family type, family size, living arrangement, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, place of living, place of education, and religion.
2. **Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES):** This scale was developed by Morris Rosenberg in 1965. It is a 10-item scale that measures the global self worth, by measuring the positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is considered to be uni-dimensional. All questions are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format - Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point).
3. **The State Self Esteem Scale (SSES):** This scale is a modification from the widely used Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (Heatherton and Polivy, 1991). The SSES is a 20-item scale that measures an individual's self-esteem at a given point in time. The 20-items are categorised into 3 components of self-esteem: 1) Performance Self-Esteem; 2) Social Self- Esteem; and 3) Appearance Self-Esteem. All the questions are answered using a 5-point scale (1= not at all; 2 = a little bit; 3 = somewhat; 4 = very much; 5 = extremely).
4. **An open-ended questionnaire** was developed to obtain the data for the present study. The questionnaire consisted of 3 different questions, asking the participants about their perception of tattoos; whether they feel tattoos enhance self-esteem; and if given an opportunity, whether or not they would get a tattoo.

Procedure

The present study was initiated in order to understand whether ink body art plays a role in enhancing one's self esteem. To conduct the study, first of all, the sample was decided; purposive sampling was used to collect the data. The sample consisted of two groups of participants, with the age range of 18 to 30 years, belonging to the urban Indian society. The socioeconomic status of the sample ranged between middle to upper middle class, with education background of the respondents ranging from under- graduation to post-graduation. The occupation of the sample included both working and student respondents. The sample was assessed on two scales measuring self-esteem: Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale and the

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State Self Esteem Scale. An open-ended questionnaire was prepared to further understand the perception of the participant towards ink body art, and if they feel that tattoos enhance one's self-esteem. A Google form consisting of a socio-demographic sheet, two self-esteem scales and the interview schedule was prepared. This was form was then circulated among the sample that was selected purposively. 30 forms were given to people with ink body art; and 30 to people with no ink body art. Once the data was collected, it was combined and mean, SD, percentages, and t-test were used check whether there is a significant difference in the self-esteem of people with and without ink body art.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1, Socio-demographic data of the total (N=60), tattooed (N=30), and non-tattooed (N=30) participants.

| Socio-Demographic Data | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Socio-Demographics | Total Sample (N=60) | Tattooed (N=30) | Sample Non-Tattooed Sample (N=30) |
| 1. Mean Age | 21 years (58.33%) | 23 years (60%) | 21 (50%) |
| 2. Gender | Female (75%) | Female (83.33%) | Female (66.67%) |
| | Male (25%) | Male (16.67%) | Male (33.33%) |
| 3. Education | Undergraduates (70%) | Undergraduates (40%) | Undergraduates (100%) |
| | Postgraduates (30%) | Postgraduates (60%) | Postgraduates (60%) |
| 4. Family Type | Nuclear (63.33%) | Nuclear (100%) | Nuclear (26.66%) |
| | Joint (25.87%) | Joint (0%) | Joint (53.34%) |
| | Single Parent (10.8%) | Single Parent (0%) | Single Parent (20%) |
| 5. Family Size (No. of People) | 1-4 (63.33) | 1-4 (100%) | 1-4 (26.66%) |
| | 5-9 (20%) | 5-9 (0%) | 5-9 (40%) |
| | 10-14 (16.67%) | 10-14 (0%) | 10-14 (33.34%) |
| 6. Living Arrangement | With Parents (47.7%) | With Parents (16.2%) | With Parents (73.32%) |
| | PG (24.6%) | PG (40%) | PG (13.34%) |
| | With Friends (16.9%) | With Friends (33.8%) | With Friends (0%) |
| | Other (10.8%) | Other (10%) | Other (13.34%) |
| 7. Socio-Economic Status | Middle (20%) | Middle (16.67%) | Middle (23.34%) |
| | Upper Middle (52.3%) | Upper (43.34%) | Upper Middle (13.34%) |
| | High (27.7%) | High (40%) | High (63.32%) |
| 8. Sexual Orientation | Heterosexual (80%) | Heterosexual (60%) | Heterosexual (100%) |
| | Homosexual (0%) | Homosexual (0%) | Homosexual (0%) |
| | Bisexual (20%) | Bisexual (40%) | Bisexual (0%) |
| 9. Place of Living | New Delhi (100%) | New Delhi (100%) | New Delhi (100%) |
| 10. Place of Education | New Delhi (80%) | New Delhi (40%) | New Delhi (100%) |
| | Other States of India (20%) | Other States of India (60%) | Other States of India (0%) |
| 11. Religion | Hindu (55.4%) | Hindu (50%) | Hindu (56.67%) |
| | Muslim (6.67%) | Muslim (0%) | Muslim (13.34%) |
| | Christian (16.67%) | Christian (23.34%) | Christian (10%) |
| | Atheist (23.34%) | Atheist (26.67%) | Atheist (19.99%) |

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The mean *Age* of the participants was 21 years (58.33%). The mean age of the tattooed -participants was 23 years (60%), and 21 years (50%) of the non-tattooed participants.

The *Gender* composition of the total sample constitutes of females (75%), and males (25%). The gender composition of the tattooed -participants constitutes of 83.33% females and 16.67% males. For the non-tattooed sample, the gender composition constitutes of 66.67% of females, and 33.33% males. A large fraction of the sample of the present study was females.

The *Educational* background of the total sample consisted of 70% undergraduates, and 30% postgraduates. A large fraction of sample of the present study was undergraduates. For the tattooed sample, 40% of the participants were undergraduates and 60% postgraduates. The majority of the tattooed sample was postgraduates. For the non-tattooed sample, 100% of the participants were undergraduates.

The *Family Type* of the total sample constituted of 63.33% of the participants from nuclear families, 25.87% from joint families, and 10.8% had a single parent. For the tattooed sample, 100% of the participants belonged to nuclear families. This indicates that the tattooed participants belonged to only nuclear families. For the non-tattooed sample, 26.66% of the participants were from nuclear families, 53.34% from joint families, and 20% had a single parent.

The *Family Size* of the total sample constituted of 63.33% of the participants who belonged to families with 1-4 members, 20% belonged to families with 5-9 members, and 16.67% belonged to families with 10-14 members. For the tattooed sample, 100% of the participants belonged to families with 1-4 members. This suggest that all the tattooed participants came from family backgrounds consisting of only 1-4 members. For the non-tattooed sample, of 26.66 of the participants belonged to families with 1-4 members, 40% belonged to families with 5-9 members, and 33.34% belonged to families with 10-14 members.

The *Living Arrangement* of the total sample constituted of 47.7% of the participants living with parents, 24.6% living in PGs, 16.9% living with friends, and 10.8% living in other types of arrangements. The tattooed sample constituted of 16.2% of the participants living with parents, 40% living in PGs, 33.8% living with friends, and 10% living in other arrangements. The non-tattooed sample constituted of 72.2% of participants living with parents, 13.34% living in PGs, and 13.34% living with other arrangements. It can be implied that not even a single participant from the non-tattooed sample lived with his or her friends.

The *Socio-Economic Status* of the total sample constituted of 20% of the participants belonging to middle class, 52.3% belonging to upper middle class, and 27.7% belonging to high class. The tattooed sample constituted of 16.67% of the participants belonging to the middle class, 43.34% belonging to upper middle class, and 40% belonging to high class. The non- tattooed sample constituted of 23.34% of the participants belonging to the middle class, 13.34% belonging to upper middle class, and 63.32% belonging to high class.

The *Sexual Orientation* of the total sample composed of 80% of the participants identifying as heterosexuals, and 20% identifying as bisexuals. The tattooed sample composed of 60% of the participants identifying as heterosexuals, and 40% identifying as bisexuals. The non-tattooed sample composed of 100% of heterosexuals.

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The *Place of Living* of the total sample composed of 100% of the participants living in New Delhi. Hence, the total sample belonged to New Delhi.

The *Place of Education* of the total sample composed of 80% of the participants from New Delhi, and 20% from other states of India. The tattooed sample composed of 40% of the participants from New Delhi, and 60% from other states of India. The non-tattooed sample composed of 100% of the participants from New Delhi.

The *Religion* of the total sample composed of 55.4% Hindus, 6.67% Muslims, 16.67% Christians, and 23.34% atheists. The tattooed sample composed of 50% Hindus, 23.34% Christians, and 26.67% atheists. The non-tattooed sample composed of 56.67% Hindus, 13.34% Muslims, 10% Christians, and 19.99% atheists. The data suggests that no tattooed participant identifies himself or herself as a Muslim.

Table 2, Comparison of the tattooed and non-tattooed participants on “Attitude towards Tattoos”

| | Attitude towards Tattoos | | | |
|------|--------------------------|--------|--------|-------------------|
| | Tattooed P | N | P | Non-Tattooed N |
| 100% | 0% | 43.33% | 56.67% | |

(Note: P – Positive, and N – Negative)

For the item, *Attitude Towards Tattoos*, 100% of the tattooed participants have a positive attitude towards tattoos. Whereas 56.67% of the non-tattooed participants have a negative perception about tattoos, and 43.33% of them have a positive attitude towards tattoos. This suggests that participants with tattoos hold a positive view about tattoos, however a large fraction of the non-tattooed sample holds a negative viewpoint towards tattoos.

Table 3, Comparison of the tattooed and non-tattooed participants on “Whether Tattoos Enhance Self-Esteem”

| | Whether Tattoos Enhance Self-Esteem | | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--------|-----|-------|-------------------|----|
| | Tattooed P | N | CS | P | Non-Tattooed N | CS |
| 66.67% | 20% | 13.33% | 30% | 56.6% | 13.33% | |

(Note: P – Positive; N – Negative; and CS – Can’t Say)

For the item, *Whether Tattoos Enhance Self-Esteem*, among the tattooed sample, 66.67% believe that tattoos enhance self-esteem; 20% do not think that tattoos enhance self-esteem; and 13.33% cannot say whether or not tattoos enhance self-esteem.

Whereas, among the non-tattooed participants, 30% believe that tattoos enhance self-esteem; 56.6% believe that tattoos do not enhance self-esteem; and 13.33% cannot say whether or not tattoos enhance self-esteem.

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Table 4, Comparison of the tattooed and non-tattooed participants on “Getting More Tattoos”

| | Getting More Tattoos | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---|-----|--------------|------|----|
| | Tattooed | | | Non-Tattooed | | |
| | P | N | CS | P | N | CS |
| 96. | | | 3. | | | |
| 67% | 0% | | 33% | 0% | 100% | 0% |

(Note: P – Positive; N – Negative; and CS – Can’t Say)

For the item, *Getting More Tattoos*, 96.67% of the tattooed participants are keen on getting more tattoos, but 3.33% cannot say whether or not they would get more tattoos. However, 100% of the non-tattooed participants believe that they would never get a tattoo. The scores of the tattooed sample suggest that 3.33% of participants are unsure about getting more tattoos in the future, which implies that they perhaps did not experience any such self-esteem enhancement after getting a tattoo.

Table 5, Responses of the participants on the questionnaire items

| Items | Positive | Negative | Can’t Say |
|--|----------|----------|-----------|
| Attitude Towards Tattoos | 71.67% | 28.33% | 0% |
| Whether Tattoos Enhance Self-Esteem | 48.33% | 38.33% | 13.33% |
| Getting More Tattoos | 50% | 48.43% | 1.67% |

For the item, *Attitude Towards Tattoos*, 71.67% of the sample have a positive connotation towards tattoos, whereas 28.33% view tattoos negatively.

For the item, *Whether Tattoos Enhance Self-Esteem*, 48.33% of the sample thinks that tattoos enhance self-esteem; 38.33% feel that tattoos do not enhance self-esteem; and 13.33% cannot say whether or not tattoos enhance self-esteem.

For the item, *Getting More Tattoos*, 50% of the sample is keen on getting, and 48.43% are not interested in getting a tattoo; and 1.67% cannot tell whether or not they would get a tattoo.

Table 6, Comparison of the means of the tattooed (N=30), and non-tattooed (N=30) participants on The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

| Groups of Participants | Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale | | t-obtained |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------|------------|
| | Mean | SD | |
| Tattooed | 24.067 | 2.92 | 0.64 |
| Non-Tattooed | 24.53 | 4.72 | |

The mean and the SD of the tattooed participants on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale are 24.067 and 2.92, respectively.

The mean and the SD of the non-tattooed participants on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale are 24.53 and 4.72, respectively.

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The t test was used on the tattooed (Mean = 28.53; SD = 4.72) and non-tattooed (Mean= 27.63; SD = 6.07) participants, the t obtained was 0.64, and t critical at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance was 1.671 and 2.390, respectively. The scores indicate that there is a difference in the means of the two groups of participants, but it is not statistically significant. Hence, it can be concluded that tattoos do not have a significant role to play in the enhancement of one's self-esteem.

Table 7. Comparison of the means of the tattooed (N=30), and non-tattooed (N=30) participants on The State Self-Esteem Scale

| | State Self-Esteem Scale | | t-obtained |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------|------------|
| | Mean | SD | |
| Tattooed | 24.067 | 2.92 | 2.21* |
| Non-Tattooed | 22.63 | 3.44 | |

The mean and the SD of the tattooed participants on the State Self-Esteem Scale are 24.067 and 2.92 respectively.

The mean and the SD of the non-tattooed participants on the State Self-Esteem Scale are 22.63 and 3.44, respectively.

The t test was used on the tattooed (Mean = 24.067; SD = 2.92) and non-tattooed (Mean = 22.63; SD = 3.44) participants, the t obtained was 2.21, and t critical at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance was 1.671 and 2.390, respectively. Since t-obtained is higher than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance, the scores indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. However, no such difference can be observed at 0.01 level of significance, as t-obtained is less than t- critical. Hence, it can be concluded that tattoos do enhance state self-esteem.

DISCUSSION

The present exploratory study aimed at understanding the relationship between self- esteem and ink body art. The sample of the study was selected using purposive sampling; it consisted of two groups of participants: with ink body art (N=30), and without ink body art (N=30). The age of the participants ranged between 18 to 30 years. The study aimed at comparing the self-esteem of participants with and without ink body art, and understanding whether ink body art enhances one's self-esteem. The socioeconomic status of the sample ranged between middle to upper middle class, with education background of the respondents ranging from under-graduation to post- graduation. The occupation of the sample included both working and student respondents. The present study is relevant to the contemporary prevalence of tattoos in socioeconomically developed societies.

A Google Form consisting of a socio-demographic sheet, an open ended questionnaire developed by the researcher, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale by Morris Rosenberg (1965), and State Self-Esteem Scale by Heatherton and Polivy (1991), was given to the participants of the present study.

The participants' global self-esteem was assessed using Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale by Morris Rosenberg (1965). The t test was used on the tattooed (Mean = 28.53; SD = 4.72) and non-tattooed (Mean = 27.63; SD = 6.07) participants, the t obtained was 0.64, and t critical at

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0.05 and 0.01 level of significance was 1.671 and 2.390, respectively. The scores indicate that there is a difference in the means of the two groups of participants, but it is not statistically significant. This further suggests that tattoos do not, necessarily, play a role in enhancing one's global self-esteem.

The result of the sample on Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale does not display any significant difference in the global self-esteem of the two groups of participants. Hence, it can be stated that tattoos do not play a role in enhancing one's global self-worth.

There could be innumerable reasons for one to have a high or low self-esteem, and they together play a role in helping an individual in forming a judgement about his or her worth. Analysis of the qualitative data to the item – *Whether Tattoos Enhance Self-Esteem*, further justifies this as 38.33% of the total sample does not believe that self-esteem can be enhanced by tattoos, and 13.33% cannot say whether or not tattoos enhance one's self-esteem. Among the non-tattooed participants, 56.6% believe that tattoos do not enhance self-esteem, stating the same with statements like, *"I don't think I need a tattoo on my body to feel good about myself; I don't believe that tattoos could play a significant role in enhancing one's self-esteem; Tattoos might give confidence to people, but does not contribute in enhancing one's self-esteem."*

Moreover, on the question of *Getting More Tattoos*, 3.33% of the tattooed sample is not sure whether or not they would get a tattoo in future. This thereby indicates that perhaps these participants did not witness a self-esteem boost in themselves after getting a tattoo. 100% of the non-tattooed participants are sure that they would never get a tattoo in the future; *"Tattoos are highly risky"*, some of them wrote.

This finding can be substantiated by a study conducted by Roberts and Ryan (2002) on tattoos and high risk-behaviour among adolescents. The dataset use of this study involved a secondary analysis of the National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health Public, which provided a nationally representative sample of 6072 adolescents collected in 1995 and 1996. The results of this study implied that permanent tattoos are associated with high risk taking behaviour in adolescents.

Even when 43.33% of the non-tattooed participants do hold tattoos in a positive connotation and 30% believe that tattoos can enhance one's self-esteem, they are personally not in favour of engaging in any such measures to enhance their own self-esteem. Overall, 48.43% of the participants are not interested in getting tattoos.

There are several factors that play a role in shaping the self-esteem of an individual.

A study conducted by Kim, and Han (2006) aimed at understanding the factors that influence self-esteem among adolescents. The data for the study was collected by 1155 students in high school in Seoul and Kyungkido, Korea. The data was analyzed using SPSS 11.0 program. The results of the study indicated the major factors that affect self-esteem of adolescents. These involved social environment, social support, body-mage, school adjustment, and family harmony, which explained 54.7% of self-esteem.

This is further substantiated by an article called *"What Factors Influence Your Self-Esteem?"*, written by Roberta Alves (2017) which suggests that there are multiple factors that tend to enhance an individual's self-esteem. One of these factors is *childhood*, this is the

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period when a child's personality is being constructed; the environment that the child is surrounded by plays a huge role in influencing the building of self-esteem. An encouraging, appreciative, and positively challenging environment facilitates the building of a high self-esteem. Two more factors that play a significant role are the *society and media*. The society tends to expect a certain code of conduct from us, and media constantly exposes us to subliminal messages that tell us about our inadequacies which could only be overcome if we purchase the products one is selling. How one feels about himself or herself is highly influenced by his or her surroundings; living in a positive environment helps in the development of a healthy self-esteem.

Therefore, it can be concluded that tattoos do not play a significant role in enhancing one's global self-esteem. The sample was assessed on their state self-esteem using The State Self-Esteem Scale by Heatherton and Polivy (1991). The t test was used on the tattooed (Mean = 24.067; SD = 2.92) and non-tattooed (Mean = 22.63; SD = 3.44) participants, the t obtained was 2.21, and t critical at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance was 1.671 and 2.390, respectively. Since t-obtained is higher than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance, the scores indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. However, no such difference can be observed at 0.01 level of significance, as t-obtained is less than t-critical.

The results of the sample on The State Self-Esteem Scale suggest that there is a significant difference in the means of the tattooed and non-tattooed sample. Since the mean of the tattooed sample is higher than the mean of the non-tattooed sample, it can be concluded that tattooed participants have a higher state self-esteem as compared to non-tattooed participants. Thus, this indicates that an individual's state self-esteem can be enhanced by getting tattoos. This can be validated by a study conducted by Swami (2011) on 82 British residents, to study the relationship between tattoos and appearance anxiety, dissatisfaction, perceptions of uniqueness, and self-esteem. This study found that both men and women had significantly lower appearance anxiety and dissatisfaction immediately after getting a tattoo. These people showed a significantly higher body appreciation, self-ascribed uniqueness, and self-esteem for three weeks after getting a tattoo. However, after three weeks, both men and women started displaying physique related.

Even though no research pertaining to the direct influence of tattoos on self-esteem has been carried out yet, it can be concluded that tattoos share a strong relationship with emotions. Participants with tattoos have stated *"Tattoos are very empowering; they are a beautiful art for me; they tend to define the individual; tattoos motivate people, they help in overcoming challenges in life; they are a reflection of one's inner self."* They have further expressed *"Tattoos are motivational, and a symbol of strength"*. 100% of the tattooed participants hold a positive view about tattoos; 66.67% of the tattooed participants believe that tattoos do play a role in enhancing one's self-esteem. They have stated *"Tattoos help in gaining body confidence, and overcoming body image issues."* *"Tattoos develop uniqueness among people, and allow them to embrace a part of themselves, in a way that is very personal to them";* *"Because some people take pride in their tattoos, it can play a role in enhancing their self-esteem"*, they further stated.

Moreover, 43.33% of the non-tattooed participants hold a positive view about tattoos, and 30% of the same believe that tattoos can play a role in enhancing one's self-esteem. Overall, 71.63% of the total sample views tattoos positively and 48.33% believe that tattoos enhance

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self-esteem. This can be authenticated by an article, “*If Tattoos could Talk*”, written by Farrell (2013) tattoos tend to make up for something that is inadequate or missing. They elevate the image one carries of oneself; body appreciation is healthy and motivating for people. Tattoos, for many, also indicate independence and individuality.

However, this is refuted by a study conducted by Aizenman and Jensen (2011) on American college students to study the incidence of self-injury, piercings and tattoos among the students. The results of the study indicated that students with tattoos and piercings scored lower on the measures of depression, and were low on self-esteem and sense of control scales.

With the help of the socio-demographic data of the participants that has been elicited, it can be further concluded that, 100% of the tattooed participants belong to nuclear families, and 33.8% of them are living with their friends. However, 53.43% of the non-tattooed participants belong to joint families, and 73.32% of them live with their parents. Thus, it can be assumed that living with parents plays an important role in influencing the perception of the non-tattooed participants, regarding their interest in getting tattoos, and their autonomy in taking decisions for themselves.

It can be observed that 20% of the sample identified with bisexuality. In a country like India, where homosexuality or bisexuality is looked down upon, tattoos can be means of empowering and accepting oneself. One of the participants who identified as a bisexual in the study stated “*I got a tattoo to embrace my bisexuality. I had a tough time accepting myself. But once I got this tattoo, I’ve been able to come to terms with my sexual identity. I believe tattoos can be very empowering and validating.*”

Even though for some participants tattoos can be empowering, some participants believe that tattoos will make them an outcaste in their community as their religion does not permit any such measure. It can be observed that 6.67% of the participants in the study identify themselves as Muslims. These participants are not in favour of ink body art, and they hold a firm ground about not getting a tattoo anytime in the future.

According to a participant who identified as a Muslim, “*Tattoos are against Islam. I’m not allowed to get a tattoo ever in my life, and neither would I want to.*”

Hence, it can be concluded that tattoos can enhance an individual’s state self-esteem. Tattoos can make people feel better about them, temporarily. They can help them overcome an emotional trauma, and empower them to lead an optimistic life. However, tattoos may not be the only factor that can lead to the enhancement of one’s global self-esteem. The present study implied that variables like sexuality, religion, family and living arrangement types can also influence one’s indulgence in any such measures.

Therefore, tattoos do share an association with self-esteem and different socio-demographic details.

LIMITATIONS

1. Sample Size: The sample size of the present study is 60, which is not enough to generalise the findings.
2. Sampling: The sampling technique used for the study was purposive sampling. There

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are various disadvantages of this sampling technique – the selection of the sample is influenced by the judgement of the researcher, which might result in high level of bias; there is a low level of reliability in the results; thereby, not allowing the research findings to be generalised to a great extent. In addition to this, 75% of the participants are females, and this serves as a major limitation to the study.

3. Measurement Tools: The measurement tools used for the study are based on the American culture, thus, they may have caused difficulty in understanding of the language, and applying the set norms, etc.
4. Lack of previous studies in this area: Literature review is a very imperative part of any study as it helps in identifying the scope of the works that have been done so far in the field. Studies with relevance to the objective of the present research have not been found.
5. Time Constraint: The present study has been completed in a specific period of time; hence it was not possible to gain an in-depth insight of the topic.

IMPLICATIONS

The present explorative study is conducted to understand the relationship between tattoos and self-esteem, and whether tattoos enhance self-esteem. The findings of the study suggest that tattoos do not have a role to play in the enhancement of one's global self-esteem. However, they can enhance one's state self-esteem. This indicates that tattoos temporarily make an individual feel good about him or her, but that feeling may or may not last. There is a lack of such researches that have been conducted to understand the direct relationship between tattoos and self-esteem. Therefore, the present exploratory research helps in gaining an insight on the relationship shared between tattoos and self-esteem.

FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study helps in gaining insight about the topic; however, the quest does not end here. Future research related to tattoos and self-esteem can provide a more in-depth understanding of how tattoos can influence self-esteem. Researchers could build upon the present study with a larger participant group to either validate or repudiate the results. Moreover, replication of this study with multiple interviews of the participants can provide a more consistent and reliable data. In addition, studies can be conducted to understand the relationship between tattoos, gender and self-esteem, as gender differences may be focal point in future studies due to differing desires that limit the prevalence of ink body art based upon gender.

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APPENDIX – A

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

Kindly elaborate over your opinions regarding the following statements.

1. What do you think about tattoos? (Positive/ Negative)
2. Do you think tattoos enhance one's self esteem?
3. Given a chance, would you get a tattoo? PART III

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Kindly indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

(This is a questionnaire designed to measure what you are thinking at this moment. There is no right answer for any statement. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself at the moment. Be sure to answer all of the items, even if you are not certain of the best answer.)

1. On the whole, I'm satisfied with myself.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

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2. At times I think I am no good at all.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as others.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. I certainly feel useless at times.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. I feel I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane as others.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

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9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. I take a positive attitude towards myself.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX – C

STATE SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

Kindly indicate your opinions about yourself with respect to the following statements.

1. I feel confident about my abilities.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

2. I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

3. I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

4. I feel frustrated or rattled about my performance.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

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5. I feel that I am having trouble understanding things that I read.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

6. I feel that others respect and admire me.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

7. I am dissatisfied with my weight.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

8. I feel self-conscious.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

9. I feel as smart as others.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

10. I feel displeased with myself.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

11. I feel good about myself.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Very much
- Extremely

Relationship between Self-Esteem and Ink Body Art

- 12. I am pleased with my appearance right now.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Somewhat
 - Very much
 - Extremely
- 13. I am worried about what other people think of me.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Somewhat
 - Very much
 - Extremely
- 14. I feel confident that I understand things.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Very much
 - Extremely
- 15. I feel inferior to others at this moment.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Very much
 - Extremely
- 16. I feel unattractive.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Very much
 - Extremely
- 17. I feel concerned about the impression I am making.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Very much
 - Extremely
- 18. I feel that I have less scholastic ability right now than others.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Very much
 - Extremely
- 19. I feel like I'm not doing well.**
- Not at all
 - A little bit
 - Very much
 - Extremely

Relationship between Self-Esteem and Ink Body Art

20. I am worried about looking foolish.

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Very much
- Extremely

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Conflict of Interest

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not a conflict of interests

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