

## Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety among Secondary School Students

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### ABSTRACT

The present study has been undertaken to investigate self-esteem and academic anxiety among secondary school adolescents. Through descriptive survey method, a sample of 200 secondary school adolescent students has been taken by using simple random sampling technique among these 100 were boys and 100 girls. The tool used for gathering required data is Rosenbergs Self Esteem Scale and Academic Anxiety Scale by A. K. Singh and A. Sengupta. The statistical techniques used for analyzing the data were Pearson's Product Moment coefficient of correlation and t-test. Significant difference has been found between adolescent boys and girls on self-esteem as adolescent boys show higher self-esteem as compare to adolescent girls. Also, significant difference has been found between secondary school boys & girls on academic anxiety as girls show higher academic anxiety as compared to boys. Results also revealed a significant negative correlation between self-esteem and academic anxiety.

**Keywords:** *Self Esteem, Academic Anxiety, Secondary School Students*

Self-esteem integrates cognitive, emotional, and interpersonal dimensions of self-perception. Individuals' private assessments of themselves are influenced by their interaction in their social worlds [Albo. M., 2007] and the emotions entailed with those assessments (satisfaction or pride in oneself, feelings of inadequacy, shame, etc. Rosenberg. M [1965] is one of the first theorists to focus on a sense of worth ("worthiness"), namely, one's value judgments about oneself. In Rosenberg's view, people with high self-esteem tend to value themselves more, while at the same time appreciating others. More than that, Bibring.MD [1953] described depression as the collapse of self-esteem, a state in which the self feels it cannot live up to its aspirations to feel good, worthy, competent, and appreciated by others. Druk. CJ [2013a] defined self-esteem as the belief that an individual is capable of handling daily challenges "worthy of respect". Other authors emphasize the cultural significance of self-esteem, conveying that it is a product of Western individualistic culture rather than being a universal human motivation [Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger & Vohs, 2003]. In religious contexts, self-esteem is linked to arrogance, while modesty is considered a virtue and a prerequisite for a person's development, while in other cultural contexts, such as traditional Japanese culture, individual success, recognition, and self-

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## Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety among Secondary School Students

esteem demands are regarded as secondary [Baumeister RF, Smart L, Boden JM (1996)]. Self-esteem is considered by most theorists to be a human need to maintain health and happiness, regardless of any differences in its conceptualization [Leontari A (2012); APA, 2013], hence refers to an individual's sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself. Self-esteem is normally viewed the evaluative thing of the self-concept, a broader representation of the self that includes cognitive and behavioral factors as properly as evaluative or affective ones (Blascovich and Tomaka, 1991). Self-esteem is a fundamental element of self-awareness. It occupies a key region in the structure of adolescent because it is related to mental fitness and definition of existence goals. Self-esteem is shaped in through the mother and father and their mind-set is of paramount importance. Self-esteem is described as an individual's subjective contrast of his/her really worth as a individual which has an necessary function to psychological well-being. High self-esteem is related with first-class interpersonal relationships, such as protection and closeness, terrific coping strategies. While as low self-esteem is associated to depression and anxiousness (Minev, Petrova, Mineva, Petkova, Strebkova, 2018). Self-esteem is an individual's feel of his or her price or worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes himself or herself. It is commonly regarded to be the evaluative element of the self-concept, a broader illustration of the self that covered cognitive and behavioral elements as nicely as evaluative or affective ones (Harris & Orth, 2020). Everyone's self-esteem is influenced by using many elements such as parents, teachers, co-workers, friends, peer group and the environment are being continuously influencing self-esteem. It has been associated to truly every different psychological notion or domain, consisting of personality, undertaking performance and similar behavior, cognitive and scientific principles such as nervousness and despair (Cvencek et al. 2018). Anxiety disorders like social anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and delinquency have been linked to low self-esteem [Heimberg RG, Becker RR (2002, Manna G, Falgares G, Ingoglia S, Como MR, De santis (2016)]. Rosenberg [1965] identified low self-esteem with neurotic anxiety, however higher self-esteem could be a protective factor against stress [Baumeister RF, Campbell JD, Krueger JI, Vohs KD (2003)], since it allows for individuals to deploy more practical strategies for coping with difficult situations [patton W, Bartrum DA, Creed PA (2004); Ikechukwu U, Siti NY, Mansor AT, Sakineh M, Rohani A (2013)] observed a significant decline in self-esteem (as measured by Rosenberg's questionnaire) following perceived stress (Perceived Stress Scale) in adolescents and argued that self-esteem may mediate the relationship between stress and substance abuse in adolescents. While self-esteem has been shown to be positively associated with success [Chufar BM, Pettijohn TF (2013)], a few studies have found that self-esteem does not seem to have a significantly positive association with academic performance [Zajacova A, Lynch SM, Espenshade TJ (2005)]. The authors of some journals argue that low self-esteem does not necessarily indicate poor academic performance [Pullmann H, Allik J (2008)] and that the positive effect of self-esteem on educational achievement is small [Marsh H, O'Mara A (2008)] or to be found in children between the ages of 7 and 15 [Malbi RS, Reasoner RW (2000)]. There has also been evidence linking high self-esteem to academic achievement [Tsiga E, Nasaina E (2012; Owens RL, patterson MM (2013)] thus reinforcing the view that self-esteem helps to boost achievement [Lawrence D (2000); Yanti R, Hidayatulfathi O, Ismarulyusda I, Syari HL, Husin L, et al. (2012)]. Although methodological differences among the above studies make it difficult to integrate their findings, several studies suggest a reciprocal relationship between self-esteem, academic performance, and anxiety [Papadioti-Athanasiou V (1999); Besser A, Zeigler-Hill V (2012)]. Although the causal relationship between the three variables is difficult to determine, it could be considered as a two-way relationship, since self-esteem

## Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety among Secondary School Students

and anxiety can affect performance while educational experiences can influence self-esteem and stress levels. For example, academic success can lead to an increase in students' self-esteem [Preston J, Hammond C. 2002; Chung JM, Robins RW, Trzesniewski KH, Noffle EE, Roberts BW, et al. (2014)], however low self-esteem and the anxiety that accompanies it are likely to constitute significant obstacles to learning [Kennedy H (1997); Pandey A, Chalise HN (2015)]. It is also likely that very high self-esteem is accompanied by exaggerated self-esteem, which can lead to frustration and negative emotions that may inhibit the educational process [Emler. N, 2001]. In the literature review, self-esteem and anxiety relate to people's well-being level and probably to their academic performance. Exam and evaluation time is a stressful moment when stress levels are at their greatest. Low levels of stress can assist pupils be more motivated to some extent; but too much stress can be discouraging. Students will be tired, overwhelmed, and perplexed. Entrance exams, as well as formative and summative assessment, are common sources of stress in the academic setting, and they can have a significant impact on a student's success in school and at university. Academic self-confidence and self-esteem, on the other hand, have an important impact in students' learning. Students that have a high level of academic confidence and self-esteem are more likely to imagine their achievement, think critically, and commit to the obstacles they face, and they have been shown to be high achievers (Cheraghian B, et al 2008). Students with poor self-confidence and self-esteem, on the other hand, are more likely to focus on how things may dwell in their personal flaws. In essence, these people are more concerned with the issues of the situation than with the potential of achievement (Hong E, Karstensson L 2002). It is widely accepted among students that living in educational institutions enrich their lives. However, the ever-changing environment and competitive world of today makes them much more anxious and stressful. There is a significant link between stressful life events and poor academic achievement. Anxiety is one of the most common feelings described as unpleasant feelings of discomfort, fear, panic, fear, anxiety or worry. (Barlow, 2002;). it may be defined as one's negative psychological effects that arise because of educational expectations from parents, teachers, peers and family members, parental pressure to succeed academically, current education and assessment system, homework responsibilities, etc. however the condition for considering anxiety as normal or abnormal may be determined by its source and intensity. Indeed, reasonable anxiety can motivate humans to control their issues and succeed in their lifestyles (Abolghasemi, Mehrabizadeh-Honarmand, Najarian, & Shokrkon, 2004). The anxiousness level may intervene with everyday functioning like studies, their daily activities, and social lifestyles among students. Anxiety is a main predictor of overall educational performance. Anxiety is one of the fundamental predictors of educational performance. Those who possess greater degree of anxiety will achieve an unsatisfactory educational performance (McCarty, 2007). Lazarus and Averill (1972) defined anxiety as "an emotion based totally on the appraisal of threat, an appraisal which entails symbolic, anticipatory and unsure elements. Anxiety comes when cognitive structures no longer allow an individual to relate meaningfully to the external world. Cole, Joan, Lachan, Seroczynski & Jonathan (1999) these who go through from severe educational nervousness tend to keep away from educational settings. Feeling of anxiousness are now not inherently abnormal, but can turn out to be extreme ample to impair functioning in some humans. Alam (2017) discovered that the educational success of the students lowered in case of the excessive and low anxious college students however the fairly anxious students did higher in academic achievement. If a pupil has academic anxiety, he might not be in a position to fulfill his duties or may no longer feel at ease asking for assistance in class. Academic anxiety refers to the feeling of being worried, scared, or burdened out as a result of faculty pressures. Academic anxiety is experienced most frequently during timed workouts and in conditions in which students are predicted to

## Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety among Secondary School Students

function satisfactory when the stakes are very high. Various factors are responsible for one's academic anxiety like emotional and health related chaos, maladjustment, low level of aspiration, low self-concept and low intelligence as well. Other factors like one's economic status, parental attitude, lack of proper guidance and assistance, uneducated neighborhood, school atmosphere, teacher student relationship etc.

### Objectives

1. To study academic self-esteem and academic anxiety among secondary school adolescents.
2. To compare male and female secondary school students on self-esteem.
3. To compare male and female secondary school students on academic anxiety.
4. To find correlation between self-esteem and academic anxiety among secondary school students.

### Hypothesis

- **H<sub>01</sub>** there is no significant difference between boys and girls secondary school students on self-esteem.
- **H<sub>02</sub>** there is no significant difference between boys and girls secondary school students on academic anxiety.
- **H<sub>03</sub>** there is significant relationship between self-esteem and academic anxiety among secondary school students.

### Sample

The sample for the present study comprises of secondary school students studying in Govt educational institutions.

### Tools used

- Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale.
- Academic anxiety scale by A.K. Singh and A. Sengupta.

### Analysis and interpretation of the data

**Table 1: showing mean comparison of secondary school boys and girls on self-esteem. (N=100 in each group).**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value
Male	100	31.44	4.71	5.80
Female	100	26.56	7.04	

Table 2 indicates that there is significant difference in self-esteem among secondary school boys and girls as the t value,  $5.80 > 2.58$  at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis, **H<sub>02</sub>**, which states that, "there is no significant difference between secondary school boys and girls on self-esteem" stands rejected. So, the table shows mean difference of males higher as compared to females, so it is evident that self-esteem is higher in males as compared to females. The results are in line with Mc Clure AC.et.al (2010) and Birndorf.S.(2005).

**Table 2: showing mean comparison of secondary school boys and girls on academic anxiety. (N= 100 in each group).**

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t- value
Boys	100	24.14	5.77	10.24
Girls	100	31.72	4.81	

Significant at 0.01 level.

## Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety among Secondary School Students

The above table indicates that there is a significant difference in academic anxiety between boys and girls as  $t$  value,  $10.24 > 2.58$ . Thus, the null hypothesis,  $H_{01}$ , which states that “there is no significant difference between secondary school boys and girls on academic anxiety” stands rejected. So, the table shows indication that mean difference goes in favour of girls, as girls have more academic anxiety as compared to their counterparts. Girls suffer more with academic anxiety than boys Bhansali & Trivedi (2008), Sharma (2004), Patitsa et al (2011), Baumeister (2013) and Lowery (2005).

**Table 3: showing Pearson’s coefficient of correlation ( $r$ ) between Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety.**

Variables	R
Self esteem	- 0.264
Academic anxiety	

Significant at 0.01 level.

It is evident from Table 3, that there is significant negative correlation between self-esteem and academic anxiety ( $r = -0.264$ ), indicates that higher the academic anxiety, the lower will be the self-esteem of students. Thus, the hypothesis,  $H_{03}$ , which states that there is “there is significant relationship between self-esteem and academic anxiety among secondary school students”, stands accepted. Ntemsia, Triadafyllidou, Papageorgiou & Roussou (2017) and Ikechukwu (2013), Veselska et al (2009) and Rosenberg et al (1995) found inverse correlation between anxiety and self-esteem and students who scored higher on anxiety tend to have low self-esteem.

### CONCLUSION

A significant difference was found between male and female secondary students on self-esteem, as boys were found to be high on self-esteem as compared to female students. Significant difference was found between male and female adolescents, as female adolescents were found more anxious as compared to male adolescents. Also, a negative correlation was found between self-esteem and academic anxiety among secondary school adolescents.

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## Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety among Secondary School Students

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## Self Esteem and Academic Anxiety among Secondary School Students

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### **Conflict of Interest**

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