

Self-esteem, Mental Well-Being and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults

Somya Nagar^{1*}, Dr. Tamanna Saxena²

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the relationship between self-esteem, mental well-being, and life satisfaction among young adults. A sample of 200 participants was selected from all over India. The study utilized the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale to collect data. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between self-esteem, Mental-Wellbeing and life satisfaction. The Implications of enhancing self-esteem for overall life satisfaction are discussed. This research contributes to our understanding of the psychological well-being of young adults and highlights the importance of fostering positive self-esteem for a fulfilling life satisfaction and mental well-being.

Keywords: *Self-esteem, Mental Wellbeing, Life Satisfaction, Young Adults, Resilience, Happiness, Positive*

Self-esteem, a term deeply rooted in psychological studies, pertains to an individual's self-assessment of their intrinsic value and capabilities. This self-perception is a cornerstone of one's psychological landscape, influencing a myriad of well-being indicators such as happiness, life contentment, and mental health stability. Despite its established connection to well-being, the exact nature of this link remains a subject of debate within the psychological community. Theories diverge, with some scholars positing self-esteem as a foundational cause of well-being, while others argue it emerges as a result or parallel occurrence of a well-adjusted psyche. This debate underscores the complexity of psychological constructs and their interrelations.

The discourse surrounding self-esteem is further complicated by the introduction of external variables such as personality traits, cultural backgrounds, and the social milieu. These factors can significantly alter the intensity and trajectory of the self-esteem and well-being correlation. For instance, an individual's cultural context might dictate the societal value placed on self-regard, thereby influencing their personal experience of self-esteem. Similarly, personality traits such as resilience or neuroticism could either bolster or undermine the positive effects of self-esteem on well-being.

¹Student, Amity University Noida, AIPS

²Assistant Professor, Amity University Noida, AIPS

*Corresponding Author

Received: April 24, 2024; Revision Received: June 15, 2024; Accepted: June 20, 2024

Self-esteem, Mental Well-Being and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults

The ongoing exploration of self-esteem has revealed its multifaceted nature and its pivotal role in shaping our psychological well-being. As research continues to unravel the complexities of this construct, it becomes increasingly clear that self-esteem is not an isolated phenomenon, but a dynamic entity influenced by a confluence of internal and external factors. Understanding these nuances is crucial for developing effective interventions aimed at enhancing self-esteem and, by extension, improving overall psychological health.

Self-esteem has been the focus of extensive research in psychology, especially in the fields of social, personality, developmental, and clinical psychology. Some of the main topics that have been explored are the causes and consequences of self-esteem, the measurement and assessment of self-esteem, the stability and change of self-esteem over time and across situations, the role of self-esteem in interpersonal relationships, and the interventions and programs that aim to enhance self-esteem and well-being.

Self-esteem is a relevant and interesting topic for psychology because it reflects how people perceive themselves and their place in the world. It also affects how people cope with challenges, pursue their goals, and interact with others. Understanding the factors that shape and influence self-esteem can help psychologists design effective strategies to promote positive self-regard and psychological well-being among individuals and groups. (Nayler, C., 2010)

Furthermore, the relationship between self-esteem and well-being may vary depending on the characteristics and circumstances of the individual and the environment. For example, personality traits, such as extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, may affect how self-esteem and well-being are related, as they influence how people perceive and respond to themselves and others. Similarly, cultural orientation, such as individualism or collectivism, may affect how self-esteem and well-being are related, as they influence the values and norms that people hold and follow. Additionally, social context, such as family, friends, school, or work, may affect how self-esteem and well-being are related, as they provide the sources and standards of comparison and evaluation for the self. (Coopersmith, S., 1967)

Mental well-being (Zimmerman, M., 2000). Mental well-being is the experience of positive emotions, such as happiness and contentment, as well as the development of one's potential, having some control over one's life, having a sense of purpose, and experiencing positive relationships. Mental well-being is influenced by both internal and external factors, such as personality, genetics, environment, culture, and life events. Mental well-being can be measured by self-report scales, such as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS), or by objective indicators, such as brain activity, hormone levels, or physiological responses.

Life satisfaction is the cognitive judgment of one's overall satisfaction with life, based on one's own criteria and standards. Life satisfaction is influenced by the comparison between one's expectations and achievements, as well as by the balance between positive and negative experiences. Life satisfaction can be measured by single-item or multi-item scales, such as the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), or by domain-specific scales, such as the Satisfaction with Job Scale (SJS) or the Satisfaction with Family Scale (SFS). (Furnham, A., & Cheng, H., 2000). The concept of subjective well-being has a long history in psychology, dating back to the ancient philosophers, such as Aristotle, who defined happiness as the goal of human existence. In the 20th century, several theories and models of subjective well-being

Self-esteem, Mental Well-Being and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults

were developed, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Diener's tripartite model, Ryff's psychological well-being, and Seligman's PERMA model. Subjective well-being has been the focus of extensive research in psychology, especially in the fields of positive, social, personality, developmental, and clinical psychology. Some of the main topics that have been explored are the causes and consequences of subjective well-being, the measurement and assessment of subjective well-being, the stability and change of subjective well-being over time and across situations, the role of subjective well-being in interpersonal relationships, and the interventions and programs that aim to enhance subjective well-being.

Life satisfaction is one of the main aspects of subjective well-being, which is the evaluation of one's own quality of life. Life satisfaction is the cognitive judgment of one's overall satisfaction with life, based on one's own criteria and standards. Life satisfaction is influenced by the comparison between one's expectations and achievements, as well as by the balance between positive and negative experiences. (Somali, M., Klepp, K. I., & Rosenvinge, J. H., 2001). The results of this study will contribute to the understanding of the role of self-esteem in well-being and the factors that may influence this relationship. The findings will also have implications for the development of interventions and programs that aim to enhance self-esteem and well-being among college students. (Shanmuga Sundaram, B., & Patel, N. M., 2021).

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Including Parts:

- Individuals aged 19-30 years.
- Willingness to participate in the study.
- Ability to understand and provide informed consent.
- Indian ethnicity

Objectives:

1. To measure the correlation between self-esteem and life satisfaction.
2. To measure the correlation between self-esteem and mental well-being.
3. To measure the correlation between Life- satisfaction and mental well-being

Hypothesis:

1. There will be a significant relationship between Self-esteem and Mental well-being amongst young adults.
2. There will be a significant relationship between Self-esteem and Life Satisfaction amongst young adults.
3. There will be a significant relationship between Life Satisfaction and Mental well-being amongst young adults.

Variables:

- **Independent Variable:** Self-esteem levels measured using a validated scale such as Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale.
- **Dependent Variables:**
 - Life satisfaction, measured by the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).
 - Mental well-being, assessed through the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being scale (WEMWBS)

Self-esteem, Mental Well-Being and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults

Participant:

- **Population:** Young adults aged 19- 30 years.
- **Sampling Technique:** 118 offline and 88 online responses
- **Sample Size:** 200 participants.

Research Design:

- **Type:** Quantitative correlational study.
- **Approach:** Cross-sectional analysis to examine the relationship between self-esteem, life satisfaction, and mental well-being at a single point in time.

Tools:

- **Self-Esteem Measurement:** Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale, a widely used self-report tool for assessing individual self-worth.
- **Life Satisfaction Measurement:** Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), which gauges overall life contentment.
- **Mental Well-Being Measurement:** Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being scale (WEMWBS)

RESULTS

In a study with 200 participants, the data analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between self-esteem and mental well-being, with a correlation coefficient of **0.74**. This indicates a significant association where higher self-esteem is related to better mental well-being. Additionally, the correlation between life satisfaction and self-esteem was found to be positive and substantial, with a coefficient of **0.67**, suggesting that increases in self-esteem are likely to be accompanied by increases in life satisfaction.

Table 1: The Mean Scores and Interpretation for the Variables

VARIABLES	MEAN SCORE	INTERPRETATION
Self-Esteem	30.7	High Self Esteem
Mental Well-Being	49.02	Average Mental Well-Being
Life Satisfaction	24.62	Slightly Satisfied

Table 2: The Correlational Values of Self- Esteem and Mental Well-Being

Variables	R value	Significance
Self- Esteem	0.74	Sign**
Mental Well- being		

** at 0.01 Level

Table 3: The Correlational Values of Self- Esteem and Life Satisfaction

Variables	R value	Significance
Self- Esteem	0.67	Sign**
Life Satisfaction		

** at 0.01 Level

Table 4: The Correlational Values of Life Satisfaction and Mental Well-Being

Variables	R value	Significance
Mental Well- being	0.67	Sign**
Life Satisfaction		

** at 0.01 Level

DISCUSSION

The results and discussion cannot contain assertions that cannot be supported by the data obtained in the actual work or by other mentioned works. The results demonstrate a strong link between self-esteem and mental well-being, as well as between self-esteem and life satisfaction. The correlation coefficients of 0.74 and 0.67 respectively, are indicative of the powerful role self-esteem plays in an individual's psychological state and their overall satisfaction with life.

1. *Self-Esteem and Mental Well-Being:*

- The strong correlation coefficient of **0.74** between self-esteem and mental well-being highlights the critical role of self-esteem in promoting psychological health.
- This positive association suggests that individuals with higher self-esteem tend to experience better mental well-being.
- This finding aligns with previous studies by Smith et al. (2020), who reported similar results in their longitudinal analysis of self-esteem and mental health outcomes.

2. *Self-Esteem and Life Satisfaction:*

- The robust correlation coefficient of **0.67** between self-esteem and life satisfaction indicates that focusing on self-esteem can significantly enhance an individual's overall quality of life.
- Interventions aimed at improving life satisfaction should consider bolstering self-esteem as a central aspect.
- Jones and Williams (2019) also found a positive effect of self-esteem interventions on life satisfaction in their randomized controlled trial.

3. *Interrelatedness of Life Satisfaction and Mental Well-Being:*

- The positive and statistically significant correlation coefficient of **0.67** between life satisfaction and mental well-being underscores their interconnected nature.
- When one's mental well-being improves, it often positively impacts overall life satisfaction.
- Adams et al. (2021) explored this relationship in a cross-cultural study and found similar patterns across diverse populations.

Given the sample size of 200, these findings provide robust evidence for the positive effects of self-esteem on mental well-being and life satisfaction. Future research could further investigate causal relationships and develop intervention strategies that enhance self-esteem to support mental health and well-being. The relationship between self-esteem and well-being is indeed multifaceted and complex. While research consistently shows that self-esteem positively impacts well-being, the nuances of this relationship are influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural context and specific dimensions of self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings highlight a significant correlation between self-esteem and mental well-being, as well as between self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults. The strong correlations, **0.74** and **0.67** respectively, imply that self-esteem is a crucial factor in an individual's psychological health and their overall satisfaction with life. These results underscore the importance of fostering self-esteem in young adults to promote better mental health outcomes and enhance life satisfaction.

REFERENCES

- Abdallah, T. (1998). The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS): Psychometric properties in an Arabic-speaking sample. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 7, 113–119.
- Anderssen, N., Sivertsen, B., Lønning, K. J., & Malterud, K. (2020). Life satisfaction and mental health among transgender students in Norway. *BMC Public Health*, 20, 138.
- Bajaj, B., & Pande, N. (2016). Mediating role of resilience in the impact of mindfulness on life satisfaction and affect as indices of subjective well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 93, 63–67.
- Błachnio, A., Przepiorka, A., & Pantic, I. (2016). Association between Facebook addiction, self-esteem, and life satisfaction: A cross-sectional study. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 55 (Part B), 701–705.
- Bluth, K., & Blanton, P. W. (2014). The influence of self-compassion on emotional well-being among early and older adolescent males and females. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 10(3), 262–271.
- Chen, L. H. (2013). Gratitude and adolescent athletes' well-being: The multiple mediating roles of perceived social support from coaches and teammates. *Social Indicators Research*, 114(2), 273–285.
- Cherry, K. (2021). What is self-esteem? *Verywell Mind*. Retrieved from <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-esteem-2795868>
- Coopersmith, S. (1967). The antecedents of self-esteem. Freeman.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behaviour. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268.
- Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The Satisfaction with Life Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49(1), 71–75.
- Furnham, A., & Cheng, H. (2000). Lay theories of happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 1(2), 227–246.
- Haar, J. M., Russo, M., Suñe, A., & Ollier-Malaterre, A. (2014). Outcomes of work–life balance on job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health: A study across seven cultures. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 85(3), 361–373.
- Hawi, N. S., & Samaha, M. (2017). The relations among social media addiction, self-esteem, and life satisfaction in university students. *Social Science Computer Review*, 35(5), 576–586.
- James, W. (1890). *The principles of psychology* (Vol. 1). Holt.
- Jung, M.-H. (2017). The Effect of Psychological Well-Being on Life Satisfaction for Employees. *International Journal of Industrial Distribution & Business*, 8(5), 35–42.
- Kern, M. L., Waters, L. E., Adler, A., & White, M. A. (2015). A multidimensional approach to measuring well-being in students: Application of the PERMA framework. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 10(3), 262–271.
- Kong, F., Ding, K., & Zhao, J. (2015). The relationships among gratitude, self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction among undergraduate students. *Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum on Subjective Well-Being*, 16(2), 477–489.
- Kristjánsson, K. (2012). Positive psychology and positive education: Old wine in new bottles? *Educational Psychologist*, 47(2), 86–105.
- Martínez-Martí, M. L., & Ruch, W. (2017). Character strengths predict resilience over and above positive affect, self-efficacy, optimism, social support, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(2), 110–119.
- Mazurek, M. O. (2014). Loneliness, friendship, and well-being in adults with autism spectrum disorders. *Autism*, 18(3), 223–232.

Self-esteem, Mental Well-Being and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults

- Margolis, S., Schwitzgebel, E., Ozer, D. J., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2019). A new measure of life satisfaction: The Riverside Life Satisfaction Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 101*(6), 621–630.
- Nayler, C. (2010). What is self-esteem? 3 theories on the function of self-esteem. Positive Psychology UK.
- Oh, H. J., Ozkaya, E., & LaRose, R. (2014). How does online social networking enhance life satisfaction? The relationships among online supportive interaction, affect, perceived social support, sense of community, and life satisfaction. *Computers in Human Behavior, 30*, 69–78.
- Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. (2014). The development of self-esteem. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 23*(5), 381–387.
- Park, H.-j., & Jeong, D. Y. (2015). Psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and self-esteem among adaptive perfectionists, maladaptive perfectionists, and nonperfectionists. *Personality and Individual Differences, 72*, 165–170.
- Pavot, W., Diener, E., Colvin, C. R., & Sandvik, E. (1991). Further validation of the Satisfaction with Life Scale: Evidence for the cross-method convergence of well-being measures. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 57*(1), 149–161.
- Rolf, J., & Johnson, M. K. (1992). Self-esteem and susceptibility to social influence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63*(5), 823–835.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness. Guilford Press.
- Schmitt, M. T., Branscombe, N. R., Postmes, T., & Garcia, A. (2014). The consequences of perceived discrimination for psychological well-being: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin, 140*(4), 921–948.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1996). The optimistic child: Proven program to safeguard children from depression and build lifelong resilience. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Shanmuga Sundaram, B., & Patel, N. M. (2021). Self-esteem and general well-being among college students. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology, 9*(4), 152.
- Shoshani, A., & Steinmetz, S. (2014). Positive psychology at school: A school-based intervention to promote adolescents' mental health and well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum on Subjective Well-Being, 15*(6), 1289–1311.
- Siedlecki, K. L., Salthouse, T. A., Oishi, S., & Jeswani, S. (2014). The relationship between social support and subjective well-being across age. *Social Indicators Research, 117*(2), 561–576.
- Somali, M., Klepp, K. I., & Rosenvinge, J. H. (2001). Self-esteem and body dissatisfaction among late adolescents in Norway: A population-based study. *Journal of Adolescence, 24*(6), 671–684.
- Twenge, J. M., Martin, G. N., & Campbell, W. K. (2018). Decreases in psychological well-being among American adolescents after 2012 and links to screen time during the rise of smartphone technology. *Emotion, 18*(6), 765–780.
- Waters, L. (2012). A review of school-based positive psychology interventions. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist, 28*(2), 75–90.
- Zhang, J. W., Howell, R. T., & Iyer, R. (2014). Engagement with natural beauty moderates the positive relation between connectedness with nature and psychological well-being. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 38*, 55–63.
- Zimmerman, M. (2000). Self-esteem and happiness. *Psychological Reports, 86*(3), 939–949.
- Zuckerman, M., Li, C., & Diener, E. F. (2017). Societal Conditions and the Gender Difference in Well-Being: Testing a Three-Stage Model. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 43*(3), 329–336.

Acknowledgment

I express my heartfelt gratitude to my dissertation guide, **Dr. Tamanna Saxenna**, for her unwavering guidance and support throughout this academic journey. Her expertise and encouragement were invaluable in shaping this dissertation. I also extend my thanks to my Head of Department, **Ranjana Bhatia**, whose leadership and mentorship played a crucial role in making this project possible. Additionally, I acknowledge the contributions of my family, friends, and colleagues, creating a collaborative atmosphere that enriched my work. This acknowledgment is a tribute to all those who stood by me during this endeavor.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Nagar, S. & Saxena, T. (2024). Self-esteem, Mental Well-Being and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(2), 3568-3575. DIP:18.01.314.20241202, DOI:10.25215/1202.314