

Research Paper

Exploring The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Self- Construal with Emotional Intelligence Among Under-Graduate Students in Kolkata

Anuraag Prasad Lama^{1*}, Prof. (Dr.) Rita Basu²

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between Self-esteem and Self-construal with Emotional intelligence among under-graduate students in Kolkata. Emotional intelligence, encompassing the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions, plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' self-perceptions and overall well-being. Self-esteem, representing one's subjective evaluation of one's worth and capabilities, is closely intertwined with Emotional intelligence. This study investigated the correlations between Self-esteem and Self-construal with Emotional intelligence, among under-graduate college students in Kolkata. A sample of 318 students participated in the study, providing insights into the interplay of these psychological constructs. The analysis revealed significant correlations between Emotional intelligence and Self-esteem ($r = .504, p < .01$), indicating a positive relationship between these variables. Additionally, Emotional intelligence exhibits significant correlations with both Independent Self-construal ($r = .544, p < .01$) and Interdependent Self-construal ($r = .438, p < .01$), underscoring the influence of Self-construal on Emotional intelligence among students in this region. These findings suggest that Emotional intelligence and Self-construal play pivotal roles in shaping under-graduate students' Self-esteem, with implications for psychological interventions and educational practices aimed at promoting student well-being and resilience in academic settings.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Self-Esteem, Self-Construal, Under-Graduate Students*

The landscape of higher education is marked not only by academic pursuits but also by a myriad of psychological and sociocultural factors that significantly influence students' experiences and outcomes. Among these factors, Self-esteem, Self-construal and Emotional intelligence, play pivotal roles in shaping the holistic development and well-being of under-graduate college students. This study seeks to explore the intricate interplay of these elements among under-graduate students of Kolkata. Self-esteem, the subjective evaluation of one's worth and capabilities, is profoundly impacted by the socio emotional competencies encompassed within Emotional intelligence. Self-construal, the manner in which individuals perceive themselves in relation to others, is intricately intertwined with

¹Assistant Professor, Muralidhar Girls' College, Ballygunge, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

²Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, Rasbehary Shiksha Prangan, University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India

*Corresponding Author

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Emotional intelligence. While students with a more Independent Self-construal might place more emphasis on individual success and autonomy, those with an Interdependent Self-construal might place more importance on social harmony and the group's overall well-being. Emotional intelligence can both impact and be influenced by these variations in Self-esteem and Self-construal. Emotional intelligence, which is commonly defined as the ability to identify, comprehend, and regulate one's own emotions in addition to perceiving and navigating those of others, has significant effects on mental health in general, interpersonal interactions, and academic performance. The intricate interplay between Emotional intelligence, Self-esteem, and Self-construal is responsible for a multitude of aspects that impact under-graduate college students' academic performance and psychological well-being. By delving into the experiences of students in Kolkata, this research aims to shed light on the nuanced interactions between these elements, offering insights that can inform educational policies, counselling services, and holistic student support programs.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the nature of Self-esteem, Self-construal and Emotional intelligence of under-graduate college students of Kolkata.
2. To identify the relationship among the perceived level of Self-esteem and Self-construal dimensions, and Emotional intelligence of under-graduate college students of Kolkata.
3. To predicting role of Emotional intelligence for Self-esteem and Self-construal dimensions of under-graduate college students of Kolkata.

Hypotheses

- **H₁**: There is a significant association between Self-esteem and Self-construal of the under-graduate college students of Kolkata.
- **H₂**: There is a significant association of Self-esteem and Self-construal with Emotional intelligence of the under-graduate college students of Kolkata.
- **H₃**: There is a moderating effect of Emotional intelligence on the Self-esteem and Self-construal of under-graduate college students of Kolkata.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

A total of 318 under-graduate Honors students from Kolkata, with an equiproportionate number of students from junior and senior classes (2nd and 3rd year), were selected randomly using the multistage sampling method. This involved dividing Kolkata into different zones and employing matching and controlling of sample characteristics (such as age, gender, discipline, etc.), while also considering inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria:

- a) The age range was between 18 to 22 years.
- b) Under-graduate honours students of the main stream of Kolkata.
- c) Those in their 2nd and 3rd year at under-graduate level.
- d) Those who successfully completed the set of questionnaires given.
- e) Both male and female participants.
- f) Participants speaking either English or Bengali or Hindi.

Exclusion Criteria:

- a) Under-graduate honours students other than main streams.

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- b) Single child was excluded so as to account for the confounding effect of sibling relationship on the overall development of the individual's Self-esteem and Self-construal (Piotrowski et al. 2014).

Data collection

Primary data collection was undertaken with the help of face-to-face interview considering structured questionnaire, to complete the process of this research.

Measures

The following measures were used in Original Form (Adopted Locally):

1. Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)
2. Singelis Self-construal Scale (Singelis, 1994)
3. The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (Schutte et al., 1998)
4. A Background Information Schedule was developed which aimed to collect personal information about the respondent such as Name, Age, Gender, Educational qualification, socio-economic status of the respondent, etc.

Research Design

Procedure

The data was collected from each sample by the investigator at the respective colleges in Kolkata (N=318). The data were tabulated and statistical analyses were done.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data is analysed through SPSS ver 20. Standardization such as reliability and validity of the scales are done. Central Tendencies (Mean, Median), Standard Score, Dispersion (Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis) and graphical representation of the data to verify the nature of sample and scored distribution of measured variables are done. Lastly, Bivariate Correlations and Regression are computed to identify the relationships and verification of hypotheses and comparison of samples.

RESULTS

Table 1: The Consolidated Psychometric Profile of The Scales with Reliability and Validity Index for The Scales Used:

Scales	No. of Enquiry Areas	Range of Correlational Values/ Validity Measures				Reliability		Norms
		Individual Enquiry Area- Individual item score	Individual Item score- Total Score	Enquiry Area- Total Score	Inter Enquiry Areas Correlation (d)	Cronbach's Alpha	Spearman Brown	
Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale	-		.490-.777			.784	.840	M=16.55 SD=4.45
Singelis Self-construal Scale	2	.410-.644	.411-.629	.853-.862	.471	.815	.763	M=155.64 SD=18.08
The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test	4	.457-.703	.407-.642	.765-.843	-	.881	.833	M=124.88 SD=13.49

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The values displayed in **Table 1** detailing the psychometric profiles of various scales used along with their reliability and validity indices. Each scale is evaluated based on different criteria such as the number of enquiry areas, range of correlational values/validity measures, reliability, and norms.

Table 2: Characteristics Features of the Self-esteem, Self-construal and its Dimensions, and Emotional intelligence in the Score Distribution of Under-graduate College Students of Kolkata: N=318)

Variables	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Value	
						Min	Max
Self-esteem	16.56	17.00	4.66	-.300	.379	1.00	28.00
Independent Self-construal	75.35	76.00	10.81	-.320	.242	37.00	103.00
Interdependent Self-construal	75.97	77.00	10.16	-.781	1.135	39.00	98.00
Emotional intelligence	122.52	123.00	14.53	-.418	1.53	52.0	157.0

The values displayed in **Table 2** to characterize overall Self-esteem, Self-construal dimensions, namely, Independence and Interdependence, and Emotional intelligence of under-graduate college students of Kolkata. Mean value of the Self-esteem, Independent Self-construal and Interdependent Self-construal, and Emotional intelligence is 16.56, 75.35, 75.97 and 122.52 respectively which indicates existence of moderate level of the variables of under-graduate college students of Kolkata. The scales scores indicate the nature of normal probability distribution with slightly negatively skewed and leptokurtic (<3) in nature.

Table 3: Results Showing a Correlation Matrix Showing the Correlations Between Self-esteem and Self-construal (Independent Self-construal and Interdependent Self-construal) among Under-graduate College Students from Kolkata (N=318).

	Self-esteem	Independent Self-construal	Interdependent Self-construal
Self-esteem	1	.450**	.058

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

From **Table 3** we can see that there is a significant positive association between Self-esteem and Independent Self-construal among under-graduate college students in Kolkata (.450**). However, there is no significant association between Self-esteem and Interdependent Self-construal among the same group (.058). Thus, we can conclude that there is a significant association between Self-esteem and Self-construal (specifically Independent Self-construal) among the under-graduate college students of Kolkata.

Table 4: Results Showing a Correlation Matrix Showing the Correlations Between Self-esteem and Self-construal (Independent Self-construal and Interdependent Self-construal) with Emotional intelligence among Under-graduate College Students from Kolkata (N=318).

	Emotional intelligence
Self-esteem	.504**
Independent Self-construal	.544**
Interdependent Self-construal	.438**

*Level of significance at .05 level. **Level of significance at .01 level.

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From **Table 4** we can see the results indicate significant, positive and acceptable levels of correlation exist with Emotional intelligence and Self-esteem, Independent Self-construal, and Interdependent Self-construal (0.504, 0.544 and 0.438) among Under-graduate College Students from Kolkata. The correlation coefficient between Self-esteem and Emotional intelligence is 0.504, indicating a moderate positive relationship between Emotional intelligence and Self-esteem. This suggests that individuals with higher Emotional intelligence tend to also have higher Self-esteem. The correlation coefficient of 0.544, indicates a strong positive relationship between Emotional intelligence and Independent Self-construal. This implies that individuals who see themselves as independent and self-reliant are likely to have higher Emotional intelligence. The correlation coefficient between Emotional intelligence and Interdependent Self-construal is 0.438, indicating a moderate positive relationship. This suggests that those who view themselves in terms of their relationships with others and their social roles also tend to have higher Emotional intelligence,

Table 5: Results of Correlation Matrix Showing the Correlations Between Self-esteem and Self-construal (Independent Self-construal and Interdependent Self-construal) with Emotional intelligence and its Dimensions (N=318).

	Emotional intelligence	Perceiving Other Emotions	Managing Self-Emotions	Managing Other Emotions	Utilizing Emotions
Self-esteem	.504**	.336**	.610**	.321**	.283**
Independent Self-construal	.544**	.354**	.544**	.444**	.410**
Interdependent Self-construal	.438**	.247**	.337**	.496**	.403**

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

From **Table 5** we can see that Self-esteem shows a strong positive correlation with managing self-emotions (.610**), suggesting that individuals with higher Self-esteem are significantly better at regulating their own emotions. Independent Self-construal demonstrates strong correlations with both managing self-emotions (.544**) and managing other emotions (.444**), indicating that individuals who view themselves as independent are likely to be proficient in these areas. It also has moderate positive correlations with utilizing emotions (.410**). Interdependent Self-construal shows the strongest correlation with managing other emotions (.496**), suggesting a significant link between seeing oneself as part of a group and being able to manage others' emotions. It also has moderate correlations with utilizing emotions (.403**).

On the basis of the results obtained from bivariate correlation, the stepwise regression analysis was done with the most prominent variables and dimensions (correlation coefficient ≥ 0.4) to identify the moderating of the independent variables on dependent variables.

Facilitating Effect on Self Esteem by Emotional intelligence and its Dimension (Managing self-emotion).

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Table 6: Results of Stepwise Regression Analysis Explain the Facilitating Role of Emotional intelligence as well as its dimensions (Managing Self-emotions) on Self-esteem.

Facilitating Dimensions of Emotional intelligence	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Increase in R ²	F Ratio	β value
Managing Self-emotions	.598	.358	.356	.356	170.739**	.598

*Level of significance at .05 level. **Level of significance at .01 level.

In **Table 6** significant level of F ratio indicates the acceptance of regression analysis. The table explains the facilitating role of Managing self-emotions on Self-esteem. Increase in R² indicate the that the dimension of Emotional intelligence viz. Managing self-emotions explained 35.6% of the total variance of Self-esteem of under-graduate students of Kolkata. Beta value indicates that coefficient of Managing Self-emotions to be 0.598 to explain the regression equation. The results suggest that managing self-emotions plays a significant positive role in explaining Self-esteem. However, the extremely low Beta value (.006) and high p-value (.901) suggest that Emotional intelligence as a whole has an insignificant impact on the Self-esteem. This means that changes in Emotional intelligence are not associated with changes in Self-esteem in any meaningful way.

Moderating Effect on Independent Self-construal by Emotional intelligence and their Dimensions (Managing Self-emotions, Managing other emotions, Utilizing emotions).

Table 7: Results of Stepwise Regression Analysis Explain the Moderating Role of Emotional intelligence as well as its Dimensions (Managing Self-emotions, Managing Other emotions, Utilizing emotions) on Independent Self-construal.

Moderating Dimensions of Emotional intelligence	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Increase in R ²	F Ratio	β value
Managing Self-emotions	.561	.314	.312	.312	140.316**	.469 for MSE
Managing Self emotions, Managing Other emotions	.578	.334	.330	.018	76.456*	.167 for MOE

*Level of significance at .05 level. **Level of significance at .01 level.

In **Table 7** significant level of F ratio indicates the acceptance of regression analysis. The table explains the moderating role of Managing self-emotions, and Managing other-emotions on Independent Self-construal. Increase in R² indicate the that the dimension of Emotional intelligence viz. Managing self-emotions explained 31.2% of the total variance of Independent Self-construal of under-graduate students of Kolkata. The dimension of Emotional intelligence viz. Managing other-emotions increases this variance to approximately 1.8%. Beta value indicates that coefficient of Managing Self-emotions to be 0.469 and Managing other-emotions to be 0.167 to explain the regression equation. The results suggests that both Managing Self-emotions and Managing Other Emotions positively influence Independent Self-construal. However, Managing Self-emotions seems to have a stronger moderating effect on Independent Self-construal.

Facilitating Effect on Interdependent Self-construal by Emotional intelligence and their Dimensions (Managing Other emotions, Utilizing emotions).

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Table 8: Results of Stepwise Regression Analysis Explain the Facilitating Role of Emotional intelligence as well as its Dimensions (Managing other emotions, Utilizing emotions) on Interdependent Self-construal.

Facilitating Dimensions of Emotional intelligence	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Increase in R ²	F Ratio	β value
Managing Other emotions	.492	.242	.240	.240	97.759**	.492

*Level of significance at .05 level. **Level of significance at .01 level.

In **Table 8** significant level of F ratio indicates the acceptance of regression analysis. The table explains the facilitating role of Managing other-emotions on Interdependent Self-construal. Increase in R² indicate the that the dimension of Emotional intelligence viz. Managing other-emotions explained 24% of the total variance of Interdependent Self-construal of under-graduate students of Kolkata. Beta value indicates that coefficient of Managing other-emotions to be 0.492 to explain the regression equation. The results suggest that Managing Other Emotions remains the primary significant predictor of Interdependent Self-construal, as neither Emotional intelligence nor it's dimension of Utilizing emotions significantly contribute to Interdependent Self-construal.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to investigate the association between Self-esteem and Self-construal with Emotional intelligence among under-graduate students in Kolkata. We firstly hypothesized that there is a significant association between Self-esteem and Self-construal of the under-graduate college students of Kolkata. The findings reveal a significant positive correlation between Self-esteem and Independent Self-construal, while the relationship between Self-esteem and Interdependent Self-construal was found to be non-significant. The results indicated a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.450$, $p = 0.001$) between Self-esteem and Independent Self-construal. This suggests that students who perceive themselves as more independent tend to have higher Self-esteem. **Therefore, our hypothesis H₁ which states that there is a significant association between Self-esteem and Self-construal of the under-graduate college students of Kolkata is accepted.** This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that individualistic traits, such as self-reliance and personal achievement, are closely linked to higher Self-esteem (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999). In the context of Kolkata, a city undergoing rapid modernization and globalization, students may be increasingly valuing independence and personal success, which in turn boosts their Self-esteem. Conversely, the correlation between Self-esteem and Interdependent Self-construal was weak and non-significant ($r = 0.058$, $p = 0.548$). This implies that the degree to which students see themselves as interconnected with others does not significantly influence their Self-esteem levels. This result may seem surprising given the traditionally collectivistic orientation of Indian culture, which emphasizes community, family ties, and social harmony (Triandis, 1995). However, the findings may reflect a shifting paradigm among the younger generation in urban areas like Kolkata, where individualistic values are gaining prominence. The dichotomy in the associations observed could be attributed to the cultural transition occurring in urban India. With increasing exposure to global cultural norms and values, young people in cities may be adopting a more individualistic outlook, prioritizing personal goals and autonomy over collective ideals. This shift could explain why Independent Self-construal is more strongly associated with Self-esteem than Interdependent Self-construal among the students studied.

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The present study also aimed to explore the association between Self-esteem and Self-construal (Independent Self-construal and Interdependent Self-construal) with Emotional intelligence (EI) and among under-graduate college students in Kolkata. The findings revealed significant, positive, and acceptable levels of correlation between EI and each of these variables. The correlation analysis indicated a significant positive correlation between Emotional intelligence and Self-esteem ($r = 0.504$). **Therefore, our hypothesis H₂ which states that there is a significant association of Self-esteem and Self-construal with Emotional intelligence of the under-graduate college students of Kolkata is accepted.** This suggests that students with higher Emotional intelligence tend to have higher Self-esteem. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others (Goleman, 1995), appears to contribute to a stronger sense of self-worth and confidence. Students who are emotionally intelligent are likely better equipped to handle social and academic challenges, leading to enhanced Self-esteem. This finding aligns with existing literature that highlights the role of Emotional intelligence in fostering positive self-perceptions and overall psychological well-being (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The study found a significant positive correlation between Emotional intelligence and Independent Self-construal ($r = 0.544$). This suggests that students who perceive themselves as independent and self-reliant also tend to have higher Emotional intelligence. Independent Self-construal, which emphasizes personal autonomy and individual goals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), may be reinforced by high Emotional intelligence, as individuals with high EI are adept at self-regulation and self-awareness. In the context of Kolkata, a city influenced by both traditional values and modern individualistic trends, this finding indicates that Emotional intelligence supports the development of an independent self-concept among students. The analysis also showed a significant positive correlation between Emotional intelligence and Interdependent Self-construal ($r = 0.438$). This indicates that students who see themselves as interconnected with others and prioritize group harmony also exhibit higher Emotional intelligence. Interdependent Self-construal, which focuses on relational aspects and collective goals (Triandis, 1995), benefits from the social competencies inherent in Emotional intelligence, such as empathy and effective communication. This relationship highlights the dual role of Emotional intelligence in supporting both individual and collective orientations, suggesting that emotionally intelligent students can navigate and balance both types of Self-construal effectively. On the basis of the results obtained from bivariate correlation, the stepwise regression analysis was done with the most prominent variables and dimensions (correlation coefficient ≥ 0.4) to identify the moderating of the independent variables on dependent variables.

We first explored the facilitating role of Emotional intelligence, specifically managing self-emotions, on Self-esteem among under-graduate students in Kolkata. The regression analysis indicated that the dimension of Emotional intelligence, managing self-emotions, explains 35.6% of the total variance in Self-esteem ($R^2 = 0.356$). This substantial proportion suggests that the ability to regulate one's own emotions significantly contributes to the level of Self-esteem among under-graduate students. The beta value ($\beta = 0.598$) further reinforces the strength of this relationship, indicating that managing self-emotions is a strong predictor of Self-esteem. This finding is consistent with existing literature that emphasizes the role of emotional regulation in enhancing self-worth and confidence (Gross & John, 2003). While managing self-emotions shows a significant positive role in explaining Self-esteem, the overall impact of Emotional intelligence on Self-esteem appears to be minimal. The

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extremely low beta value ($\beta = 0.006$) and high p-value ($p = 0.901$) suggest that Emotional intelligence as a composite construct does not significantly influence Self-esteem.

We then investigated the moderating role of Emotional intelligence, specifically managing self-emotions and managing other emotions, on Independent Self-construal among undergraduate students in Kolkata. The regression analysis shows that managing self-emotions explains 31.2% of the total variance in Independent Self-construal ($R^2 = 0.312$). This significant proportion indicates that students who are better at regulating their own emotions tend to view themselves as more independent. The beta value ($\beta = 0.469$) further underscores the strength of this relationship, suggesting that managing self-emotions is a robust predictor of Independent Self-construal. This finding aligns with existing literature which suggests that individuals with high emotional regulation skills are more likely to develop a strong sense of personal autonomy and self-efficacy (Gross & John, 2003).

Lastly the study investigated the role of Emotional intelligence, specifically managing other emotions, in facilitating Interdependent Self-construal among undergraduate students in Kolkata. The regression analysis indicates that managing other emotions explains 24% of the total variance in Interdependent Self-construal ($R^2 = 0.240$). This significant proportion suggests that students who are adept at understanding and regulating the emotions of others tend to have a stronger sense of interdependence. **Therefore, our hypothesis H₃ which states that there is a moderating effect of Emotional intelligence on the Self-esteem and Self-construal of under-graduate college students of Kolkata is accepted.** The beta value ($\beta = 0.492$) further reinforces the strength of this relationship, indicating that managing other emotions is a primary predictor of Interdependent Self-construal. This finding aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of social and emotional skills in fostering a sense of community and connectedness (Goleman, 1995). The study also found that neither overall Emotional intelligence nor the specific dimension of utilizing emotions significantly contributes to Interdependent Self-construal. This suggests that while Emotional intelligence as a whole is valuable, it is the specific ability to manage others' emotions that plays a crucial role in fostering an interdependent self-view. Utilizing emotions, which involves harnessing emotional states to facilitate problem-solving and decision-making, appears to have a minimal impact on how students perceive their connectedness with others.

APPLIED VALUE

- The findings of the study provide several applied values for educational, psychological, and social interventions aimed at enhancing the well-being and development of undergraduate students in Kolkata.
- Schools and colleges can implement training programs focused on improving students' ability to manage their own emotions. This focuses on enhancing Self-Esteem through Emotional Regulation through techniques such as mindfulness, cognitive-behavioural strategies, and stress management exercises.
- Counselling can focus on helping students develop better self-emotion management skills. Counsellors can use targeted interventions to help students build confidence and self-worth by teaching them how to handle their emotions effectively.
- Workshops that focus on developing personal autonomy and self-reliance and can help students gain the skills necessary to navigate academic and social challenges independently.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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