

## Emotional Intelligence in Relation to Self Esteem Among College Students

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### ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-esteem among college students. A total of 150 participants, comprising 75 male and 75 female students aged between 18 and 25 years, were selected from various colleges in the Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. The study employed a random sampling technique to ensure representativeness. Emotional intelligence was measured using the Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2001), while self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). The study aims to explore the extent to which emotional intelligence correlates with self-esteem and to examine potential gender differences in these constructs. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on emotional and psychological well-being in young adults, with implications for educational and mental health interventions in college settings.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Self-Esteem, Psychological Well-being & Mental Health.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) or emotional quotient (EQ) is the ability to recognize, understand, control, and affect emotions in oneself and others. Emotional intelligence (EI) places more emphasis on the social and emotional dimensions of human behavior than traditional intelligence, which is mainly concerned with cognitive skills. The concept was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990) concerning the role of emotions in social processes and cognitive activities. The idea was later popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995), who further expanded it into a more practical model, which was applicable for purposes of organizational performance, leadership, and personal development. The five primary elements of emotional intelligence (EI) are self-awareness, which is the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions; self-regulation, the ability to regulate or redirect inappropriate erratic emotions; motivation, using emotions to achieve goals; empathy, which is the ability to understand and share others' feelings; and social skills, which involve appropriately managing relationships and communication (Goleman, 1995). These factors are also critical in ensuring interpersonal interaction and organizational functioning positively in addition to individual well-being. The value of emotional intelligence has been emphasized in education, leadership, healthcare, and mental health fields. Research shows that people with high EI tend to do better at work, have better mental health, and are successful in teams (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995). Moreover, high EI leaders are also found to make better employers as they inspire, motivate, and encourage their teams: a decisive element for being effective leaders (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). EI is closely related to academic performance because it equips children with tools to deal with stress, keep their focus, and remain motivated. Students who have high emotional intelligence can handle test anxiety more effectively, conquer classroom barriers, and solve problems more efficiently. It has been reported that students who have high emotional intelligence (EI) tend to perform better academically due to their higher resilience and better emotional self-regulation skills (Parker et al., 2004).

Self-esteem is a key element of psychological health and is defined as an individual's overall assessment of their own value. "The disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and as worthy of happiness" is how Nathaniel Branden (1994) defines self-esteem. It consists of two essential components: self-efficacy, or the conviction that one can handle life, and self-respect, or the conviction that one is valuable in and of themselves. According to research, resilience, connections with others, and achieving goals are all positively impacted by having a high sense of self-worth.

(Orth& Robins, 2014). On the other hand, social disengagement, anxiety, and depression are strongly linked to low self-esteem (Sowislo&Orth, 2013). Numerous techniques have been demonstrated to raise self-esteem. Negative self-judgments can be considerably reduced by engaging in self-compassion practices, which include treating oneself with care while failing (Neff, 2003). Furthermore, evidence-based strategies that help promote improved self-evaluations include realistic goal-setting, positive self-talk, and preserving supportive social interactions (Mayo Clinic, 2022). Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) has been shown to be successful in reorganizing negative self-beliefs in those with persistently poor self-esteem (Fennell, 1997). All things considered, developing self-esteem is essential for fostering adaptive behavior, life happiness, and emotional well-being

## OBJECTIVES

- To examine gender differences in Emotional Intelligence and Self Esteem among college students.
- To explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem.

## HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between male and female college students.
2. There is no significant difference in Self-Esteem between male and female college students.
3. There is a significant correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem among college students.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the survey method was applied. Two of the study's variables were gathered using self-reported questionnaires in conjunction with the personal data sheet. The standardized questionnaire was given to the participants under careful observation.

## SAMPLE

A sample of 150 college students (male 75 and female 75) participated in the study. The research participants were taken from the colleges of Cuddalore District of Tamil Nadu using random sampling method. During the process of data collection, available students in the institutions were recruited based on their voluntary consent and participation as subjects in the current study.

## PROCEDURE

The institutional authorities (Principals in the Colleges) were approached before the process of data collection and approval was obtained from them to collect data from enrolled students. Further, students were approached and the objectives of the study were briefed to them. They were also briefed about their rights as study subjects. Furthermore, a consent form was provided to all the participants and they were requested to sign on the same before taking part in the study. Participation in the study was voluntary. The participants took 20–25 min to respond to the questionnaires and no compensation was provided to them for their participation in this study.

## INSTRUMENTS

Since in Tamil Nadu, the medium of instruction in colleges is English, therefore all the measures of this study were distributed among the participants in English to collect the data. The description of each of the measures is provided as follows:

The Gender information of the participants was recorded. For instance, the respondents were asked: “What is your gender” (male or female) with the help of a background information questionnaire.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SCALE

The inventory was developed and standardized by AnukoolHude, Assistant Professor, ShriVaishnav Institute of Management Scheme 71, Gumasta Nagar, Indore and SanjyotPethe, Lecturer, Nirma Institute of Management Sarkhej, Gandhinagar Highway, Charodi Post Oganaj, Ahmedabad and UpinderDhar, Director, Prestige Institute of Management and Research 2, Education and Health Sector, Scheme 54, Indore. The questionnaire has 34 items with 5 alternatives from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Each item or statement should be scored 5 for Strongly Agree, 4 for Agree, 3 for Neutral, 2 for Disagree and 1 for Strongly Disagree. The minimum score is 0 and the maximum is 170, scores below 51 is considered as Low Emotional Intelligence, scores between 52-84 is considered Normal Emotional Intelligence and Scores between 85 and above is considered as High Emotional Intelligence.

## SELF ESTEEM SCALE

The inventory was constructed and standardized by Rosenberg (1965). The scale has 10 items with four alternatives from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The scoring for items 1,3,4 and 7 is 3 for Strongly Agree, 2 for Agree, 1 for Disagree and 0 for Strongly Disagree. For items 2,5,6,8 and 9, the scoring is reversed, that is 0 for Strongly Agree, 1 for Agree, 2 for

Disagree, and 3 for Strongly Disagree respectively. The minimum score of scale is 0 and maximum is 30, scores between 26 to 30 indicates High Self Esteem, scores between 16 to 25 Normal Self Esteem and below 15 Low Self Esteem.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1 Showing Group Statistics and Independent t-Test for Emotional Intelligence**

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Emotional intelligence	Female	75	75.73	10.24	0.167 N. S
	Male	75	75.43	11.67	

The above table shows Mean, SD and t-value for the respondent's level of Emotional Intelligence. Based on the gender, it is inferred from the obtained result that the Male obtained a mean value of (75.43) and female group obtained a mean value of (75.73). The calculated t-value (0.167) also proved that there is no significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between Male and Female. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 2 Showing the Group Statistics and Independent t-Test for Self-Esteem**

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Self-esteem	Female	75	32.62	10.86	0.265 N. S
	Male	75	33.08	10.31	

The above table shows Mean, SD and t-value for the respondents' level of Self Esteem. Based on the gender, it is inferred from the obtained result that the Male obtained a mean value of (33.08) and female group obtained a mean value of (33.62). The calculated t-value (0.265) also proved that there is no significant difference in Self Esteem between Male and Female. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 3 Showing the Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem**

Variables	Emotional intelligence
Self-esteem	0.430**

**\*\*Correlation at 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem among college students. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem ( $r = 0.430$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that students with higher levels of Emotional Intelligence tend to have higher levels of Self-Esteem. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions, appears to play an important role in shaping how students view themselves and their worth. Hence alternative hypothesis is accepted.

### 4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem among college students, along with examining gender-based differences in these constructs. A sample of 150 students, equally divided by gender and aged between 18 and 25, was selected from colleges in the Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu using random sampling. The

Emotional Intelligence Scale by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2001) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) were used for data collection. Statistical analyses revealed that there were no significant gender differences in Emotional Intelligence or Self-Esteem, indicating that these Psychological traits are not substantially influenced by gender in this population.

Furthermore, the study found a significant positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem, suggesting that students with higher Emotional Intelligence tend to exhibit higher levels of self-worth. This finding emphasizes the crucial role of Emotional regulation, Self-awareness, and interpersonal skills in shaping one's self-perception. The results support the idea that fostering Emotional Intelligence can positively influence Self-Esteem and contribute to students' psychological well-being. These insights highlight the need for educational institutions to implement programs that enhance emotional competencies as a strategy to promote both personal and academic success among students

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