Relationship Between Anxiety and Self-Esteem

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Abstract : Purpose: The purpose of this study was to find out if there is a correlation between a person's anxiety levels and self-esteem. The proposed hypothesis was that there will be a significant correlation between anxiety and self-esteem levels of an individual.

Methodology: To perform the Correlational Study, data from 91 participants were collected. Each participant was required to solve a questionnaire. To measure anxiety, Beck Anxiety Inventory was used, and to measure self-esteem, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used. The participants' Anxiety and Self Esteem scores were used as the raw data for the research. JASPsoftware was used for data analysis.

Findings: The correlation between Anxiety and Self-Esteem was analyzed considering the Age, Gender, and Socio-Economic status of the participants. A moderate positive correlation was observed between Total Anxiety and Total Self- Esteem. The small sample size, no direct observation of and interaction with the participants are the limiting factors of the study.

Contribution: The findings of this study indicate that the higher the anxiety of an individual, the lower will be the self-esteem. The results of past studies also support this conclusion. The study is useful for psychologists to check for self-esteem levels on anxiety-related complaints.

Keywords: Anxiety, Self Esteem, Correlational Study, Beck Anxiety Inventory, Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale.

I.   INTRODUCTION

India has one of the highest rates of mental disorders in the world. According to the National Mental Health Survey 2016, over 14% of India's population needs active mental health interventions. Every year, over 200,000 Indians commit suicide. When one considers the number of suicide attempts, the figures become even more staggering. President Ramnath Kovind raised mental health concerns during his speech to the

World Congress for Mental Health. According to the data, a high proportion of the Indian population suffers from mental health problems. One out of every seven Indians had a depression or anxiety problem. Between the early 2000s and the end of the past decade, the numbers more than doubled.

Anxiety is a feeling of tension, anxious thoughts, and bodily changes such as elevated blood pressure. Anxiety disorders are characterized by repeated intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations due to discomfort. Physical symptoms may include sweating, trembling, disorientation, or a rapid heartbeat. Anxiety and fear are not similar, yet they are frequently used interchangeably. Fear is a reasonable, present-oriented, and short-lived response to a clearly recognized and precise threat, whereas anxiety is a future-oriented, long-acting response largely focused on a diffuse threat.

Self-esteem refers to a person's overall feeling of worth or value. It is a measure of how much a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes himself or herself. Self-esteem influences not just our thoughts, but also how we feel and behave. It also has significant impacts on our happiness and pleasure in life. It significantly impacts events in our lives, such as our relationships, our job and ambitions, and how we care for ourselves and our loved ones.

Self-esteem is the degree to which one feels confident, valuable, and worthy of respect. It exists on a continuum from high to low. Where a person's self-esteem falls on this spectrum can influence one's overall well-being. People with high self-esteem often feel good about themselves and their progress through life. People with low self-esteem often feel shame and self-doubt. They often spend lots of time criticizing themselves. Low self-esteem is a symptom of several mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression. Low self-esteem is not represented as its own diagnosis in the APA's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V). Yet its symptoms and effects are very real. People who wish to improve their self-esteem can get help from a therapist. Self-esteem impacts your decision-making process, your relationships, your emotional health, and your overall well-being. It also influences motivation, as people with a healthy, positive view of themselves understand their potential and may feel inspired to take on new challenges. People with low self-esteem tend to feel less sure of their abilities and may doubt their decision-making process. They may not feel motivated to try novel things because they don't believe they can reach their goals. Those with low self-esteem may have issues with relationships and expressing their needs. They may also experience low levels of confidence and feel unlovable and unworthy. People with overly high self-esteem may overestimate their skills and may feel entitled to succeed, even without the ability to back up their belief in themselves. They may struggle with relationship issues and block themselves from self-improvement because they are so fixated on seeing themselves as perfect.

Researchers have conducted a study on the relationship between self-esteem,

self-concept, and academic achievement among adolescents. Nawaz and colleagues (2021) reported on the impact of anxiety on self-esteem, self-concept, and academics. College students with low self-esteem tended to be unhappy and less sociable, were more likely to use drugs and alcohol, and were more vulnerable to depression. Relationship between anxiety and academic achievement was positive for scientific section

students, whereas it was negative for literary section students. The main purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between self-esteem, self-concept, anxiety, and academic achievement among adolescents.

Self-esteem is one of the leading contributors to anxiety for college students. Does Among (2022) reported in 'Psychology Research and Behavior Management' that low

self-esteem, as a risk trigger for mental illness, is typically associated with a high incidence of anxiety symptoms. Approximately 61% of freshman students in Bangladesh struggled with moderate to extreme anxiety; around 15% of undergraduates at Franciscan University in the United States experienced severe or extremely severe anxiety. Around 15% of undergraduates at Franciscan University in the United States experienced severe or extremely severe anxiety. The study concludes that the anxiety problems of Chinese college students got ameliorated on average.

Self-esteem is associated with anxiety, depression, and academic stress, which significantly affect students' quality of life and link to suicidal ideation. In 'Low Self-Esteem and Its Association With Anxiety, Depression, and Suicidal Ideation in Vietnamese Secondary School Students', Dat Nguyen et al. (2019) noted that a correlation has been detected between low self-esteem and depression, anxiety, and adolescents' suicidal ideation and attempts.

Students were likely to show lower self-esteem when their mother's education was at the primary level or below, when they were often physically or emotionally abused at home or at school, or when they reported experiencing high educational stress. Having a personal tutor and academic performance in the last semester was no longer significant associations. This article reports on a study that aimed to determine the prevalence of low self-esteem in secondary school students.

Pearson correlation analysis showed that self-esteem was negatively correlated to anxiety, depression, and educational stress. The results of univariate logistic regression illustrated that low Self-esteem contributed to a high risk of anxiety, Depression, and suicidal ideation.

Social Anxiety in Relation to Self-Esteem among University Students in Jordan People in Jordan have a high level of social anxiety and a low level of self-esteem. Odeh Murad (2020) reports that Social anxiety is one of the most common psychological disorders experienced at the present time. The results showed that the arithmetic means of students' responses to the items on the social anxiety scale ranged from 1.52 to 2.50. This result is attributed to the level of social anxiety among students that negatively affect their activities, and self-expression in various situations. Results showed a high level of self-esteem and a low level of social anxiety among participants.

Child abuse has a direct and indirect effect on self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and stress.

The study aims to investigate the direct and indirect effects of maltreatment of children on self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and stress. Maltreatment of children has negative effects in the short and long term. Exposure to maltreatment in the childhood period is correlated with reduced self-esteem. Self-esteem has a reducing effect on problems experienced in adulthood. Aspects of the conclusions may strengthen earlier work in this field: "Children with abusive experiences had higher levels of negative self-assessment. These findings support the view that negative experiences in the early period have negative effects on self-

conception and perception which begin to form during this early period," Çelik posited.

The levels of depression and self-esteem were significantly higher for children in the first year of secondary school than for those in the second year. The criterion measures correlated significantly for all children, boys, and girls in both elementary and junior high groups. Findings that indicate the parent-related facets of self-esteem correlate higher with depression than with anxiety support the position offered by Battle. Some of the conclusions may substantiate prior research on this subject: "Depression correlates higher than anxiety with total self-esteem for subjects in elementary and junior high schools.

Relationship between social anxiety disorder and an individual's self-esteem,

self-efficacy, and dependency. In 'Self-esteem, dependency, self-efficacy, and self-criticism in social anxiety disorder', Iancu and colleagues (2014) reported that self-esteem, self-criticism, dependency, and self-efficacy are related to SAD. It is suggested to search for ways to affect

these factors through cognitive-behavioral interventions and additional psychotherapeutic treatments. They suggest that self-esteem, self-criticism, dependency, and self-efficacy are related to SAD. It is suggested to search for ways to affect these factors through cognitive-behavioral interventions and additional psychotherapeutic treatments. Family dysfunction and school stress are risk factors for increased anxiety levels in early adolescents. The findings demonstrated the utility of moderated mediation models in understanding the conditional indirect effects of family dysfunction. Aspects of the authors' findings potentially support prior work in this subject: "It is likely that under conditions of high levels of school stress, adolescents with low self-esteem may have worse relationships with their peers and teachers and difficulty in learning. This explanation is consistent with prior research showing that cognitive vulnerability to emotional disorders operates within a diathesis-stress framework," Guo suggested.

Alicia Nordstrom et al. (2014) reported on the effect of social anxiety and self-esteem on college adjustment, academics, and retention. The study examined how social anxiety affects the academic, social, emotional, and institutional adjustment to college in first-semester students.

Some of the authors' conclusions seem to corroborate previous studies on this subject: "Incoming freshmen with high social anxiety struggled with comorbid symptoms of depression, anxiety, and physical symptoms upon arrival. These effects persisted throughout the first semester," Nordstrom posited. They argue that the comorbidity between social anxiety and low self-esteem necessitates a closer investigation into the directionality of their relationship as well as a further study into their consequences on the college transition.

II.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data was collected by circulating the google form among family and friends through Whatsapp, Instagram, Discord, and LinkedIn. The data for 91 participants were collected. Each participant took approximately 5 minutes to solve the questionnaire. The form consists of the beck anxiety inventory and Rosenberg self-esteem scale. By using these two scales, participants' anxiety and self-esteem scores were

found which generated the raw data for the research. For understanding the correlation between anxiety and self-esteem, JASP software was used for data analysis. In descriptive statistics mean and standard deviation were removed for the variables including age, gender, socioeconomic status, anxiety, and self-esteem. In inferential statistics, the correlation value was removed for the variables anxiety and self-esteem. Based on these valuesfurther analysis was done.

Null Hypothesis - There will be no significant association between a person's level of anxietyand self-esteem. Alternate Hypothesis - There will be a significant association between a person's level of anxiety and self-esteem.

III.   RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	Socio-Economic Status	Gender	Age	Total Anxiety	Total Self Esteem
Valid	91	91	91	93	93
Missing	2	2	2	0	0
Mean	1.890	1.549	25.407	18.409	21.742
Std. Deviation	0.379	0.500	7.121	13.800	7.596
Minimum	1.000	1.000	19.000	0.000	0.000
Maximum	3.000	2.000	50.000	52.000	37.000

Correlation

Pearson's Correlations

Variable		Age	Gender	Socio-Economic Status	Total Anxiety	Total Self Esteem
1. Age	Pearson's r	—				
	p-value	—				
2. Gender	Pearson's r	-0.129	—			
	p-value	0.888	—			
3. Socio-Economic Status	Pearson's r	0.070	0.088	—		
	p-value	0.254	0.204	—		
4. Total Anxiety	Pearson's r	-0.191	-0.311	0.037	—	
	p-value	0.965	0.999	0.365	—	
5. Total Self Esteem	Pearson's r	-0.279	-0.109	0.140	0.548***	—
	p-value	0.996	0.847	0.092	< .001	—

Note. All tests one-tailed, for positive correlation.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, one-tailed
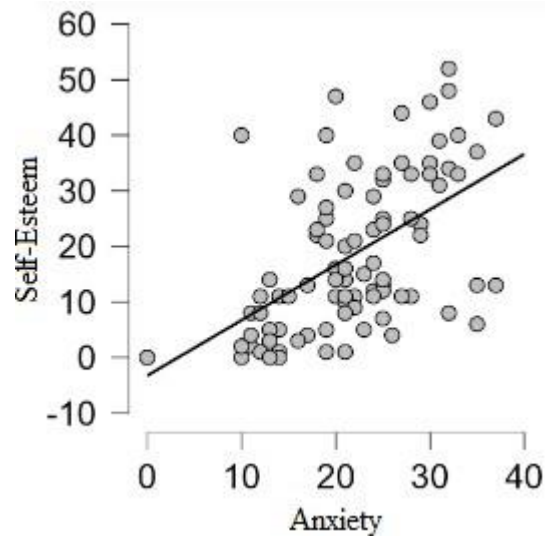
JASP software was used for data analysis. In descriptive statistics, the maximum, minimum, mean, and standard deviation of the different parameters like Age, Gender, and Socio-Economic Status as well as the Total Anxiety and Total Self Esteem scores are presented.

The Socio-Economic Status scores were recorded on a scale of 1-3.1-   High

2- Medium

3- Low

The mean is 1.890 and Standard Deviation is 0.379. As per the data, most of the participants are in the medium part of the Socio-Economic Status Scale. There is an almost equal split of Male and Female participants. The mean age of the participants is 25.407 years with the majority of participants being in the age group of 18 – 32 years age group.

The Total Anxiety is recorded on a scale of 0-63.0-7 minimal

8-15 mild

16-25 Moderate

26-63 severe

The max anxiety score recorded in the survey was 52 which is on the severe part of the scale. The mean total anxiety Is 18.409 and the standard deviation is 13.800. The Standard Deviation of the Total Anxiety is quite large and the Anxiety Scores of the Survey participant arespread across the Scale.

The Total Self Esteem was recorded on a scale as follows20 - average

below 20 - lowabove 20 – high

The mean and standard deviation of Total Self Esteem Scores are 21.742 and 7.596 respectively. The responses are split equally across the three parts of the scale.

The correlation was $r(91)=0.548, p<.001$. This is a moderate positive correlation, which means there is a tendency for high X variable scores(Anxiety) to go with high Y(Self-Esteem) variable scores (and vice versa). Anxiety has a significant positive correlation with self-esteem. Age and socioeconomic status have a weak correlation with anxiety and self-esteem. Gender has a negative correlation with the variables. Alternate hypothesis - There will be a significant association between a person's anxiety level and self-esteem was supported in the research. The significant positive correlation suggests that there will be a correlation between a person's anxiety level and self-esteem i.e. if the anxiety level goes high the self-esteem scores will go down and vice versa.

IV. DISCUSSION

The results of the present study suggest that there is a significant positive correlation between a person's anxiety and self-esteem levels. This indicates that the higher the anxiety of an individual, the lower will be the self-esteem. The results of the past study also supported this and had similar results and outcomes. The alternate hypothesis for this study was There will be a significant association between a person's level of anxiety and their self-esteem. The results of the present study are supporting the proposed hypothesis providing a significant positive correlation between anxiety and self-esteem.

Although the present study provides an appropriate result to understand the correlation between anxiety and self-esteem, the sample size is not enough for generalizing the results obtained in this study. The sample size should be bigger and more diverse among age, gender, and socioeconomic status. The responses were collected online mode due to which the limitation of this study was the participants were not directly observed during solving the questionnaire. If the researcher could observe the participants while solving the questionnaire and could ask them questions about their current condition, few confounding variables can be identified. As both the questionnaires were self-report inventory, there can be a possibility of over-reporting or fake good/bad answers.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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