

Self-Esteem and Life Satisfaction among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT - The study mainly focused on the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults, whether self-esteem can be a significant predictor of life satisfaction and the differences in self-esteem and life satisfaction based on gender among young adults. The sample of the study consisted of 130 young adults, 65 men and 65 women selected from Southern region, India.. The data was collected using Rosenberg self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965) and Satisfaction with Life scale (Diener et,al 1985). A comprehensive statistical analysis was done using SPSS, in terms of descriptive, inferential and linear regression statistical methods. The study concludes that there is a significant positive relationship existing between self-esteem and life satisfaction, also self-esteem can be a significant predictor of life satisfaction. Men and women significantly do not differ in self-esteem and life satisfaction The implications of improving one's self-esteem and thus the life satisfaction are discussed in the study.

Keywords : *Self-esteem, Life satisfaction, Young Adult*

I. I.INTRODUCTION

A legal adult is a person who has attained the age of majority and is regarded as independent, self-sufficient and responsible. Adulthood is a period in the human lifespan in which full physical and intellectual maturity have been attained. Age of 20 or 21 marks the beginning of adulthood. According to the Developmental psychologist, Erik Erickson, the period occurring between ages of 20 and 45 is the young adulthood. Erikson(1950)^[8] referred to the young adult period as "intimacy vs. isolation" in his eight stages of development, he described it as the period when after developing a sense of identity, the individuals begin intimate relationships. Although identity-related explorations and negotiations have theoretically been closely associated with adolescence (Adams,1998; Erickson,1950), Arnett argued that these activities are a more defining feature of emerging adulthood than of adolescence, a characteristic of young adulthood is that prior to making enduring decisions regarding love, work, and career, and adopting the more stable adult self-views, emerging adults vigorously engage in identity explorations. Indeed, the highly fluid nature of emerging adulthood, is further illustrated in his finding that, when asked whether they have reached adulthood, the majority of emerging adults answered neither no or yes and instead endorsed the more ambiguous option, in some respects yes, in some respects no (Arnett, 2000)^[1].

A distinct developmental period that encompasses several transitions bridging adolescence and adulthood, is the emerging adulthood and wherein the individual's actions, decisions and choices are still guided by provisional adult

self-images in ways that may affect the experienced processes and outcomes of this unique life phase. Identity negotiations crucial to transforming internalized self-images from adolescent to adult are especially intense in the interval of emerging adulthood. Establishment of intimate relationships and not feeling isolated from others is the main task of early adulthood (Erikson, 1950)^[8]. The time period from the end of adolescence to the young-adult responsibilities of a stable job, marriage and parenthood is the emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000)^[1].

Self-Esteem

Positive and negative attitude toward oneself and one's evaluation of one's own thoughts and feelings overall in relation to oneself can be defined as self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965)^[15]. Positive or negative evaluations about the self and how the individual feel about it is the self-esteem(Smith & Mackie, 2007)^[20]. Self-esteem is believed to be influenced by various factors like genetics, personality, life experiences, age, health, thoughts, social circumstances, the reactions of others and comparing the self to others. Although self-esteem may be a part of self-concept, it is not self-concept. The perception that individuals have of themselves is the self-concept. Or the awareness of who the individual is their concept of self. People's self-esteem is often visibly responsive to life events.. Self-esteem is how the individual feel about themselves., opinion of themselves critically influences everything, from their performance at work, their relationships, their value as a person, their purpose in life, their strengths and weaknesses, their social status and how they relate to others etc .A major component in the determination of success or failure is the self-esteem.

High level of self-esteem enables the individuals to be confident, happy and be sure of oneself. The individual would be highly motivated and will have the right attitude to succeed. High self-esteem is evident in respect for one's self, others, property, law and one's country. There exist a relation between higher self-esteem and lower rates of depression and other mental health problems, and also exist an increase in physiological health(Baydala,et.al,2009)^[3]

A number of negative outcomes, such as depression have been shown to be correlated with Low self-esteem(Silverstone&Salsali,2003)^[19]. Low self-esteem can come from being treated harshly, being ignored, ridicule or through experiencing failures. It can lead to anxiety, stress, loneliness, problems in relationships, poor choices and increased vulnerability to drug and alcohol abuse as well as depression. People with low self-esteem are more troubled by failure and tend to exaggerate events as negative(Rosenberg & Owen,2001)^[16]

Life Satisfaction

An underlying state thought to be relatively consistent and influenced by social factors is cognitively assessed and this is the life satisfaction (Ellison et al.1989)^[7]. Satisfaction with Life can also be defined as the degree to which an individual experiences general contentment with one's life.(Diener et,al.1985)^[6]. The way in which people show their emotions and feelings, their feelings about their directions and options for future, is the life satisfaction. A key part of subjective wellbeing is life satisfaction.

The more happy people are, the less they are focused on the negative, according to Seligman. An overall happiness is created by tendency to like others, which then correlates with higher level of life satisfaction. The happiness of an individual is dependent on several factors. Positive and negative experiences, both those that are acute events (eg, death of a loved one) and chronic, daily experiences (eg, ongoing family discord) influence Life Satisfaction. Every individual life is influenced by family in an important way and most strive to have high levels of satisfaction in life as well as within their own family. Individuals who evaluate their family functioning as cohesive, flexible, communicative, and fulfilled, are more likely to process their own emotions and enjoy higher life satisfaction (Szczesniak&Tulecka,2020)^[22]

II. FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Young adulthood is a period that bridge the differences between adolescents and adults. Young adults often are cut off from child/adolescent services they may still need and are treated the same as older adults in adult services, marking that early adulthood is a critical period in ones life time. Their satisfaction with relationships, achieved goals, well being assessed in terms of mood, self-concepts, and self-perceived ability to cope with one's daily life together determines an individual's satisfaction with his life. Life

Satisfaction can be measured in relation to economic standing, amount of education, experiences, and the people's residence as well as many other topics .like self-esteem. Self-esteem increases when we reflect on our achievements, and focusing on our failures typically hurts self-esteem especially during adulthood .Many current researches have indicated that there is relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction, and it is significant among men and women., Greater individual self-esteem predicted better life satisfaction (Diener, 2009)

The objective of this study is to assess self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adult and how high levels of self-esteem assess and foresee happiness and satisfaction in their life. The independent variable selected for this study is self-esteem and the dependent variable is level of life satisfaction . Also to determine whether gender differences exist in the level of self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults.

III. METHOD

Correlation study was used to find the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction and to predict the relation with self-esteem as an independent variable. A correlation study is a type of research design where a researcher seeks to understand what kind of relationships variables have with one another.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How self-esteem and life satisfaction are related among young adults?
- Is there a significant gender difference in self-esteem and life satisfaction?

In order to answer the above research questions, the following objectives had been formulated in the present study.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults and to check the level of prediction of self-esteem on life satisfaction among young adult
- To study the gender difference in self-esteem and life satisfaction among the selected sample.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Correlational research design was used to study the relationship between the variables and regression model was employed to check whether the relationship predicts whether the independent variable self-esteem can influence life satisfaction Also between group test to find out the gender difference with respect to self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults in this present study.

SAMPLE

The sample of the study consisted of 130 young adults from various parts of Kerala, selected using convenience sampling method. The sample consisted of 65 males and 65 females within the age range of 18-35 years. Students and Working Professional within the age range were included and Differently abled and young adults who were staying outside Kerala were excluded from the study.

TOOLS USED

Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

The self-esteem scale was developed by Morris Rosenberg in 1965. This is a widely used self-report instrument for evaluating individual’s self-esteem. Reliability and internal consistency for the scale range from 0.77-0.88. Test-retest reliability for Rosenberg’s scale range from 0.82 – 0.85. The scale is a ten item Likert scale with items answered on a four-point scale- from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Satisfaction With Life Scale(SWLS)

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985). The scale has shown to be a valid and reliable measure of life satisfaction,

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	P
Self esteem	130	18.669	3.83	0.432	0.000**
Life satisfaction		22.238	5.52		

showing high internal consistency and reliability and suited for use with different age groups and populations. The SWLS shows strong internal reliability and moderate temporal stability with a coefficient of alpha of 0.87. The scale has high internal consistency, high temporal reliability and discriminant validity. The scale is a 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one’s life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative affect). Respondents answer in a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 7(strongly agree)

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The informed consent from participants were taken and the purpose of the study was made clear to them. Then, they were provided with both the questionnaires and requested to give honest responses and were assured that their identity would be kept confidential and information provided by them would be used exclusively for the purpose of research work. The participants filled the questionnaires and a scoring was done for further analysis.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data collected was analysed with the SPSS. Descriptive and Inferential statistical methods were used. Descriptive statistics include mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics like Mann-Whitney U test and Spearman correlation was used and to predict the influence of self-esteem on life satisfaction linear regression model was used.

RESEARCH ETHICS FOLLOWED

- Respondents consent had been sought through the consent form attached in Google form

- Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study and the data collected from the respondents was used for academic purpose only.
- To do away with the ambiguity regarding the purpose of the research, the aim and objectives of the research was explained in detail to each of the participant.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from the participants were scored , tabulated and also descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to arrive at the results of the study. The results obtained are represented as well as discussed as follows:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults

In order to test the above hypothesis, descriptive and inferential statistical methods were assessed. Since the data was normally distributed, the significance of relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction was computed using the Spearman correlation test

Table 1 : Showing the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults

***Significant at 0.01 level*

An analysis of the table indicates that there were 130 young adults, self-esteem of young adults have a mean score of 18.669, standard deviation of 3.83 which is interpreted to be normal range. The life satisfaction had a mean score of 22.238, standard deviation of 5.82 which is interpreted to be satisfied.

In order to see whether there was a significant relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults, the scores were subjected to Spearman correlation test, which yielded the spearman correlation coefficient ‘r’ as 0.432, and the corresponding p-value is 0.000. And it is significant at 0.01 level. Analysis of the table indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and life satisfaction. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected and there is statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults. This finding can be supported by the study conducted by Hong et,al,1993 to examine the effects of life-satisfaction, sex and age on self-esteem. The study concluded significantly higher self-esteem for men than women, and for those with high life satisfaction and that self-esteem and life satisfaction are significantly related^[9]

Table 2 :To measure the effect of self-esteem on life satisfaction among young adults.

Variables	β	F	p
Self-esteem	0.444	31.469	0.000**

Life Satisfaction

$$R^2 0.197 \text{ adjusted } R^2 0.191$$

This objective was examined using linear regression. For the regression model, self-esteem was entered as the independent variables and life satisfaction entered as dependent variables. The table above reports the regression results for the overall respondents. The R^2 for regression model is found to be 0.197. This indicates that, 19% of the variation in the dependent variable life satisfaction is explained by the study variable for the overall respondents. It also shows that adjusted $R^2 = 0.191$ for the overall, which means that any time another independent variable is added to this model, the R^2 will increase (even if only slightly). This regression model results in the ANOVA which is reported by F – ratio 31.469 ($p = 0.000$). This indicates that the regression model for the overall respondents is significant. On examination of the standardized beta coefficients, it is found that self-esteem is significantly related to the life satisfaction at 0.01 level. The statistical significance is found to be in the directions hypothesized (Baumeister, 2003)^[5]. Self-esteem may be the product of achievement with happiness and life satisfaction being the products of self-esteem. Individual self-esteem directly predicts life satisfaction. Previous research has demonstrated a similar relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction among college students (Lucas et al., 2011)^[12]

Table 3 : To study significant gender difference in self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults

In order to test the above hypothesis, the mean scores obtained by males and females on self-esteem was computed. Further the significance of the difference between mean scores of the two groups was computed using Mann-Whitney U test since the data was not normally distributed, which yielded the following.

Variable	Gender	Mean	z-value	p-value
Self esteem	Men	71.03	1.682	.093
	Women	59.57		
Life satisfaction	Men	60.10	1.637	.102
	Women	70.10		

An analysis of the above table indicates that the mean value obtained for self-esteem among males is 71.03 and women is 59.97. The value shows that men had a higher level of self-esteem when compared to women.. The z-value for self-esteem is 1.682 and the corresponding p-value is 0.093. Thus the result shows that there is no significant difference between men and women on self-esteem. So, the hypothesis is accepted. These findings can be supported by the results obtained in the study conducted by Marcic & Grum, 2011^[14]. The mean value obtained for life satisfaction among men is 60.10 and women is 70.10. The value shows that women have a higher level of life satisfaction compared to men. The

z-value for life satisfaction is 1.637 and the corresponding p-value is 0.102. Thus the result shows that there is no significant difference between men and women on life satisfaction. So, the hypothesis is accepted. These findings can be supported by the study conducted by Bibi.et.al.2015 on 275 adults within the age range of 18-30 years, to assess the levels of life satisfaction with reference to age, gender and culture difference respectively. Findings showed that life satisfaction increases with increase in age, and no difference was found in life satisfaction with reference to gender^[4]

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to add research in the area of self-esteem, life satisfaction among young adults. The findings of this study are nearly consistent with the literature on relationship between self-esteem and its prediction of life satisfaction This study also showed a significant relationship and self-esteem as a predictor of life satisfaction.

Also there was no significant gender difference in self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults.. This study signifies the young adulthood, its impact on an individual’s life satisfaction and self-esteem levels in particular this stage of life span . Growth curve analyses directed self-esteem inclines to increase from adolescence to middle adulthood, reaches a peak at age 50. (Robins & Widaman, 2012)^[18] The results of this research study backup the research done by Kiang and relate self-esteem to be a significant predictor of life satisfaction. (Kiang et al., 2006)^[10].

Young adulthood is a period of adjustment to new patterns of life and social expectations. These adjustments can make early adulthood a distinctive period in the life span. By making them aware of their self-concept including how they evaluate of their own worth, they can easily adjust to the new patterns of their life can lead a more satisfied life. Research studies addressing these factors can help them to a larger extent to improve themselves . In educational institutions and professional settings intervention programs could be conducted to improve self-esteem, and thus the overall satisfaction of an individual with his life

VI. LIMITATIONS

Major setback of this study was the restrictions put forth due to COVID-19 pandemic because of which it was not possible to collect the data manually from the participants. Second setback was the difficulty to examine all the elements of self-esteem and life satisfaction in a quantitative study with few questions. Another limitation was that since the data was collected from the participants using google forms, it was not possible to build a friendly relationship with the participants.

VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It would be interesting to build on this research by conducting a qualitative research study in the form of in-depth interviews. Studies can also be conducted to determine

whether there is any difference in self-esteem and life satisfaction based on age and designation. Further research may also look into self-esteem and life satisfaction among young adults who are differently abled, since very few studies had been conducted in this area.

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