

## Chapter 2

### SELF-ESTEEM AND HAPPINESS AMONG FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS

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#### Abstract

The present study investigated the relationship between Self-esteem and Happiness among female College Students. 60 Female college students were selected as the participants of the study through purposive random sampling from Malappuram District. The participants were administered Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (Morris Rosenberg 1965) and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Michael Argyle and Peter Hills 2002) to measure their self-esteem and happiness. The statistical techniques used to analyse the data were Pearson product moment correlation and independent sample t-test. The result shows that there is a significant negative relationship between self- esteem and happiness among female college students and there is no significant difference in self-esteem and happiness among family type.

**Keywords:** *Self-Esteem, Happiness, Female college students*

#### Introduction

Self-esteem is an individual's subjective evaluation of their own worth. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs about oneself as well as emotional states, such as triumph, despair, pride, and shame.

Happiness is an emotional state characterized by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfilment. While happiness has many different definitions, it is often described as involving positive emotions and life satisfaction.

## Self-esteem

Self-esteem refers to a person's overall sense of his or her value or worth. It can be considered a sort of measure of how much a person "Values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself" (Adler & Stewart, 2004). According to self-esteem expert Morris Rosenberg (1965) self-esteem is quite simply one's attitude toward oneself. "He described it as "favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the self".

Self-esteem has been a hot topic in psychology for decades, going about as far back as psychology itself. Even Sigmund Freud, who consider as the founding father of psychology, had theories about self-esteem at the heart of his work. Most discussions of the question regarding self-esteem pay some homage to the definition offered by William James in his principles of psychology, first published in 1890: self-esteem is success divided by pretension. The elegant simplicity of this notion contains interesting implications. Self-esteem can be increased by acquiring greater success and maintained by avoiding failures, but it can also be increased by adopting less ambitious goals: 'to give up pretensions is a blessed relief as to get them gratified'( James, 1890, p.311). James's formula is also made some vital prediction that Self-esteem cannot be predicted purely from the objective level of success a person archives, what matter is that whether success of them are relevant to their aspirations.

Self-esteem is an attractive psychological construct. Because it predicts certain outcomes, such as academic achievement, happiness, Satisfaction in marriage and relationships, and criminal behaviour. Self-esteem can apply to a specific attributes or globally. Psychologists usually regard self-esteem as an enduring personality characteristics (trait self-esteem) , through normal, short-term variations (state self-esteem) also exist. Synonyms or near -synonyms of self-esteem include: self-worth, self-regard, self-respect and self-integrity. It is a controversial term between academics due to some believing that the concept does not exist and is better measured by extraversion and introversion trait levels.

Many early theories suggested that Self-esteem is a basic human need or motivation. American psychologist Abraham Maslow included self-esteem in his hierarchy of human needs. He described two different forms of "esteem": the need for respect from others in the form of recognition, success and admiration, and the need for self-respect in the form of self-love, self-confidence, skill, or aptitude. Respect from other people was believed to be more fragile and

easily lost than inner self-esteem. According to Maslow, without the fulfilment of the Self-esteem need, individuals will be driven to seek it and unable to develop and obtain self-actualisation. Modern theories of Self-esteem explore the reasons humans are motivated to maintain a huge regard for themselves. Sociometer theory maintains that self-esteem evolved to check one's level of status and acceptance in one's social group. According to Terror Management Theory, self-esteem serves a protective function and reduces anxiety about life and death. Carl Rogers believed in the importance of giving unconditional acceptance to a client and when this was done it could improve the client's self-esteem. In his therapy sessions with clients, he offered positive regard no matter what.

## **Happiness**

The term happiness is used in the context of mental or emotional states, including positive or pleasant emotion ranging from contentment to increase joy. It is also used in the context of life satisfaction, subjective well-being, eudemonia, flourishing and well-being. Since the 1960's, happiness research has been conducted in a wide variety of scientific disciplines, including gerontology, social psychology and positive Psychology, clinical psychology, clinical and medical research and happiness economics.

Happiness in psychology a state of emotional well-being which a person experiences either in an arrow sense, when good things happen in a specific moment, or more broadly, as a positive evaluation of one's own life and accomplishments overall – that is, subjective well-being. Happiness can be distinguished both from negative emotions (such as sadness, fear, and anger) and also from other positive emotions (like affection, excitement and interest). This emotion often co-occur with a specific facial expressions: the smile.

Happiness has been the topic of discussion and debate since the ancient Greek times. Hedonism has a long history (Ryan & Desi, 2001). Science has looked closely at happiness as 'hedonically' defined-or in other words happiness is the outcome of the pursuit of pleasure over pain (Ryan & Desi, 2001).

Human beings want to be happy and Satisfied with their lives. After decades of research on the nature, causes, and effects of happiness, more social psychologists agree that our subjective well-being involves four basic components (Diener, 2001): Global life satisfaction –

feeling generally satisfied or happy with our lives, Satisfaction with important life domains-being satisfied with our work, relationships, and family, Positive feelings -experiencing positive emotions and moods often and Negative feelings – experiencing negative emotions less often than positive ones, or Preferably, rarely.

In short, happiness with our lives seems to consist of multiple, interrelated factors. To the degree these factors are present in our lives, they strongly influences how happy we are and extent to which we see our lives as meaningful and fulfilling.

College students are on their stressful young adulthood stage of life. They need to take responsibilities in their life and also need to pursue their dreams by continuing study. Female college students would go through many issues such as marriage pressure, dislikes from the society and if they are married, adjusting married life. So in order to keep the study they need to increase their self-esteem. For them it is also necessary to be happy in their college life as well as daily life in order to promote a healthy lifestyle and achieving their goals. So through these research we analysed that how much important is Self-esteem and happiness in a female college student for a successful life.

Previously there have been studies in the topic of self-esteem and happiness. Durmus Ümmet (2015) conducted a study on the topic self-esteem among college students: A study of Satisfaction of Basic Psychological needs and some variable. It was found that the satisfaction of autonomy and relatedness needs of the students significantly predicted their self-esteem, while the satisfaction of competence did not predict self-esteem. Also self-esteem of the students showed significant differences as to educational level of mother, income level and perceived parent attitudes by them, a whereas educational level of father and gender did not have effect on self-esteem. Arshad, Zaidi and Mahmood (2015) were conducted a study on Self-esteem and Academic Performance among University Students, after arising of several behavioural and educational problems. It was found that there was a significant relationship ( $r=0.879$ ,  $P<0.1$ ) between self-esteem and academic performance. Moreover a significant difference was found between male and female students on self-esteem and academic Performance scores, which indicate that female students have high scores on academic performance as compared to male students and male students have high scores on self-esteem as compared to female students. Prompted significant increase in State hope and happiness, commending grateful remembering as

a practice that can bolster present happiness and hope for the future. Oley, Medredev and Lan (2018) studied on exploring constructs of well-being, happiness and quality of life. The results show high positive correlations between happiness, Psychological and health domains of quality of life, life Satisfaction, and positive affect. Social and environmental domains of quality of life were poor prediction of happiness and subjective well-being after controlling for psychological quality of life. The results revealed that happiness and self-esteem, while highly correlated ( $r=0.58$ ) presented unique patterns of relations with the other measured variables.

## **Method**

The present study is based on quantitative research. A self-administered questionnaire survey was done to assess significant relationship between self-esteem and happiness among female college students. The independent variable and dependent variable of the study was self-esteem and happiness respectively. Objectives of the study was To study the relationship between self-esteem and Happiness among female college students, To compare self-esteem among family type and to compare happiness among family type. Hypotheses of the study was,

H1: There is a significant relationship between Self-esteem and happiness among female college students,

H2: There is significant difference in self-esteem among family type.

H3: There is significant differences in Happiness among family type.

## **Participants**

60 college Students (female) from Malappuram district, Kerala state. Including 1<sup>st</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> year and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Students were considered as the participants for the study. Purposive random sampling, is used for sample Selection. It means the process of identifying a population of interest and developing a systematic way of selecting cases that is not based on advances knowledge of how the outcome would appear.

In the present study, made use of three instruments, personal data schedule to collect personal data of the participants or for collecting demographic details and another two scales are used. They are, Scale by Morris Rosenberg (1965) and scale by Michael Argyle and peter Hills (2002).

## Procedure

The topic for the study was selected under guidance of the expert. Rapport was established with the participants and then the purpose of study was explained. After their concerns got, the questionnaire containing personal data schedule and scale for measuring self-esteem and happiness were give. The Participants were assured about the confidentiality and the information collected will only use for research purpose. Investigator gave proper instruction to the participants for collecting data.

Statistical techniques used in this study were Pearson product moment correlation and Independent sample t-test to find out the significance level of data through SPSS.

## Result and discussion

This chapter deals with the result and discussions of the data collected.

*H1: There is a significant relationship b/w Self-esteem and Happiness among female College students.*

To verify the hypothesis Karl Pearson's product correlation test was used and result are showing in table 1.

Table 1: Correlation between self-esteem and happiness

Variables	Self-esteem
Happiness	-0.476 **

\*\*significant at the 0.01 level

Table 1 shows the correlation coefficient between Self-esteem and Happiness is found to be --.476 which is statistically significant 0.01 level. This shows that there is a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and happiness among female College Students. So the hypothesis stating that, there is significant relationship between self-esteem and happiness among female college students is accepted.

The self-esteem and happiness are highly negatively correlated .When self-esteem increases happiness decreases and when self-esteem decreases happiness increases. It may be

due to when self-esteem increases the person have high self-worth and when they could not reach their goals and potentials, as a result their happiness may decreases and they could be unhappy.

*H2: There is significant difference in self-esteem among family type.*

To verify this hypothesis t-test is used and result is showing in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean, SD, t-value among nuclear and joint family type on self-esteem.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig(2-tailed)
Self-esteem	Join(0)	9	22.00	4.472	-.538	.593
Self-esteem	Nuclear (1)	51	22.59	2.722	-.382	.711

Table 2 can be seen that the mean score of self-esteem for Join family type is 22.00 and mean of self-esteem for nuclear family type is 22.59. The S.D of self-esteem of joint is 4.472 and that of nuclear is 2.722. The t-value of self-esteem for join is -.538 and for nuclear is -.382. The significant [two-tailed] value are .593 and .711.

So the hypothesis 2 stating that there is significant difference in self-esteem among family type is rejected. This shows that there is no difference in self-esteem among family-type. Self-esteem is same among joint and nuclear family type college students. Statistically differences on family type are not usually found in self-esteem. Because Self-esteem can be affected by many factors such as school, friends, and internal factors. So Family type does not affect self-esteem.

*H3: There is significant difference in happiness among family type.*

To verify this hypothesis t-test is used and result is showing in table 3.

Table 3 -Mean, S.D, t-value among nuclear and joint family type on happiness.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Sig(two-tailed)
Happiness	Joint	9	4.0300	.72149	.187	.853
Happiness	Nuclear	51	3.9888	.59011	.162	.875

Table 4.3 can be seen that the mean score of happiness for joint and Nuclear are 4.0300 and 3.9888 respectively. The S.D of Happiness for joint and Nuclear family type are .72149 and .59011 respectively. The t-value is .187 for Joint and .162 for nuclear. The significant (two-tailed) value is .853 and .875 for joint and nuclear family respectively.

So the hypothesis stating that there is significant difference in Happiness among family type is rejected. This show that there is no significant difference in happiness among family type. Happiness is same among joint and nuclear family type college students. Statistically significant differences on family type are not usually found in happiness. Because happiness is affected by many factors. Happiness is subjective in nature.. In many cases both family type has its own relevance. Not one is better to contribute more happiness.

### **Summary and conclusion**

The findings show that there is a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and happiness. That is Self-esteem and happiness are highly negatively correlated which indicates that when self- esteem increases the happiness decreases and when the self-esteem decreases the happiness increases. The study also finds that statistically significant differences on family type are not found in self-esteem and happiness.

Many researchers found that high self-esteem leads to a happy life. Generally self-esteem has been found to be associated with happiness (e.g. Baumeister et al., 2003). However a research also found that the magnitude of the association between self-esteem and happiness can be affected by many factors. So in the present study we found a negative relation between Self-esteem and happiness. So we can understand that a person with low self-esteem can be experience happiness because of other factors. We can assume that the majority of Samples were extraverted in nature. Even though they have low self-esteems they are in positive mood in most of the time. They may be more social and outgoing, which boost their happiness but not their self-esteem. When people have high self-esteem they feel unhappy. It may be because of people

feel that they have not reached their goals or what they want even though they have high self-worth. So despite past research that shows high positive correlations of self-esteem and happiness our study gives further information's that they both can also be negatively correlated.

This study can be applied to many areas especially in case of students. That is this research can use to improve the self-esteem and happiness of Students by giving proper strategies from the research. It is also applicable among different relationships. Because self-esteem acts as a predictor of happiness and that affects play a mediating role in that relationship.

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