

Self Esteem and Altruism among adolescents

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Abstract:

Self esteem is a person's in general sense of worth about his or herself, while altruism refers to a selfless or pro social behavior done for someone else without intention of gain. The objective of this research was to investigate the quantitative relation between self esteem and altruism in junior college students and qualitative study with respect to self esteem of students with one of the parents in defense services. The research methodology was in accordance with convenience sampling where the sample consisted of 432 students of junior college (225 males and 207 females) aged between 16 and 17 years. Rosenberg's self esteem and Rai - Singh's Altruism self report questionnaires were used for assessing these two parameters. For statistical analysis a t-test was used for determining a significant difference if any, between the two groups of males and females. Mean of self esteem and altruism scores for males was found to be 21.88 (SD 3.77) and 38.49 (SD 7.52) respectively while scores on self esteem and altruism for females were found to be 22.36 (SD 3.61) and 38.11 (SD 7.22) respectively. t value for self esteem was found to be 8.72 and for altruism it was 3.97 which were significant at 0.05 levels.

Key words: Self esteem, Altruism, Adolescents

Introduction:

Self esteem is one of the most studied parameter in psychology and other behavioral sciences.

According to Rosenberg, 1965, self esteem is either favorable or unfavorable attitude towards the self. He developed a scale originally to measure adolescents' global feeling of self worth or acceptance. As per Rosenberg et al (1995) out of two types of self-esteems, global self esteem is more relevant to psychological well being than the specific self esteem which is much superior interpreter of school performance. Self esteem may be considered as a tool for personal evaluation, sense of own worth, value, importance or capabilities (Mayers and Mayers, 1992). Various personality traits are also found to have correlation with self esteem and with many other aspects of life such as introversion, extraversion, depression, suicidal ideation, confidence etc. Out of many positive personality traits, altruism is one to have high correlation with self esteem.

Altruism is considered to be selfless behavior which is conducted without any intend of benefit. It is a pro social behavior or simply an unselfish behavior or action done for the sake of someone else without any personal gain. In other words people do not expect any reward or return for that deed. According Baston, 2011, altruism refers to any behavior that is designed to increase another person's welfare, and particularly those actions that do not seem to provide a direct reward to the person who performs them. According to Irani (2018), the origin of altruism is empathy. It generates good feeling. Thus because of helping behavior both the recipient and giver are benefited.

Adolescence is one of the crucial developing stages in human life. According to World Health Organization, adolescence is that stage of development which occurs after childhood and before adulthood. Adolescence is that period where an individual struggles to deal with remarkable and complex changes in life. It is a turbulent and mostly confused state of mind where the person doesn't remain a child anymore nor has entered adulthood completely. Today's adolescents are from 'Gen Z' who are referred to be born after 1996. They are grown up in technological age and are experiencing true global culture. Many of them have been baby seated by televisions, video games, mobile games, and like. They seem to have more virtual friends than real. Most of them evaluate their self worth from else's lens.

According to Cornell University Professor Anthony Burrow; self esteem is contingent on what other people say and think. Few 'likes' or 'dislikes' on photos or posts shared on social media may shake the self esteem. Being in a nuclear family with either no or very few number of siblings, they may face issues in sharing their belongings as well as space too. Biological, social, cognitive, emotional and environmental characteristics of an individual influence self esteem and overall development.

Review of Literature:

A cross cultural study on personality processes and individual differences with respect to age and gender differences in self esteem by Bleidorn, et al (2016) consistently reported males with higher self esteem than females. According to the research published in 2016 by American Psychological Association, males were seen to possess higher self esteem than females. Moksnes and Espnes have reported boys having higher self esteem than girls in 2013. Feiingold, Kilng, et al (1999) also showed that the self esteem of males is more than females. King, et al (1999) reported evidences of males having

higher global self esteem than females in one meta-analysis on gender differences in self esteem. Similarly studying self esteem and life satisfaction in adolescents,

Altruism is one of the important pillars of positive psychology. World Health Organization's theme for year 2017 was 'Depression-Let's Talk'. As per their statistics more than 300 million people are living with depression. There are large number of research studies which show high negative correlation among depression and altruism. Telzer and colleagues, 2014 showed that teenagers who get pleasure in altruistic activities are less likely to get in depression. Thus having altruistic nature can help avoiding depression.

Branas, et al (2016) found evidences to support that women are expected to be more altruistic than men. Similarly Simmons and Emanuele reported in 2007 that on an average women are predicted more to donate. While the study by Egaly et al in 1986 showed that while encountering with strangers, men helped more than women. It has also been shown as per social role theory of gender and helping that the altruistic nature of males and female vary. Males come forward to help where there is brave or courageous basis while women take initiative when there is need of nurture and care.

This study tries to find out the relation between self esteem and altruism among adolescents in Pune district. After having comprehensive review of literature following hypotheses were put forth -

1. There will be a difference in self esteem among males and females
2. There will be a difference in altruism among males and females
3. There will be positive correlation between self-esteem and altruism

Methodology:

Sample:

The participant sample was students of eleventh or twelfth standard studying in Dr D Y Patil Junior college, Pimpri, Pune. Total sample of 432 students was collected using convenience sampling method and consisted of 225 males and 207 females.

Tools:

The following tools were utilized in the present study.

Rosenberg's self esteem scale: This scale was used. It is a self report measure for assessment of global self esteem. Internal consistency for the same is from 0.77 to 0.88 while the test retest reliability is from 0.82 to 0.85. Criterion validity is 0.55 and is well-matched with Coopersmith self esteem inventory. The scale has score range from 0 to 30 with average score from 15 to 25. Higher score indicates high self esteem. The score below 15 refers to low self esteem.

Altruistic attitude: This scale was developed by S.N. Rai and S. Singh. The reliability coefficient of the scale is .84; test-retest reliability is .92. Concurrent validity is .63. The score ranges from 0 to 60 with average score 30. Score classification is different for males and females.

Qualitative study was carried out in the form of face to face interview with the participants. They were asked few open ended questions which included their experiences, problems they faced, difficulties while making friends, relation with, etc.

Results:

After data collection and applying statistical analysis following results were obtained.

Table I: T test for Self Esteem

S.N.		Mean	S D	t
1	Males	21.88	3.77	8.72*
2	Females	22.36	3.61	

The mean values show that male and female participants have average self esteem. Table I shows that the t-value for self esteem is 8.72 which is greater than the critical values at 0.01 and .05 confidence level. It shows that the hypothesis, there will be a difference in self esteem among males and females is accepted.

The findings of this paper are in accordance with these results where there is significant difference among self esteem of males and female participants. It shows that the hypothesis is accepted. The scores on global self esteem were found to be in 'average' category where the mean values for males and females are 21.88 and 22.36 respectively as they lie in the range of 15 to 25 for Rosenberg's self esteem scale. Though there is significant difference among self esteem of males and females, the overall self esteem was not very high, rather it was just average.

Table II: T test for Altruism

S.N.		Mean	S D	t
1	Males	38.61	7.29	3.97*
2	Females	38.11	7.22	

The mean values show that male and female participants have high altruism in both males and females is found to be high. Table II shows that the t-value for altruism is 3.97 which is significant at 0.01 and .05 confidence level. It shows that the hypothesis, there will be a difference in altruism among males and females is accepted.

This study finds high altruistic nature in both males as well as in females. There are large number of research studies which show high

negative correlation among depression and altruism. Telzer and colleagues, 2014 showed that teenagers who get pleasure in altruistic activities are less likely to get in depression. Thus having altruistic nature can help avoiding depression. Branäs, et al (2016) found evidences to support that women are expected to be more altruistic than men. Similarly Simmons and Emanuele reported in 2007 that on an average women are predicted more to donate.

Table III: Correlation among Self Esteem and Altruism in males and females

	Self Esteem	Altruism
Self Esteem	1	- .06
Altruism	- .06	1

Table III shows a very weak negative correlation between self esteem and altruism. Hence the hypothesis, there will be positive correlation between self-esteem and altruism is rejected.

Few Observations:

After interviewing participants especially whose one of the parents was in military various answers were noted. They are as follows -

1. Some stated that they were unable to make deep rooted friends because of frequent transfers of parent.
2. Few of the students experienced the partial treatment by teachers as per the ranking of parent in the defense service.
3. Many students especially girls faced problem in making friendship with those classmates whose parents differ drastically in designation.
4. Almost everyone mentioned that they were unhappy when their parent was absent during the time of achievements, school competitions, exams and also during tough times.

5. Most of the participants pointed out that fathers being authoritative used to expect obedience from their wards. They added further that to obey in childhood was part of routine, but when entered college, they do not want to agree with father on all fronts just for the sake of agreeing.
6. All the participants mentioned that being father on deployment for long duration, they feel emotionally close to their mothers.
7. Few participants affirmed to join military later as an occupation.

Conclusion:

There is significant difference in self-esteem of males and females.

There is significant difference in altruism of males and females.

There is high altruism among males and females.

There is weak negative correlation between self-esteem and altruism

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