

## **“Correlates of Personality and Self-Esteem among Youth”**

**Dr.Kalyani Kenneth**

*Associate Professor, School of Counselling,  
Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development, Sriperumbudur-*

---

**Abstract:** *This study investigates the correlation of self-esteem with that of personality type of youth boys and girls who came to attend the one month Leadership Internship program me organized by RGNIYD during June 2012.The sample comprised of 41 youths from all over the country. To measure the variables under study, participants were administered with standardized tools available. To determine whether the participant was neurotic or extroverted, the Eysenck Personality Inventory was used; the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to determine the self-esteem of participants. The data's thus collected were statistically treated with coefficient of correlation to find the relationship between the two variables under study. Alternate directional hypothesis is framed to be proved i.e “Self-esteem will be positively correlated with extraversion and negatively with neuroticism”. Results show a significant positive correlation of self-esteem and personality (Extrovert Personality) of the participants.*

**Key Words:** *Adolescent, co-relation, personality, self esteem, youth.*

---

### **I. Introduction:**

August 12th was declared International Youth Day by The United Nations. "Youth is defined as any member of society between the ages of 15 and 34" - World Health Organization. "Youth... those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years." - United Nations General Assembly. "...youth ... comprises persons between the age of 15 and 24. It is used by ... the World Bank" - World Bank.

"This world demands the qualities of youth: not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the life of ease."

#### **Robert Kennedy.**

All youth experience a range of challenges as they changeover into adulthood, but youth in care face an exceptional set of circumstances. They haven't had the same opportunities, experiences and role models as youth in the general population. Youth in care have poorer health, especially mental health, and have limited education and employment options as they grow older.

Considering the everyday world of face-to-face encounters, the commonplace activities in these encounters - greeting, discussing, joking, negotiating, guiding, and the like - make up the drapery (material) of an individual's social world. Individuals of all societies move through life in terms of a continuous series of social interaction. It is in the context of such social encounters that the individual articulates the significant elements of his culture, whether they are matters of economics, social status, personal values, self-image, or religious belief.

#### **Self-Esteem**

Perhaps the simplest definition of self-esteem is found in the New Webster's Dictionary<sup>1</sup> [42], which say that self-esteem is "satisfaction with oneself." In psychology, self-esteem or self-worth includes a person's subjective appraisal of himself or herself as intrinsically positive or negative to some degree 2[43]. Generally, self-esteem is described as a personal evaluation that an individual makes of her or himself, their sense of their own worth, value, importance, or capabilities 3, 4 [44, 45].

People's self-evaluation, whether explicit or implicit, are apparently formed through interaction with significant others. According to theories in the tradition of symbolic interactions, people develop a sense of self on the basis of how other people treat them, and according to the sociometer theory of self-esteem, people's self-esteem is formed through their interactions with others 5 [48]. Individuals with low self-esteem have been reported to have repeatedly experienced perceived interpersonal rejection. Conversely, people with high self-esteem have experienced many subjectively successful or non-rejecting interpersonal relationships 5[48].

Recent studies indicate that inflating students' self-esteem in and of itself has no positive effect on any objective aspect of their lives. One study has shown that inflating self-esteem by itself can actually decrease grades 6 [50]. Global self-esteem has also been positively correlated with extraversion and negatively with neuroticism 7 [51] and therefore has particular relevance to experiences of subjective well-being.

Self Esteem is the opinion of an individual about himself and indebtedness of his worth and importance. It depends on his attitude especially how he values himself as a person. It also depend on other areas particularly job, the purpose of life, independency, Place in the world, potential success, strength and weaknesses, Social status, and how he relate himself with others.

Self-esteem basically depends on an individual’s confidence and satisfaction about his skills and abilities, and it is usually achieved through experiences of personal success. Self-esteem expedites an individual to cope up with difficult challenges when it arise and give a faith to overcome it.

An individual develop his self esteem from his family. Family members play a very vital role in the personality formation of an individual. High parental self esteem influences the personality of a child. The school environment also plays an important role in the development and the creation of self esteem among the children. People who have high self esteem have low self destructive behavior. Self Esteem can be improved through proper socialization.

Some people always feel inferior and unable to face the impediments in their life. They always be subservient and accept whatever others are saying. This kind of attitude will loosen their self respect and confidence. Others will take advantage of their demerits. In this situation they need to avoid the company of such people and should be able to find the people who will support them and give value to their abilities.

Low self-esteem in adolescence and young adulthood is a risk factor for negative outcomes in important life domains. For example, Trzesniewski et al. (2006) found that low self-esteem during adolescence predicts poorer mental and physical health, worse economic well-being, and higher levels of criminal activity in young adulthood. Similarly, other studies found that low self-esteem prospectively predicts antisocial behavior, eating disturbances, depression, and suicidal ideation (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2005; McGee & Williams, 2000; Orth, Robins, & Roberts, 2008). Research findings thus suggest that the development of self-esteem—which is defined as “a person’s appraisal of his or her value” (Leary & Baumeister, 2000, p. 2)—may have significant consequences for life outcomes. However, the normative pattern of self-esteem development and the factors that affect it are still unclear.

Self esteem is the corner stone of triumph. However low self esteem has two faces. One is the personality that seems to always be the under achiever with a negative attitude about their life. The other face is the person who seems very confident, very control, very opinionated, positive feature, and often has high leadership qualities. Self esteem always depends upon the personality of an individual. Hence, the researcher felt the need to study the relationship between self-esteem and personality.

### **Personality**

It is evident that there are individual differences in social behavior. People have conventionally been distinguished in terms of such personality traits as extroversion or dominance. According to the Columbia Encyclopedia<sup>8</sup> [52] personality refers to the patterns of behavior, thought, and emotion unique to an individual, and the ways they interact to help or hinder the adjustment of a person to other people and situations. Numerous theories have attempted to explain human personality. In recent years, trait theories have arisen with the object of determining aspects of personality that compel an individual to respond in a certain way to a given situation. Objections to trait theories point out that behavior is largely situation dependent, and that such traits as "honesty" are not especially helpful in characterizing personality and behavior. Despite such objections, trait theories have been popular models for quantifying personality<sup>8</sup> [52]. Eysenck<sup>9</sup>[53] has proposed three fundamental dimensions of personality: extroversion-introversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. Extroversion-introversion includes the trait of sociability, which can also be related to emotion (e.g., interest, as expressed toward people, versus shyness). Neuroticism includes emotionality defined, as in temperament theory, as nonspecific negative emotional responsiveness.

According to Eysenck's Personality Inventory test, an introvert is associated with controlled behaviors, seriousness, unenthusiastic and reliability. He does not act on impulse nor does he like excitement. An extrovert, on the other hand, is associated with sociable tendencies, optimistic, aggressiveness and impulsive behaviors. He does not keep his feelings under control nor does he like to do things by himself<sup>10</sup> [54, p.180]. Extroverts appear to be more open to change their judgments under the influence of prestige suggestions. However, when an introvert encounters an extrovert with different views on a controversial issue, the introvert is more likely to be persuaded to modify his position <sup>10</sup>[54, p.205].

Studies on differences in communication style between extraverts and introverts, suggest that people who are extraverts speak more rapidly, using higher pitch, and give more feedback than introverts<sup>11,12</sup> [55, 56]. Introverts have also been found to be more likely to take the role of the “interviewer” in dyadic situations<sup>12</sup> [56]. According to Argyle<sup>13</sup> [57] several studies have confirmed that extraverts gaze more frequently, with longer glances, especially while talking, than introverts.

Self-esteem, a person’s positive or negative evaluation of him- or herself, has been recognized as a predictor of social problems in the recent research of psychological and social development (Donahue &

Benson, 1995; Mecca, Smelser, & Vasconcellos, 1989; Mruk, 1995). Past research studies have found direct links between low self-esteem and substance abuse, unprotected sex, criminal behaviours, particular personality disorders, depression, and suicide. Self-esteem can be used to predict possible occurrences of depression (Mruk, 1995; Nunley, 1996). In view of the fact that the link between self-esteem and depression/suicide could have fatal consequences, this research study wished to further investigate self-esteem. Researchers who study suicide assert that when the protective shield of self-esteem is low, depression is more likely to sneak in (Mruk, 1995). Extreme cases of low self-esteem can be deadly because depressed adolescents are especially prone to considering the option of suicide and following through with it (Mruk, 1995; Nunley, 1996). Some research that estimates that up to 5% of adolescents experience the symptoms of depression and severe depression occurs in “one in fifty school children” (Nunley, 1996). Currently suicide is the third leading cause of death in adolescents between the ages of 15-24, four times what it was twenty-five years ago (Donahue & Benson, 1995; Nunley, 1996).

Because of the high correlation between low self-esteem and depression and the resulting risk of suicide among today’s adolescents, more research needs to be done on self-esteem and other factors that might correlate to it. Because social identity and social context have been linked to self-esteem, the current study considered the relationship self-esteem has with personality.

This study investigates the correlation of self-esteem with that of personality type of youth boys and girls who came to attend the one month Leadership Internship programme organised by RGNIYD during June 2012. The sample comprised of 41 youths from all over the country. To measure the variables under study, participants were administered with standardized tools available. To determine whether the participant was neurotic or extroverted, the Eysenck Personality Inventory was used; the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to determine the self-esteem of participants. The data’s thus collected were statistically treated with coefficient of correlation to find the relationship between the two variables under study. Alternate directional hypothesis is framed to be proved. Results show a significant correlation of self-esteem and extravert personality of the participants.

### **Objective**

To find out if there is any relationship between the level of self-esteem and type of personality among youth.

### **Hypothesis**

Based on the review of previous literature the researcher for the current research framed the following alternate directional hypothesis i.e “self-esteem will be positively correlated with extraversion and negatively with neuroticism”.

### **Participants**

Participants consisted of students those who enrolled themselves to attend the one month Leadership Internship program me organized by RGNIYD during June 2012. The sample comprised of 41 youths from all over the country. The study was open to both male and female participants of any ethnicity. There were a total of 41 participants. Of these, there were 20 (49%) male participants and 21 (51%) female participants.

### **Design**

This study is a non-experimental co relational study that looked at the relationship between self-esteem and personality.

### **Materials**

For this study, the Eysenck Personality Inventory and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used.

### **Eysenck Personality Inventory**

Personality of the respondents was measured using the Eysenck Personality Inventory. This questionnaire has 24 items measuring two traits namely extrovert and neurotic. Responses to the 24 items were rated on alternate response of ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ which were yielding scores between 0 and 24, with higher scores and higher sten scores indicating dominant personality trait.

### **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale**

Self-esteem was assessed with the 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965); a commonly used and well-validated measure of self-esteem (cf. Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991; Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001). Responses were measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*), yielding scores between 10 and 40 with higher scores indicating higher self-esteem. With a mean of 3.25 (*SD* = 0.42) averaged across the assessments. The alpha reliability ranged from .85 to .88 across

assessments. A self-esteem score between 10-20 indicates low self-esteem, 21-30 indicates moderate self-esteem, and a score between 31-40 indicates high self-esteem.

**Procedure**

This study is a non-experimental co relational study that looked at the relationship between self-esteem and personality. Self-esteem in this study is defined according to Rosenberg as “a positive or negative attitude toward a particular object, namely, the self” (Mruk, 1995). Self-esteem was operationalized as the score from 10 to 40 on Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale with 40 signifying the highest self-esteem score (University of Maryland, 2000). The participants of the present research were given with the questionnaire on Eysenck’s Personality and Rosenberg’s Self Esteem Scale. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire in a group set up giving suitable instructions. The tools were administered one after the other with lunch break in between the two sessions. The filled in response sheets were collected and the questions were analyzed using the respective scoring key. The data thus arrived was put to statistical analysis in order to see if they confirmed the research question.

**II. Results**

To measure the relationship between the personality trait and the self esteem of the youth participants, Co-efficient of correlation as a statistical measure was used. Results show a significant correlation of self-esteem and extravert personality of the participants. The Pearson correlation between the two variables is displayed in Table 1. The hypothesis which predicted that “self-esteem will be positively correlated with extraversion and negatively with neuroticism” is supported by the co relational analysis. This correlation  $r = .539^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$  is found to be statistically significant.

**Table: 1. Correlation between Personality and Self-esteem among youth.**

		Neu	Ext	Self Esteem
Neu	Pearson Correlation	1	-.138	-.232
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.390	.144
	N	41	41	41
Ext	Pearson Correlation	-.138	1	.539**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.390		.000
	N	41	41	41
Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.232	.539**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.144	.000	
	N	41	41	41

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**III. Discussion**

Significant correlation is found between Extraversion Personality type and Self-esteem of the youth. Thus the alternate directional hypothesis framed is supported. No-significant correlation is observed between Neuroticism Personality type and Self-esteem of the youth. Hence, the alternate directional hypothesis framed is partially supported. These results are unlike one of the study results, in which the correlation between extravert personality and self-esteem was positively correlated and neuroticism and self-esteem was negatively correlated. One reason for the difference in correlation significance in the two studies is that the, Study sample size is much larger than the current study (kalyani, 2012). There is reason to believe that in actuality there may be a statistically significant correlation between neuroticism and self-esteem, but it would be too small to consider practically significant.

**IV. Limitations**

Only two variables are taken into consideration in this current research namely personality and self-esteem. Many other related variables can be studied in future. The sample that came to attend the Leadership Internship programme alone was included in the present study. Hence, Sample size is too small. Enlarged sample can be studied in further research. Only co relational analysis is been done in the present research. Many other statistical results can also be made.

### References

- [1]. G. K. Jonsson, 2000, Relation between self-esteem, personality dimensions of extraversion and emotionality and real-time patterning of social interaction. In L.P.J.J Noldus (Ed.), *Measuring Behavior 2000*, 3rd International Conference on Methods and Techniques in Behavioral Research. Nijmegen (pp. 167-168), Netherlands.
- [2]. F. R. Rosenberg & M. Rosenberg, 1978, Self-Esteem and Delinquency. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 7, 279-291.
- [3]. T. DeHart, B. W. Pelham & H. Tennen, 2006, what lies beneath: Parenting style and implicit self-esteem. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 42, 1–17.
- [4]. D. Watson, J. Suls & J. Haig, 2002, Global self-esteem in relation to structural models of personality and affectivity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 185–197.
- [5]. G. Wilson, 1977, Extroversion/Introversion. In T. Blass (Ed.) *Personality Variables in Social Behavior*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- [6]. Maykel Verkuyten; 1995. Self-Esteem, Self-Concept Stability and Aspects of Ethnic Identity among Minority and Majority Youth in the Netherlands, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, Vol. 24,
- [7]. G. Riva, M.T. Anguera, B.K. Wiederhold and F. Mantovani (Eds.) 2006, **From Communication to Presence: Cognition, Emotions and Culture towards the Ultimate Communicative Experience. Festschrift in honor of Luigi Anolli** IOS Press, Amsterdam, (c) All rights reserved – <http://www.emergingcommunication.com>
- [8]. Gudberg K. Jonsson, 2011, Personality and Self-Esteem in Social Interaction, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, American Psychological Association, Vol. 101, No. 3, 607–619.
- [9]. H. J. Eysenck & S. B. G. Eysenck, 1991, *Manual of the Eysenck Personality Scales (EPS Adult)*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- [10]. Dumont, M., and M. A. Provost. 1999. Resilience in adolescents: Protective role of social support, coping strategies, self-esteem, and social activities on experience of stress and depression. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 28: 343-363.
- [11]. Pelkonen, M., M. Marttunen, J. Kaprio, T. Huurre, and H. Aro. 2008. Adolescent risk factors for episodic and persistent depression in adulthood. A 16-year prospective follow-up study of adolescents. *Journal of Affective Disorders* 106: 123-131.
- [12]. Roberts, J. E., I. H. Gotlib, and J. D. Kassel. 1996. Adult attachment security and symptoms of depression: The mediating roles of dysfunctional attitudes and low self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 70: 310-320.
- [13]. Trzesniewski, K., B. Donnellan, T. Moffitt, R. Robins, R. Poulton, and A. Caspi. 2006. Low self-esteem during adolescence predicts poor health, criminal behavior, and limited economic prospects during adulthood. *Developmental Psychology* 42: 381-390.
- [14]. Swann, W. B., Jr., C. Chang-Schneider, and K. Larsen McClarty. 2007. Do people self-view matter? Self-concept and self-esteem in everyday life. *American Psychologist* 62: 84-94.
- [15]. Nunley, K.F.(1996). The Relationship of self-esteem and Depression in Adolescence Retrieved February 8,2001, from the world wide web:<http://www.dmunley.com/depressi.htm>
- [16]. Mecca, A.M. Smelser, N.J. & Vasconcellos, J (Eds.), (1989). *The Social Importance of Self-Esteem*. Berkeley: University of California Press.