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Relation of self-esteem with five personality factors and aggression among youth

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Abstract

Self-esteem is a subjective sense of personal value and worth of themselves. It is crucial in the life of an individual. The importance of personal value gives a powerful sense of living. The term self-esteem is pronounced differently in the population, like self-respect, self-regard, self-identity, ego, etc. These terms vary from individual to individual. A simple question arises: What factors are responsible for determining self-esteem. In this study, two crucial psychological constructs (Personality traits and Aggression) were taken, which might be associated with self-esteem. Data were taken from 120 students having an age range of 17 to 24. Results describe a strong association and significant role of personality traits and Aggression in determining youth self-esteem.

Keywords: Self-esteem, self-identity, aggression, neuroticism, extraversion

Introductions

According to Dweck (2008) ^[18], large number of self-esteem and personality investigations were conducted on school and college students. In 1985, Demo expressed that researchers take self-esteem as a central part of any research studies regarding inspecting personality. According to Demo (1985) ^[17], a study on self-esteem can be haphazard since estimation systems have a different scope. For some situations, there are non-existent or powerless relationships among markers. Self-esteem is a focal construct in social, personality, development, and individual psychology, and its contribution to the psychological system has been read for almost a century (Greenier, Kernis, and Waschull, 1995) ^[23]. The importance of this concept is constantly misrepresented based on its level. A high level of self-esteem is always a reason for the good, and a low level of self-esteem is always a reason for malicious (Manning, Bear and Minke, 2006) ^[27]. Self-esteem evaluates personal feelings or preferences as good or bad and how they analyze their sense of self-worth (Blascovich and Tomaka, 1991) ^[8]. Moreover, self-esteem is taken as a general indicator of self-evaluation, including psychological attributes and emotions, which are essential in global assessment (Murphy, Stosny, and Morrel, 2005) ^[34]. Wang and Ollendick (2001) ^[46] state that self-esteem involves self-evaluation with enthusiastic responses about oneself.

Personality is a vast topic, but in this research, the focus has been on the Big Five Personality Factors, also known as "Big 5" or acronymically known as "OCEAN." Allport (1961) ^[3] expressed that personality is a psychophysical framework that includes the specific relation of one's thought, personal qualities, and conduct. The personality can likewise be characterized as a mixture of different attributes that an individual has (Weinberg and Gould, 1999) ^[49]. In Social Learning Theory, Bandura (1977) ^[4] has mentioned that a person's characters are developing through both nature (genetic, by birth) and nurture (environment). He also highlighted that personality might remain the same or change over time (Bandura, 1986) ^[5]. This conviction gradually turned into establishing the big five personality theory (Dweck, 2008) ^[18]. Later on, this theory was developed by different analysts like Norman, Smith, Goldberg, McCrae, and Costa. These five important components of this theory are Neuroticism (emotional instability), Extraversion, Openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Each individual encapsulates each of the five qualities. What separates everybody is the scope of every attribute—individual self-esteem is a significant contributor to a wide variety of human traits. More research has been done to find out the connection between personality and self-esteem, which contributes to work motivation, job performance, and job satisfaction (Edworthy & Cole, 2012) ^[19]. Therefore it is also essential to learn about students' personalities and self-esteem.

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This is because one can perform better as a student by being aware of their self-esteem, which can affect their personality (Cast & Burke, 2002)^[14].

In any case, the other exploration has revealed that self-esteem is emphatically associated with essential elements of self-esteem, for instance, the "Big Five" (Erdle, Gosling, and Potter, 2009; Watson, Suls, and Haig, 2002)^[20, 47]. Emphatic association of self-esteem has been observed with each of the big five personality factors. Self-esteem has been emphatically associated with each of the Big Five personality variables (Robins *et al.*, 2001)^[36]. Self-esteem is associated contrarily with only the neurotic dimension. It is undoubtedly related to the rest of the dimensions (extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, and agreeableness) of the Big Five personality factors (Watson *et al.*, 2002)^[47]. A new report by Swickert *et al.* (2004)^[42] detailed a critical aberrant impact of extraversion on self-esteem utilizing positive effects. Consequently, the authors observed a positive and robust impact on extraversion on self-esteem. Various examinations have researched the relationship of emotional elements and personality of an individual with self-esteem (Francis, 1996; Swickert, Hittner, Kitos, and Cox-Fuenzalida, 2004)^[21, 42]. Neuroticism and extraversion generally show opposite associations with self-esteem (Watson *et al.*, 2002)^[47].

The general definition of aggression alludes to a scope of practices that can bring about either harm physically or mentally to oneself, others, and objects of the environment. Baron and Richardson (1994)^[6] characterize aggression as any demonstration that hurts another person who spurred to avoid such harm. Sometimes aggression has been separated into two-component one is adequate, and the other is instrumental aggression (Bushman and Anderson, 2001)^[10]. The affective component of aggression is related to negative emotion; generally, anger and instrumental aggression are especially goal-directed is moderate without influence.

Self-esteem is the individual's identity, and sometimes aggression protects that identity. Adolescence is a very critical time for the formation of self-esteem. Both guardians and instructors can help an individual shape their self-esteem. The reflection of self-esteem of the adolescents can be noticed in the disposition and conduct of both schools and at home (Mogonea and Mogonea, 2014)^[32]. Along these lines, young age is simply the primary period for advancing self components like self-identity and self-esteem. Low self-esteem might play a role in the emotional deregulation of adolescence (Lin, Tang, Yen, Ko, Huang, Liu, *et al.*, 2008)^[26].

In contrast, a high level of self-esteem contributes to positive growth and resilience (Moksnes and Espnes, 2012)^[33]. One side of the researcher's discussion has argued that people with low self-esteem are inclined to genuinely externalize issues such as antisocial activity and introverted conduct (Fergusson and Horwood, 2002; Rosenberg, Schooler, and Schoenbach, 1989; Sprott and Doob, 2000)^[22, 38, 41]. However, others have scrutinized this issue and noticed that few investigations have neglected to discover a connection between externalizing problems and lower level of self-esteem (Bynner, O'Malley, and Bachman, 1981; Jang and Thornberry, 1998; McCarthy and Hoge, 1984)^[12, 24, 31] or between the lower level of general self-esteem results of aggression (Bushman and Baumeister, 1998; Kirkpatrick, Waugh, Valencia, & Webster, 2002; Twenge and Campbell, 2003)^[9, 25, 44].

Rationale of the study

The whole life of a person revolves around his personal identity, and this identity is achieved through self-evaluation by the individual of one's self. There is numerous factor that refines this personal identity. Some people have a good sense of self, but some have less. The primary motive behind this study is to know the association and role of personality traits. The whole aspect of individuals is inclined, and aggression is another aspect that expresses a bunch of negative emotions in determining self-esteem. Some researches show that aggression protects an individual's identity or self-esteem.

Objective

To analyze the relationship between personality factors, aggression, and self-esteem among youth.

Find out the role of personality factors, aggression in self-esteem among youth.

Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between personality factors, aggression, and self-esteem among youth.

Personality factors and aggression play an essential role in the self-esteem of youth.

Method

Sample: A convenient sample of 120 participants was selected from Haryana between the ages of 17 to 24.

Design: Correlation design was adopted for the present study.

Measures

Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (Rosenberg 1965)^[37]: The scale measures an individual's self-worth with the help of 10 positive and negative feeling statements about himself. The scale is uni-dimensional in which each statement is rated on a four-point Likert scale in between strongly agree to disagree strongly—the internal consistency reliability of the test (Cronbach alpha. 81).

Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992)^[11]: The scale measures four crucial areas of aggression which are Physical Aggression (PA), Verbal Aggression (VA), Anger (A), and Hostility (H). The 29 statements are categorized in four areas of aggression, and the total of these statements gives a composite score of overall aggression. Responses were scored on a five-point scale that was highly uncharacteristic of me (1) to highly characteristic (5).

NEO-Five Factor Questionnaire (Costa & McCrae, 1992)^[16]. The test consists of 60 self-reported items to assess the five critical personality dimensions. The broad five dimensions of personality are termed OCEAN (openness, conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism). These dimensions are assessed through a five-point Likert scale between strongly disagree and strongly agree.

Procedure

For the present study, a convenient sample was taken from Haryana. Data was collected through Google form. The purpose of the study was cleared with participants after the participant's consent the link of Google form was shared with them. Instructions of each scale were written before the actual statement of each questionnaire. Google provides a

spreadsheet for every individual response. The compiled data were analyzed through SPSS.

Results and Discussion

The study's first objective is to describe the relationship between personality, aggression, and self-esteem. The Pearson correlation analysis results are shown in table no. 1. Results of table 1 demonstrate a significant association of big five personality traits, aggression, and self-esteem. Self-esteem found negatively associated with the total aggression ($r = -.25, p < .01$ level), physical aggression ($r = -.30, p < .01$ level), verbal aggression ($r = -.21, p < .05$ level), anger ($r = -.35, p < .01$ level), and hostility ($r = -.32, p < .01$ level). The first hypothesis is accepted based on the present results. The person who scores high on overall aggression and dimension of aggression shows a lower level of self-esteem. Findings supported by Weber and Kurpius (2011) [48] revealed a negative association between self-esteem and aggression of college-going students. Further research focused on the association of relational aggression with current internalizing problems (Achenbach, 1991) [2], delinquency in the community (Marsee *et al.*, 2011) [28], and anger and poor emotional adjustment (Marsee & Frick 2007) [29], proactive aggression-related with dispassionate attributes. Self esteem shows positive association with personality traits, extraversion ($r = .42, p < .01$ level), Openness to experience ($r = .17, p < .05$ level), Agreeableness ($r = .15, p < .05$ level), and conscientiousness ($r = .24, p < .01$ level), negatively associated with Neuroticism ($r = -.42, p < .01$ level). The characteristics associated with extroverts are generally full of energy, highly expressive, and outgoing by nature (Amirazodi and Amirazodi (2011) [1]. Extrovert people are also assertive and bold, which results in them being more engaged in many activities and civil associations. Their participation leads them to excel in many different situations, increasing their self-esteem level. Individuals high on openness tend to move out from their zone and constantly acquire a wide range of interests to have new experiences. According to Amirazodi and Amirazodi (2011) [1], students who are high on the trait of agreeableness are trustworthy, clear about their ideas, and very helpful. According to Muthu and colleagues (2010) [35], the traits of conscientiousness are linked with self-disciplined, self-control, and persistence, and these characteristics are also found in a high self-esteem individual. People who are high on conscientiousness always stand strong for their point of view and decisions and stick to their decisions until they can be. The person who is high on the above dimension of personality shows a greater level of self-esteem. In Contrast, the reverse link between neuroticism and self-esteem is supported by research. Researchers Teng and Liu (2013) [43] revealed that neurotic university students positively predict negative emotions such as depression and anxiety. Neurotics tend to overreact to certain stimuli and, most of the time, feel nervous in all types of situations. These negative symptoms reduce the self-esteem level of the individuals.

Table 1 shows positive and negative associations between dimensions of aggression and personality. Neuroticism shows positive association with overall aggression ($r = .36, p < .01$ level), and dimensions of aggression such as physical aggression ($r = .30, p < .01$ level), verbal aggression ($r = .26, p < .01$ level), anger ($r = .28, p < .01$ level), and hostility ($r = .15, p < .05$ level). People who are higher on the

neurotic dimension of personality show greater aggression. These expressions of aggressive behavior may differ in these individuals, but according to the results, they are aggressive in nature. Caprara *et al.* (1996) [13] and Ruiz *et al.* (2001) [39] found a positive association between neuroticism and aggression. A similar kind of relation between anger and neuroticism was studied by (Caprara *et al.* (1996) [13] & Martin *et al.*, 2000) [30]. Extraversion also show significant positive association with total aggression ($r = .15, p < .05$ level), physical aggression ($r = .12, p < .05$ level), and anger ($r = .10, p < .05$ level). Results revealed that extroverted individuals are showing more physical aggression, which includes the direct physical harm to the targeted individual and anger in which individuals are primarily disposed to respond aggressively when they face injustice, unfair criticism, or bad (van Goozen *et al.* 1994; Spielberger *et al.*, 1983) [45, 40]. People who are high on agreeableness shows concern about others behavior and easily shows trust on other people are found negatively associated with the total aggression ($r = -.30, p < .01$ level), physical aggression ($r = -.23, p < .01$ level), verbal aggression ($r = -.38, p < .01$ level) and ($r = -.17, p < .05$ level). Few studies show an inverse relationship between aggression and the dimension of the agreeableness of personality (Caprara *et al.*, 1996; Martin *et al.*, 2000; Ruiz *et al.*, 2001) [13, 30, 39]. Conscientiousness found positively associated with anger ($r = .15, p < .05$ level) and negatively associated with verbal aggression ($r = -.12, p < .05$ level). Self-disciplined and self-controlled behavior of these individuals positively related to anger and negatively related to verbal expression of aggression.

The results of table 2 fulfill the purpose of the second objective, which formulates to find out the contribution of dimensions of aggression and personality in the self-esteem of the defined sample. Dimensions of personality and aggression jointly contribute 36% in determining an individual's self-esteem. The personality dimension neuroticism shows a 17% negative contribution to the self-esteem of the individuals. People with neurotic traits indicate a low level of self-esteem; they evaluate themselves in negative aspects and, negatively blame their self-worth, possess excessive anxiety and depression (Teng and Liu 2013) [43]. On the other side dimension, extraversion shows 8%, and Conscientiousness shows 1% positive contribution in self-esteem. The overt behavior of extroverted people boosts their self-esteem and positively evaluates their efforts and self-worth.

The total aggression shows 5%, anger 3%, and physical aggression .04% negative contribution in the self-esteem of individuals. Participants with low self-esteem are more susceptible to increased self-abasement and depression (Cong, Tian, & Zhang, 2005) [15]. Baumeister *et al.* (1996) [7] suggested that escalated high self-esteem (as seen as a component of narcissism) strongly contributes to aggressive behavior and low self-esteem. Some research indicates that aggression sometimes protects individuals' identities. However, the high level of overall charge or a particular dimension of attack reduces self-esteem in any individual.

Conclusion

The result of the study describes the potent role of some personality dimensions and aggression in determining youth self-esteem. A lower level of self-esteem is a part of personality and is responsible for aggressive behavior. Some other potent factor-like (family structure, work environment, parameters of self-evaluation, etc.) that may play a role in

the determination of self-esteem can also be included in further studies for better understanding.

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