
RELATION BETWEEN SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND SELF ESTEEM AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

V. SELVA MEENAKSHI

Abstract: Self Esteem refers to one's attitude about oneself. It is the evaluation we make of ourselves. It can be negative or positive. People with high self esteem perceive themselves as good, competent, worthy etc; while those with low self esteem see themselves as unworthy, incompetent, etc. Socio Economic Status is the position held by the individual in the society. SES of the student is assessed by their family's economic status. Young child in the school does not aware of the SES significantly. The transition from the school to the college can be demanding. It creates awareness about the difference in the SES level of the individual. The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of SES on the self esteem of the college students. The sample consisted of the students from the 2nd and 3rd year between the age of 17 to 21 from a Engineering college and polytechnic college from Kanyakumari district. They were divided into low SES (157) and high SES (131). Rosenberg self esteem rating scale were used to assess the self esteem of the students. Analysis was done through SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). Chi-Square test was used to analyses the data. Inference and results were made based on the results of the analysis.

Keywords: College Students, Low and High Self Esteem, Low and High Socio Economic Status, .

Introduction: Self-Esteem is related to better health, less criminal behavior, lower levels of depression and, overall, greater success in life. Therefore, it's important to learn more about how the average person's self-esteem changes over time. "In general, education, income, health and employment status all affected levels of self-esteem. Four principles of self-esteem development are advanced to account for these conditional relations-social comparison process, reflected appraisals, self-perception theory, and psychological centrality. College students have many obstacles to overcome in order to achieve their optimal performance. It is important to the society that students should learn and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that will in turn make them contribute positively to the development of the general economy of any nation. Four theoretical ideas relevant to self-esteem formation will be considered: social comparison process, reflected appraisals, self perception theory, and psychological centrality. Socio Economic Status is a measure of an individual's or family's economic and social position based on education, income and social position based on education, income and occupation. It is such a strong predictor of health that an assessment of both physical and mental health would be incomplete without the consideration of socio economic status of its residents. Many contemporary scholars appear interested in SES because it serves as an indicator of the health of a social system or society, often measured against some egalitarian or meritocratic ideal. Another group of contemporary scholars seems interested in SES in order to rule out the long established effects of SES on various measures of well-being and life outcomes. For this group, SES is a nuisance variable; one that must be controlled for or eliminated as a potential explanation of research findings or theoretical arguments. Here, SES is of interest only so far as it eliminates effects that confound the exposures or treatments of different interest. A final point about the definition of SES revolves around the issue of qualifying social inequality. According to one study conducted by J.P. Robinson & P.R. Shaver (Eds)1973 Socio Economic Status (SES) has a small but significant relationship with self – esteem. Low self-esteem individuals, who blame themselves for their failures, perpetuate continued failure and negative self – evaluation which is threatening to both the individual and to the society. Students with high self – esteem contribute much to the self, family society and to the nation.

Objectives :

1. To study the relation between the Socio Economic Status and Self Esteem among college students
2. To investigate whether the low SES and high SES would influence self – esteem of college students

Hypotheses :

1. There will be a positive relationship between SES and Self Esteem
2. There will be a negative relationship between SES and Self Esteem
3. There will be no significant relationship between SES and Self Esteem

Method :

Participants: Participants in this study were the students from various department of K.N.S.K. engineering college and K.N.S.K. Polytechnic college. Convenience sampling method was used to collect data from 295 students. 7 data were disqualified due to incomplete details. Of the valid 288 data 255 were boys and 33 were girls. Their age ranged from 17 – 21 years with the mean age of 19.

Instruments : Rosenberg self –esteem rating scale was developed by Rosenberg (1965). The scale is a ten item Likert scale with items answered on a four point scale- from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The original sample which the scale was developed consisted of 5,024 High School Juniors and seniors from 10 randomly selected schools in New York State

Procedure : Permission was sought from the college authorities and consent was obtained from the students to participate in the study. Group of 25 – 30 were administered the assessment material at a time. The class was monitored and assisted by the researcher to ensure students work independently. Based on the information obtained from the students they were grouped into either of the categories : the low SES and high SES and using the Rosenberg rating scale they were grouped into students with low Self-esteem and high self- esteem

Statistical Analysis : Pearson’s Chi-square was used to determine the correlation between Socio economic status and self esteem among college students.

Results : The results of the study are as follows :

SES	Self Esteem		
		Low Self Esteem (<15)	High Self Esteem(>15)
	Low Middle Class	26	131
Upper Middle class	10	121	

Analysis done through **SPSS (i.e. Statistical Packages for Social Science) Output:**
 Statistical methodology used here is- **Chi-square test for independence of attributes)**

Table-1:

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
SES * SELFESTEEM	288	100.0%	0	.0%	288	100.0%

The above table shows that there are 288 samples were taken in our study and there are two qualitative variables, namely SES and Self Esteem were considered.

Table-2:

SES * SELFESTEEM Cross tabulation					
			SELFESTEEM		Total
			1	2	
SES	1	Count	26	131	157
		Expected Count	19.6	137.4	157.0
	2	Count	10	121	131
		Expected Count	16.4	114.6	131.0
Total		Count	36	252	288
		Expected Count	36.0	252.0	288.0

The above table-2, reveals the observed and expected frequencies.
 (i.e. count= observed frequencies, that we originally we observed &
 Expected count= expected frequencies, that is calculated by using formula)

Table-3:

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.203 ^a	1	.023		
N of Valid Cases ^b	288				

Table 3 reveals that, there is association between SES & Self esteem at 1% level of significance (since p-value = 0.23, which is greater than alpha=.01 i.e 1%), which implies that there is correlation between these two variables)

BUT, There is NO association between SES and Self Esteem at 5% level of significance (since p-value 0.023 is less than alpha = 0.05) which implies that, there is NO correlation between these qualitative variables.

Discussion : The data analysis has shown that there is no significant relationship between socio economic status and self-esteem. The literature on the relationship of social class to self - esteem is riddled with contradictions, showing positive, null and inverse relationships. (Morris Rosenberg University of Maryland Leonard I. Pearl in National Institute of Mental Health). After decades of research on both social class and self-esteem, it is

somewhat surprising to find so little firm knowledge about their relationship. William James ([1980] 1950, pp. 306-7) long ago noted” One may say, however, that the normal provocative of self feeling is one’s actual success or failure, and the good or bad actual position one holds in the world. However in the industrial era there is a vast difference in the socio economic status among the people. SES plays an important role in most part of the life like health, education, occupation, mental health etc. the data are surprisingly in consistent, at times showing no relationship (or even inverse relationship), at other times modest relationship, and at still other times moderate ones. The aim of this paper is to suggest that beneath this diversity is an underlying consistency which can be understood on theoretical grounds. This paper will be devoted to advancing certain theoretical reasons for expecting the relationship of

social class to self – esteem to vary across the age span and to examining these theoretical ideas in the light of empirical data. But, first, it is necessary to consider the empirical basis for the assumption that this relationship is less stronger among students than middle aged. From these findings, we may deduce that one reason social class has little effect on the self-esteem of students is that students are not yet exposed to the class-related occupational conditions that help to shape self-esteem. Furthermore, it is this feeling of economic superiority or inferiority that partly accounts for the relationship between social class and self esteem among students. Moreover this study purely rely on

socio economic status and other variables like family background, cultural back ground and other psychological issues, early experiences, parental evaluation are doesn't taken into account.

Conclusion: The study shows that there exists no relationship between SES and Self Esteem. The researchers found that people of all ages in satisfying and supportive relationships tend to have higher self esteem. So self esteem does not depend on SES alone. It is important to evaluate our own behavior to match the ideals or goals that have been set. So setting reasonable level of perfection may be a winning solution. This would keep the self-esteem intact.

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Mrs V. Selva Meenakshi/M.sc Psychology/University of Madras/
sakthidexter@gmail.com