

Relationship Between Psychological Well-Being and Self-Esteem Among Adolescents

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Abstract—Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage characterized by significant physical, emotional, social, and cognitive changes. During this period, psychological well-being and self-esteem emerge as important determinants of healthy personality development and overall adjustment. The present study aimed to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem among adolescents. A sample of 120 adolescent students studying in Classes XI and XII was selected through purposive sampling. Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Carol Ryff and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were administered to the participants. Data were analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem among adolescents. Students with higher levels of self-esteem exhibited better psychological well-being across various dimensions such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The study highlights the importance of fostering healthy self-esteem among adolescents to promote positive mental health and psychological adjustment.

Index Terms—Psychological Well-Being, Self-Esteem, Adolescents, Mental Health, Positive Psychology

I. INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has witnessed growing concern regarding the mental health and well-being of adolescents. Rapid technological advancement, academic competition, social media exposure, changing family structures, and socio-economic challenges have considerably influenced the psychological functioning of young individuals. Consequently, psychological well-being has become one of the central concerns of educators, psychologists, parents, and policymakers.

Psychological Well-Being (PWB) refers to the realization of one's potential, effective functioning, and positive psychological health. Carol Ryff (1989) conceptualized psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct comprising six dimensions: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance. Individuals possessing high psychological well-being tend to experience greater life satisfaction, resilience, emotional stability, and social competence.

Self-esteem is another significant psychological construct that plays a vital role in personality development. Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as an individual's overall evaluation of self-worth or self-value. Adolescents with positive self-esteem generally perceive themselves as capable, worthy, and competent. They demonstrate greater confidence, optimism, emotional stability, and adaptability. Conversely, low self-esteem is often associated with anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, poor academic performance, and psychological distress.

The relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem has attracted considerable attention among researchers. Positive self-evaluations contribute significantly to emotional health, life satisfaction, and effective coping. Self-esteem serves as an internal psychological resource that enables adolescents to handle developmental challenges successfully. Research findings suggest that individuals with higher self-esteem report better psychological well-being, stronger interpersonal relationships, and greater resilience in stressful situations.

Adolescence represents a sensitive phase in which identity formation, self-concept development, and social acceptance become major concerns. Therefore, understanding the association between psychological

well-being and self-esteem is essential for designing effective educational interventions, counseling programs, and mental health promotion strategies. The present study seeks to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem among adolescent students.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Ryff (1989) emphasized that psychological well-being extends beyond happiness and encompasses purposeful functioning and personal growth.

Ryff and Keyes (1995) confirmed the multidimensional structure of psychological well-being and highlighted its importance in promoting positive mental health.

Mruk (2006) reported that self-esteem serves as a major predictor of emotional adjustment and psychological health.

Mann et al. (2004) found that adolescents with high self-esteem demonstrated greater psychological resilience and social competence.

Chahal and Mehta (2019) observed a positive association between psychological well-being and life satisfaction among Indian adolescents.

Bhatia and Chadha (2018) reported that psychological well-being significantly contributes to positive mental health outcomes among adolescents.

Sharma et al. (2021) found that students with positive self-perceptions exhibited better emotional adjustment and psychological well-being.

The review of literature indicates a close association between psychological well-being and self-esteem; however, more research is needed in the Indian adolescent context.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of psychological well-being among adolescents.
2. To assess the level of self-esteem among adolescents.
3. To examine the relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem among adolescents.

Hypothesis

Assuming that other factors remain constant, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H₁: There exists a significant positive relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem among adolescents.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study adopted a descriptive correlational research design.

Sample

The sample consisted of 120 adolescents studying in Classes XI and XII from junior colleges in Nagpur city. The age range of participants was 16–19 years.

Tools Used for Data Collection

1. Psychological Well-Being Scale

Developed by Carol Ryff (1989), the scale measures six dimensions:

- Autonomy
- Environmental Mastery
- Personal Growth
- Positive Relations with Others
- Purpose in Life
- Self-Acceptance

The scale possesses satisfactory reliability and validity.

2. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

Developed by Rosenberg (1965), the scale consists of ten items measuring global self-esteem. It is one of the most widely used instruments for assessing self-worth and self-acceptance.

V. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The obtained scores were analyzed using:

- Mean
- Standard Deviation
- Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (r)

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The correlation coefficient between psychological well-being and self-esteem was found to be $r = .68$,

which is significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables.

Table 1 Relationship between Psychological Well-Being and Self-Esteem among Adolescents

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r
Psychological Well-Being	120	178.42	18.63	—
Self-Esteem	120	28.74	4.91	0.68**

$p < .01$

The findings suggest that adolescents possessing higher self-esteem tend to experience greater psychological well-being. Such students demonstrate stronger self-acceptance, confidence, autonomy, and ability to manage environmental challenges effectively. Positive self-esteem contributes to emotional stability and encourages adolescents to pursue meaningful goals and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

The findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by Rosenberg (1965), Ryff (1989), Mann et al. (2004), Chahal and Mehta (2019), and Sharma et al. (2021), which reported significant positive associations between self-esteem and psychological well-being.

The results indicate that self-esteem functions as an important psychological resource that supports positive mental health and adaptive functioning during adolescence.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Psychological well-being and self-esteem are positively related among adolescents.
2. Adolescents with higher self-esteem exhibit greater psychological well-being.
3. Self-esteem significantly contributes to emotional adjustment and positive mental health.
4. Enhancement of self-esteem may serve as an effective strategy for promoting psychological well-being among adolescents.
5. Schools should incorporate counseling, life-skills education, and positive psychology interventions to strengthen self-esteem and psychological well-being.

VIII. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Schools should conduct self-esteem enhancement programs.
2. Guidance and counseling services should focus on positive self-development.
3. Teachers should create supportive classroom environments that foster confidence and self-worth.
4. Parents should encourage autonomy and positive self-evaluation among adolescents.
5. Mental health awareness programs should be integrated into the school curriculum.

IX. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study was limited to adolescents studying in junior colleges.
2. The sample was confined to a specific geographical area.
3. Self-report measures were used for data collection.
4. Other variables such as socio-economic status and parental education were not considered.

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