

# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIFE SATISFACTION AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** The cardinal objective of present study is to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and self-esteem. To test the hypothesis, the sample was taken from 120 students (60 male students and 60 female) using purposive sampling method. The students were administered with the SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE and Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale out of the 130 data, those whose responses were complete for both scales alone were included and a final of 100 students (50 males & 50 females) were selected as the sample for the study. The collected data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-value. Results indicate that there is a positive relationship exists between Life satisfaction ( $r=0.3223$ ).

**Keywords:** Life satisfaction, self-esteem, College students, Kashmir.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The term self-esteem is used to describe a person's overall sense of self-worth or personal value. In other words, how much you appreciate and like yourself. Well you believe you'll handle future actions, performance, or abilities. Life satisfaction can reflect experiences that have influenced a person in a positive way. These experiences have the ability to motivate people to pursue and reach their goals. There are two kinds of emotions that may influence how people perceive their lives. Hope and optimism both consist of cognitive processes that are usually oriented towards the reaching of goals and the perception of those goals. Additionally, optimism is linked to higher life satisfaction, whereas pessimism is related to symptoms in depression. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) is a single scale that is used by UNESCO, the CIA, the New Economics Foundation, the WHO, the Veenhoven Database, the Latin barometer, the Afrobarometer, and the UNHDR to measure how one views his or her self-esteem, well-being and overall happiness with life. Previous modeling showed that positive views and life satisfaction were completely mediated by the concept of self-esteem, together with the different ways in which ideas and events are perceived by people. Several studies found that self-esteem plays a definite role in influencing life satisfaction. There is also a homeostatic model that supports these findings. A person's mood and outlook on life can also influence their perception of their own life satisfaction.

According to Seligman, the happier people are, the less they are focused on the negative. Happier people also have a greater tendency to like other people, which promotes a happier environment, which then correlates to a higher level of the person's satisfaction with his or her life. However, others have found that life satisfaction is compatible with profoundly negative emotional states like depression. Life-review therapy using Autobiographical Retrieval Practice for older adults with depressive symptoms, in a study carried out by Serrano JP, Latorre JM, Gatz M, and Montanes J, Department of psychology at Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, demonstrated that, with increased specificity of memories, individuals show decreased depression and hopelessness and increased life satisfaction. The test was designed to measure participants' ability to recall a specific memory, in response to a cue word, while being timed. Thirty cue words; including five words classified as 'positive' (e.g., funny, lucky, passionate, happy, hopeful), five as 'negative' (unsuccessful, unhappy, sad, abandoned, gloomy), and five as 'neutral' (work, city, home, shoes, family); were presented orally in a fixed, alternating order to each member of a focus group. To ensure that

the participants understood the instructions, examples were provided of both 'general' memories (e.g., summers in the city) and 'specific' memories (e.g., the day I got married). For each cue word, participants were asked to share a memory evoked by that word, of an event that should have occurred only once, at a particular time and place, and that lasted no longer than a day. If the person could not recall a memory within 30 seconds, then that cue instance was not counted. Two psychologists served as raters and independently scored the responses of each participant. Each memory was tagged either as 'specific' – if the recalled event lasted no more than one day – or, otherwise, as 'general'. The raters were not informed regarding the hypotheses of the study, the experimental (control) group's membership, nor the content of the pretest or post-test. Life satisfaction is a multidimensional concept related to psychological and environmental life conditions. The term life satisfaction can be split into two words—life and satisfaction. Life—Life is the state of functional activity peculiar to organized matter and especially to the portion of it such as, constituting an animal or plant before death (Oxford Dictionary, 1990). Life is what one's thinking makes it, one makes it human or hell through one's thinking (Bartlett, 1986). Life is an object to which the effect or ambition is directed. In fact, no life can be without a goal. Satisfaction—Satisfaction is a Latin word that means to make or do enough. Satisfaction is a word difficult to define. Satisfaction wholly depends upon the individuals' environment, caliber, behavior and nature. It is more concerned with mind than the material world. Life satisfaction is attainment of a desired end and fulfillment of essential conditions (Wolman, 1973). Satisfaction in life does not lie in the length of days, but in the use we make of them. A man may live long yet may get little from life. Thus satisfaction in life does not depend on number of years, but on will (Bartlett, 1977). It is a degree of contentment with one's own life style. Golden (1984) psychologically speaking satisfaction may occur on a conscious, preconscious and unconscious level and brings an organism to a balanced state. Satisfaction with one's life implies a contentment with 'or' acceptance of one's life circumstances, or the fulfillment of one's wants and needs for one's life as a whole. Life satisfaction is the conscious and cognitive judgment of one's life in which the criteria of judgment are up to the person (Pavot & Diener, 1993). It is frequently uttered that the persons sharing the view that life has a meaning, goal and direction, are the ones having optimal life satisfaction. Harleen (2004) opined that happiness enhances reasonable self-satisfaction. The three A's of happiness are achievement, acceptance and affection. So, to be truly satisfied and stimulated by life, a person needs to be intrinsically satisfied. It is thus apparent that a person can be happy only when he has a realistic appraisal of his abilities and potentials to develop realistic aspirations and expectations. And finally, an optimistic outlook and cheerful disposition towards life is a healthy outlook without which it is difficult to have satisfaction in life. Life satisfaction represents the ideas that the individual reaches about subjective well-being (subjective prosperity) and life quality in terms of facts taking part in his/her life (Dikmen, 1995). Perhaps the most famous investigation into the relationship of self-esteem to SES is Rosenberg and Pearlin's (1978) assessment of social class and self-esteem among children and adults. In an effort to clarify decades of inconclusive work on what many thought would be an obvious connection between one's social status or prestige and one's personal sense of worth, Rosenberg and Pearl suggested that age was a critical factor in teasing apart this relationship. Indeed, they found virtually no association between social class of parents (measured by the Hollingshead Index of Social Position) and self-esteem among younger children, a modest association among adolescents, and a moderate association among adults based on their own social class. They rely on theories about social comparison processes, reflected self-appraisals, self-perception theory, and psychological centrality to explain the age graded relationship. Because the salience of class in the interpersonal context differs for children and adults, and because the social class of children is ascribed while that of adults is generally considered achieved, Rosenberg and Pearlin argue, the extent to which the sense of inequality inherent in the meaning of social class is mirrored within individuals is not the same for children as it is for adults.

Coppersmith's (1967) original work was designed to assess the origins of self-esteem in children. The results of this work in which children filled out the Self-Esteem Inventory and provided ratings of their parents, staff members interviewed mothers, and mothers filled out questionnaires, indicated that "external indicators of prestige [of the parents] such as wealth, amount of education, and job title did not have as overwhelming and as significant an effect on self-esteem as is often assumed" (Pervin, 1993, P. 189). Parental attitudes and behaviors—acceptance of their children, clear and well-enforced demands, and respect for actions within well-defined limits—were the primary antecedents of children's sense of self-worth (Pervin, 1993).

Since the work by Rosenberg and Pearlin (1978) and Coppersmith (1967), others have explored the relationship of self-esteem to SES, especially among adolescents. With some exceptions, Rosenberg and Pearlin's results have been replicated (though it appears that more people have studied adolescents than adults). Filsinger and Anderson (1982) found no relationship between own SES (Duncan SES Index) and self-esteem (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) among adolescents, but a significant relationship between the SES of the person's best friend and self-esteem. They attribute this to a heightened sense of self-efficacy among those who interact with friends who are of a higher social

status than themselves, as it may be the social status of significant others from which adolescents derive their own sense of social status (p. 383). Demo and Savin-Williams (1983) replicated and extended Rosenberg and Pearlin's findings, and demonstrated that the relationship between SES (father's occupation) and self-esteem (Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, plus two others to assess reflected appraisals and academic self-esteem) was greater among eighth-graders than among fifth-graders.

Richman, Clark, and Brown (1985) found a main effect for the relationship between self-esteem and SES among adolescents, but demonstrate complicated interactions of gender, race, and social class: white females (including high SES individuals) were significantly lower in general self-esteem than white males and black males and females. There has been considerable research on the relationship between race and self-esteem. As for social class, in which the expectation is that the social order will be reflected in individual self-assessments, people of color are hypothesized to have lower self-esteem than are white people. In research comparing whites and blacks, blacks often have equal or higher self-esteem than whites, and a number of theories, including those related to self-protection and misidentification, have been offered to explain these findings (see Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Steele, 1992).

Using both traditional and non-traditional measures of social class (including father's unemployment status, neighborhood unemployment, family welfare status, and neighborhood evaluation), Wiltfang and Scarbecz (1990) found that father's education had a small positive relationship with adolescents' self-esteem and non-traditional measures had moderate to strong (neighborhood unemployment) associations with self-esteem (items from both Rosenberg and Coppersmith), all in the expected direction; they also found, however, that adolescent achievement variables (school grades, group leadership, report of many close friends) contributed significantly more to their self-esteem than did parental social class variables (P. 180).

In a study of 711 sixteen-year-olds in England, Francis and Jones (1995) found that the relationship of SES and self-esteem varied with the measure of self-esteem. There was a significant relationship between SES and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory ( $r = -.122$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and a moderate relationship with the Rosenberg ( $r = .063$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Considerably less attention appears to have been paid to the self-esteem-SES relationship among adults. In their study of 228 employed men, Gecas and Seff (1990) were interested in the role of psychological centrality and compensation in maintaining self-esteem. Simple bivariate correlations between self-esteem (measured by a 14-item semantic differential scale) and SES were as follows: with occupational prestige,  $r = .21$ ; with education,  $r = .16$ ; with income,  $r = .08$  (significance level unavailable,  $N = 228$ ). There were, however, mediating effects of the centrality of particular contexts to the self. They found that when work was a central aspect of men's self-concept, occupational variables (occupational prestige, control at work) were more strongly related to self-esteem than when they were not; similarly, when home was important, home variables (control and satisfaction at home) were strongly related to self-esteem.

The relations between Income and Life Satisfaction became an important area of study in the early nineties. The relationship between income and subjective well-being whether relative or absolute was a subject of study by Diener, E., Sandvik, E., Seidlitz, L., & Diener, M. (1993). Richard A. 1995 also saw income and Individual happiness as a vital component of Life Satisfaction in the study on Utility Income, Aging, Health and Well-Being. Along with income health also became associated with life satisfaction Kim, O (1997) in his study on older Korean immigrants observed that Loneliness was a deterrent to life satisfaction and also a predictor of health perceptions. The subjective evaluation of different aspects of life is known to correlate fairly strongly with life satisfaction (Ateca-Amestoy, Serrano-del-Rosal, & Vera-Toscano, 2008; Lloyd & Auld, 2002; Van Praag & Ferrer-i-Carbonell, 2004; Van Praag et al, 2003). Evaluations of finance, health, and job satisfaction, together with leisure satisfaction are the four most important correlates (Van Praag et al., 2003). Ateca-Amestoy et al. (2008) and Spires and Walker (2009) find positive associations between leisure satisfaction and life satisfaction.

Rode, Joseph Charles (2002) examined a job and life satisfaction model that included both environmental conditions and personality measures within a longitudinal framework and national representative sample to better understand the relationship of job satisfaction and life satisfaction over time. Satisfaction with Life Index was created calculating, subjective well-being on the basis of health, wealth and access to basic education (White, Adrian (2007). Life Cycle Happiness and its Sources was tried to be found out Easterlin, Richard A. 2006; Van Praag, Bernard M.S., and Ada Ferrer-i-Carbonell (2008) and relationships among stressful life events, temperament,

problem behavior was also tried to be studied McKnight, C. G., Huebner, E. S., & Suldo, S. M. (2002). Reschly, A. L., Huebner, E. S., Appleton, J. J., & Antaramian, S. (2008). Life satisfaction was studied amongst the below poverty line in India.

Biswas-Diener, R., & Diener, E. (2001). Satisfaction with Life Index was created calculating, subjective wellbeing on the basis of health wealth, and access to basic education. White, Adrian (2007). Tremblay et al. (2006) examined the role of subjective vitality and the perception of stress as mediators between general life satisfaction and post-traumatic physiological and psychological health. They found that satisfaction with life optimistically predict subjective vitality and negatively predicted perceived stress.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### OBJECTIVES

To find out the difference between Male and Female in Selected variables.

To find out the relationship between Life satisfaction and Self-Esteem

### HYPOTHESES

There is no relationship between Life satisfaction and Self-Esteem

There is no significant difference exist between male and female in Life satisfaction

There is no significant difference exist between male and female in Self-Esteem

### SAMPLE

From various places of baramulladistrictof Jammu and KashmirState, 120 students (60 male students and 60 female) were taken as sample for the current study using purposive sampling method.

### TOOLS

1. ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE (Rosenberg, 1965)
2. RAO ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION TEST by Dr. D. Gopal Rao (1974)

### PROCEDURE:

From various places of baramulla district of Jammu and kashmir state, initially 130 students were approached and explained the need for the study to them. 120 interest students were administered with the SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE and Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale out of the 130 data, those whose responses were complete for both scales alone were included and a final of 100 students (50 males & 50 females) were selected as the sample for the study.

### Analysis of Data:

The collected data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-value.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table I**

### Relationship between life satisfaction and self –esteem

Variable	Mean	SD	t-value
Life satisfaction	23.05	5.04256879	0.3223
Self-Esteem	23.27	3.643776	

Table I shows the relationship between life satisfaction and self –esteem. It shows that there is a Positive relationship exists between Life satisfaction and self-esteem( $r=0.3223$ ). It clearly indicates that persons who have higher self-esteem tend to satisfy with their life or way of living. Hence, the Null hypothesis “There is no significant relationship exists between Life satisfaction and Self-esteem is Rejected”

**Table II**

### Difference between male and female in Life satisfaction

Variable	Mean	SD	t-value	Significance
Male	21.58	5.295621	-3.01692	Not Sig**
Female	24.52	4.299953		

Not Sig\*\*=Not Significant at 0.05 level

Table II shows the difference between male and female in Life satisfaction. It shows that there is a significance difference exists between male and female in life satisfaction ( $t=-3.0169$ ).It clearly indicates that there is a considerable difference exists between male and female population in life satisfaction, according to their preferences. Hence, the null hypothesis “There is no significant difference exists between male and female in life satisfaction is rejected.”

**Table III**

### Difference between male and female in Self-Esteem

Variable	Mean	SD	t-value	Significance
Male	23.44	3.395055	0.462363	Not Sig**
Female	23.1	3.869108		

Not Sig\*\*=Not Significant at 0.05 level

Table II shows the difference between male and female in Self-Esteem. It shows that there is a significance difference exists between male and female in life satisfaction ( $t=0.4623$ ).It clearly indicates that there is a considerable difference exists between male and female population in self-esteem,

according to their preferences. Hence, the null hypothesis “There is no significant difference exists between male and female in self-esteem is rejected.”

## **SUMMARY**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- To find out the difference between Male and Female in Selected variables.
- To find out the relationship between Life satisfaction and Self-Esteem

From various places of baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir state,120 students (60 male students and 60 female) were taken as sample for the current study using purposive sampling method. From various places of soporedistrict of baramulla state, initially 130 students were approached and explained the need for the study to them.120 interest students were administered with the SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE and Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale out of the 130 data,there whose responses were complete for both scales alone were included and a final of 100 students (50 males &50 females) were selected as the sample for the study. The collected data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-value and the following conclusions were drawn.

### **Conclusion:**

- There is a positive relationship exists between Life satisfaction and Self-esteem
- There is a significant difference exists male and female in life satisfaction.
- There is a significant difference exists male and female in Self-esteem.

### **Limitations:**

- Sample size is relatively small.
- Sample are taken from one district only.
- Other related variables could have been included in this research

### **Suggestions for further study:**

- Sample size may be increased.
- Other variables should be added for further research.
- Sampling area may be increased to more districts.

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