Self Esteem and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students: A Correlation Study

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ABSTRACT

The goal is to discover evidence regarding student self-esteem along with their academic performance within Kahuta Tehsil which is a part of District Rawalpindi. The Rawalpindi region lacks sufficient studies which analyze the bond between self-esteem and educational achievement specifically among students from Kahuta secondary schools. The current literature and research findings lack this information so it needs immediate attention. The research design was descriptive; nature was quantitative with survey methodology. The research utilized correlation as its design methodology by using SPSS (version 25). The study included selected secondary schools through stratified sampling technique for total student population of 1125. Population divided into two strata boys (562) and girls (563). The sample size was calculated by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) 18%. The sample of the study was 211 students of 10th graders—boys (106) and girls (105) from public schools of Tehsil Kahuta. The research tool for assessing student self-esteem and Academic Achievement was developed as a self-made questionnaire. Summated scores with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) performed the analysis on research questions while null hypothesis data analysis involved comparison between established relationship indexes and 0.5 significance levels. The research outcome showed that student self-esteem created a positive link between academic success for both male and female students. The researchers confirmed a positive significant connection between secondary school student self-esteem and educational outcomes throughout Kahuta Tehsil based on their research conclusions followed by further discussions.

Keywords: Self Esteem, Academic Achievement, Secondary School Students

INTRODUCTION

In education, there are three key players: parents, students, and teachers. All of these individuals work together to enhance the quality of education for children. Parents are deeply invested in their child's learning, striving for the best possible outcomes. From the teachers' perspective, their goal is to help students achieve high marks and grades. When we consider the students' needs, several factors contribute to their learning success, including a positive learning environment, confidence, self-esteem, socio-economic status, motivation, and support from others. Among these, self-esteem plays a crucial role in a student's educational development (Zhubakova, Makhambetova, Dyusenbayeva, Baimenova, & Temirov, 2025).

Another predictor recognized for affecting academic performance is self-esteem because; it has been known to have a close relationship with motivation and academic success. Self-esteem is a positive or negative attitude towards one's self, and impacts the extent of completion or non-completion of educational tasks by a student. Thus, this factor should be included as it showed rather strong positive correlation with performing a given task (Cuc, & Claudia Cuc, 2019).

The other equally prevalent assessment of the academic performance of students is by the accomplishment of the grades received by the learner while learning, the traditional mode of assessment is considered the yardstick to success in learning. It is also stated that psychosocial self-esteem factor affects grades that psychosocial self-esteem is related to affective states and motivational structure of learners. Thus, the investigation of the association between self-esteem and academics involvement will present empirical foundation that can be used to develop recommendation that fosters sufficient level of motivation for positive influence on academic achievement (Phan, & Ngu, 2014).

The relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement significantly impacts learning. When students believe in themselves, they are more motivated to work harder and face challenges. They actively participate in activities and projects, and their high self-esteem allows them to view failure as an opportunity for success. Additionally, they build strong relationships and communicate effectively. Therefore, we can conclude that self-esteem is not only a valuable trait but also a predictor of high academic performance (Arshad, Zaidi, & Mahmood, 2015).

Academic achievements depend heavily on a positive self-concept as an essential starting point according to research data and multiple empirical studies. Youngsters who possess positive self-concept demonstrate social behaviors that society accepts. Through social comparison processes researchers prove that academic self-concept develops when students evaluate their ability against their peers. Currently an individual experiences developmental change during their secondary school years also known as adolescence as they advance from childhood toward maturity (Caskey, & Anfara, 2014).

During this transition, young adults experience heavy psychological as well as sociological stress within their daily lives. This life period involves psychological development along with cognitive growth while students evaluate their family expectations and match them against their peer connections. They confront parental expectations and peer pressures yet they must maintain social ties with both groups. The choices surrounding their school and curriculum and the challenges of a new academic community contribute to their adjustment process (Jaiswal, & Choudhuri, (2017).

Objectives

1. To find out the level of self-esteem and academic achievements of secondary school students.
2. To measure the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among secondary school students.

HYPOTHESIS

H_0: There is no difference between self-esteem and academic achievement of secondary school students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self Esteem

The way we value our selves constitutes self-esteem which represents both our world-perception of personal worth and how much we believe we matter to others. Self-esteem influences trust in people alongside relationships and employment processes and impacts several parts of our existence. People with strong self-esteem possess enough strength to guide their life development through mistakes while maintaining a fearlessness about possible social rejection. A low sense of self-esteem generates inner feelings of worthlessness alongside a belief that one is unable to succeed or accomplish tasks. The idea of self-esteem remains among the most ancient psychological concepts ever studied by professionals. Psychologist W.

James from America introduced the concept in his work published during 1890. People understand self-esteem as their subjective evaluations about their value which exists between positive and negative poles. Many assume that self-esteem operates as an enduring personality factor which shows no change over time inside individual people. The assessment of oneself through self-worth and self-esteem existing as an inner perception about personal value which ranges from completely positive to entirely negative (Bhagat, 2016).

Personal self-assessments fluctuate according to the success or failure events experienced during daily life. Four terms describe self-esteem: self-worth together with self-regard along with self-respect while self-integrity paints an additional picture of this concept. Every person holds an internal understanding of their own value through an evaluation of their self. People with no self-value tend to show mistreatment to themselves along with others. Low self-esteem acts as an essential element which contributes to abuse as well as addiction and other circumstances. Crime, depression, loneliness, low educational achievement, mental illness and unhappiness. Overall people who maintain high self-esteem tend to be innovative along with being lively companions while bringing positive contributions to their surroundings (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003).

The general trend in the research literature over the past three decades indicates that particular socio-cultural contexts are typically linked to reduced aspirations, language impairments, and minimal social and professional adaptability. According to DuBois, Burk, Braston, Swenson, Tevendale, and Hardesty (2002), the environment has been demonstrated to have a noteworthy effect on the development of adolescents' self-esteem (Joshi, & Srivastava, 2009).

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement represents all acquired information through the learning process. The student obtains knowledge through school instructions which he/she receives during core learning activities. A teacher distributes assignments to students while performing evaluation with assessment of their work quality through activities with defined core functions of their work. The school delivers numerous achievement experiences that exceed those given by the family. Levy (1942; Lounsbury, Fisher, Levy, & Welsh, 2009) explains that academic performance develops through multiple determining elements. A wide range of influences works on children which include their attitudes toward learning as well as their personal interests alongside social background and individual personality traits (Kumari, & Chamundeswari, 2013).

There exist multiple references which describe achievement. The definition primarily refers to performance while showing expertise. The process involves both environmental influence and standard-based excellence competition. The under achieving child represents students who show actual achievements below their potential abilities based on school curriculum results. The current level of his school performance falls short of what education expectations show his capabilities can accomplish. During 1942 Levy established that achievement pupils showed marks which exceeded expected educational levels. Their educational performance exceeds what people expect from them based on their activities. Other variables besides ability have positive influences on performance according to achievement data. Research findings demonstrate both that performance does not measure up to abilities and that intelligence shows no flawless positive relation with achievement (Kaya, Juntune, & Stough, 2015).

Rahmani study's research results demonstrated relationships between self-esteem together with all three components of achievement goals (mastery goal and approach performance and avoidance performance) and academic achievement levels. Results from t-student testing demonstrate that male students show statistically different performance levels compared to female students for both self-esteem and achievement

goals orientation. Self-esteem together with achievement goals serve as key determinants which shape academic achievement in primary school students according to the research findings (Rahmani, 2011).

Self-esteem and secondary school pupils' academic success in English are highly positively correlated (Akunne, & Anyamene, 2021).

Booth, & Gerard, (2011), this study examines the connection between young adolescents' academic success and self-esteem in two Western cultural contexts: the US and England. From the start of their academic year to the end of their eleventh or twelfth year, quantitative and qualitative data from 86 North American and 86 British adolescents were used. Quantitative findings showed a relationship between autumn self-esteem and several measures of academic success in the following year for both samples. Math seems to have a continuous link with self-esteem in both nation contexts, even though country variations become apparent by the end of the year. The self-perceptions of British students as more correctly representing their academic experience than those of American students were shown to have some support by qualitative analyses.

Self-esteem was found to differ significantly between males and females. Adolescent males scored noticeably higher. On self-esteem compared to female teenagers; also, there were notable distinctions between male and female academic performance. Males were shown to be inferior to females (Joshi, & Srivastava, 2009).

The authors looked at how academic success in the eighth grade affected the students' sense of self-control and self-worth in the tenth grade, and how control and self-esteem in the tenth grade affected the students' academic performance in the twelfth grade. They offer proof that while self-esteem has little bearing on future academic success, a sense of personal control does. Self-esteem and a sense of personal control are enhanced by prior academic success and family support. While the authors anticipated that parental support would have a greater impact on self-esteem and that achievement would have a greater impact on personal control (Ross, & Broh, 2000).

A person's entire being corresponds directly to his heart's internal thinking according to this statement. The thinking process of an individual encompasses his complete self while extending its influence to every aspect of his existence. It extends to every condition along with all life circumstances. An individual becomes exactly what he thinks because his character and achievement derive from his thoughts.

His thoughts accumulate into his complete character which also forms his achievements. An individual's thoughts about himself together with his personal value decisions will determine his state of being completely. Putting value on self-determines to a significant extent how far he progresses in life. Every individual's achievement in an assigned task corresponds directly to their thoughts about themselves (Okafor, Obi, & Oguzie, (2018).

The study examined student self-esteem which impacts academic results and correlates with student self-esteem. A study about self-esteem and academic outcomes of undergraduate students was performed at the University of Swat. This research used randomly selected 600 respondents from departments spread across the University of Swat. The researchers employed Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES) The research data showed a positive link between undergraduate student grades (GPAs) and their test scores. On the self-esteem scale. The research data demonstrated that learners who displayed greater levels of self-esteem achieved best academic results (Correlating, 2018).

The research discovered that females demonstrated greater self-esteem than males according to participant data. Self-esteem levels do not affect the academic results obtained by the respondents similarly. The educational system of the country along with the adolescent's psychological environment composed of family and teachers and peers maintains essential influence on their academic performance in school (Noronha, Monteiro, & Pinto, 2018).

The research study demonstrated that Student Academic Achievement shows positive correlation with their Self-Esteem scores (Vishalakshi, Yeshodhara 2012).

Jaiswal, & Choudhuri, (2017) the ongoing research study has produced a positive relationship between academic self-concept and academic performance of students in the secondary school level. This research study established additionally that difference between the academic self-concept of male and female students at secondary school level.

The research shows that self-esteem exhibits a strong significant relationship to academic achievement under gender control but fails to demonstrate any connection between these variables (Naderi, Abdullah, Aizan, Sharir, & Kumar, 2009).

The study conclusions show that emotional intelligence and self-esteem levels as measured among students do not impact their educational results. Research data shows that female students maintain higher self-esteem than their male peers do. In Kahnooj Payam-e Nour University, Balochistan, Pakistan (Jenaabadi, 2014).

This paper uses both qualitative and quantitative methods of examining the relationship between self-esteem and academic success in young adolescents in the United States and England. Based on data on 86 North American and 86 British adolescents, the researchers were able to test how their self-esteem related to their academic success throughout 11th -12th school year. This was supported quantitatively by the fact that the fall self-esteem was correlated with several indicators of subsequent academic achievements of students during their later years. Differences in the country can be observed towards the end of the year, however, mathematic self-efficacy remains connected to self-esteem among all. Some of the qualitative results suggested that British students' views of themselves were better aligned with their academic reality than those of American students (Booth, & Gerard, 2011).

Getting good grades in school helps a person choose their career and future occupation. Choosing a field of work and finding training for the future. Self-confidence refers to trusting in yourself and what you do. The ability to trust in themselves helps students when trying to achieve academically and learn. Scientific attitude is characterized by a person's honesty and awareness. Responsibility and the use of critical thinking. The main advantage of learning science is the chance to build a strong scientific mindset. Nowadays, a lot of students prefer science as their principal academic focus. Knowing whether confidence and a love of science help students in school is very important. Whether learning is successful or not and after that, determine how we can help promote effective learning and achievement. This work seeks to discover how academic performance is connected to self-confidence the development of a scientific attitude among students in District Kathua's Higher Secondary Schools. In addition to this, this paper the study tries to explain how self-confidence, a scientific approach and academic achievement relate. The 354 Higher Secondary School Students in class were the subjects of the empirically study. XI of government schools is being run under District Kathua. The study's reflections are beneficial to the involvement of the respective Teachers, administrators and people who develop the curriculum are all stakeholders (Sharma, 2023).

For the study, researchers focused on 20,098 senior secondary school (SS2) students. A total of 2,040students were chosen by multi-stage sampling method and Hare Self-esteem Scale (HSS) with an alpha reliability coefficient of 0.83 was used. For the analysis of data, descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were employed. The outcomes of the study indicated tha majority of students in Edo have a good sense of self-esteem. The findings further indicated that most students achieved good marks in English language and mathematics. Furthermore, there was show strong connection between students' self-esteem and their academic. It was concluded in the study that secondary students' self-esteem was strongly linked to their achievements in both the English language and Mathematics. Counsellors were encouraged by experts to offer both group and personal counselling to improve how students see themselves. This way, the students will sense they are capable of doing better in their courses if they try their best (Ifedioramma, & Anyamene, 2025).

The examination of the relationship between self-esteem and motivational components together with identification of best predictors for academic achievement in Turkish gifted students was the primary goal of the study. The research included 184 students who were made up of 76 girls and 108 boys. Students enrolled across fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades numbered sixty-one, forty-three, thirty-four, thirty-two and fourteen respectively. The number of students enrolled in İstanbul Art and Science Centre as an after-school program of gifted student was 84 and 100 students were provided with their education at a public special education school of gifted students. In self-esteem, students were given Coppersmith Self-esteem Inventory to evaluate their own self-esteem and Scale of Intrinsic Versus Extrinsic motivational Orientation in the Classroom to assess the aspects of motivation. It was found that self-esteem had direct correlation to motivation that consequently had a strong relationship on student achievement. The fourth graders needed general self-esteem scores to achieve academic success whereas the fifth graders needed academic self-esteem scores in order to achieve academic success but sixth and seventh graders needed intrinsic motivation for success followed by eighth graders requiring extrinsic motivation for achievement as revealed through regression analysis results (Topçu, & Leana-Taşcılar, 2018).

A lack of published research exists regarding the connection between self-esteem and academic effectiveness in the public secondary schools of Tehsil Kahuta District Rawalpindi. Research covers secondary schools of the Kahuta tehsil located in Rawalpindi district from their perspective. Research into this topic remains poorly developed despite the identified knowledge gap. The study examined the self-esteem fluctuation levels among schoolchildren against their academic performance in Kahuta.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was descriptive and quantitative in nature. The Survey research design was embraced and a stratified random sampling method used. The sample of this research was the 10 th -grade students of the public school, Rawalpindi tehsil Kahuta. Population was in total 1125, divided into two strata boys (562) and girls (563). The sample size was calculated by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003). He said 15-50% sample is enough for a research study therefore, 18% of the sample was taken for this research study. The sample was 211 students of 10th graders—boys (106) and girls (105) from public schools of Tehsil Kahuta, District Rawalpindi, Province Punjab. The sampling was stratified, making sure that schools (public), and genders (boys and girls) were appropriately represented. The 211 students were chosen from the different public schools of tehsil Kahuta and given the self-esteem questionnaire. The questionnaire of self-esteem that was used in the current study was self-developed, comprised 25 items, and took around 20 minutes in total. The self-esteem scale consists of five subscales pride, strength, status, respect and recognition. Academic achievement scale consists on two subscales mentioned as Mastery of knowledge and skills and Classroom learning. It is a five-point Likert scale with five response categories of "strongly agree", "agree",

"undecided", "disagree", and "strongly disagree" (5,4,3,2, and 1 respectively). In Survey, data collection was completed by personally visits to schools. Data analysis by Mean and Correlation statistics.

RESULT

Table 1

Mean score of sub dimensions of Self Esteem (211)

Dimensions	Mean
Pride	4.142
Status	4.306
Respect	4.02
Strength	4.122
Recognition	4.346

Table 1 provides the means of the dimensions of Self-esteem. According to this table, Pride (4.142), Status (4.306), Respect (4.02), Strength (4.122), and Recognition (4.346). Highest mean value was observed against Recognition i.e. 4.346 and lowest mean value was observed against the Respect dimension i.e., 4.02.

Table 2

Mean score of sub dimensions of Academic Achievement (211)

Dimensions	Mean
Mastery of Knowledge	25.38
Class Room Learning	25.03

Table 2 shows the mean value of the dimensions of Academic Achievement. According to this table, Mastery of Knowledge (25.38), and Class Room Learning is (25.03). Highest mean value was observed against Mastery of Knowledge i.e. 25.38 and lowest mean value was observed against the Class Room Learning dimension i.e., 25.03.

Table 3

Correlation of Self Esteem and Academic Achievement (211)

Variables	N	Mean	S. D	R	P
Self Esteem	211	104.7251	11.3200	.703**	.000
Academic Achievement	211	100.8246	11.0463		

The correlation analysis also shows a strong positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement (r = .703, p < .01). This showed that students of high self-esteem excel in their studies. The conclusion indicates how emotional factor (self-esteem) can affect academic performance.

DISCUSSION

The main aim of the study to establish the relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of the students of Tehsil Kahuta District Rawalpindi, Pakistan, public secondary schools. The primary area of concern with the research to verified that student self-esteem provided a positive association between school success among male and female pupils or otherwise. The researchers established the existence of positive significant association between the self-esteem of secondary school students and the educational results across the whole of Kahuta Tehsil. Whereas, another research find correlation as well as classroom involvement. The results indicated that the self-esteem of the university students as indicated by their performance relating to classroom participation is relatively stronger than it can be related to other measures of academic performance. Nevertheless, there is no connection between the self-esteem and the performance of university students in self-managed learning (Chohan, 2013). In another research study, it is reported that there were significant relationships among self-esteem and academic achievement but no significant relationship was found among optimism and self-esteem as well as academic achievement (Akram, & Suneel, 2018). Another alike study found a significant positive effect of both -academic self-efficacy and self-esteem on students' achievement by (Hanif, Bibi, & Gul, 2023). Contrary to our study, analyze the findings of the study revealed that the academic achievement and self-esteem were not significantly positively related when the two variables were combined between male and female learners. Science students had much greater self-esteem than Arts students and male students had much greater self-esteem than female students. The self-esteem and academic achievements of male students showed significant correlation whereas no significant correlation was observed between the self-esteem of female students and their academic performance. Study by (Khan, Mahmood, & Zaib, 2019). Along this another study was found focused on the effects of self-esteem and effects of stress on GPA were determined separately, it has been discovered that both these cognitive variables were not significantly associated with the academic of students. Therefore, the research found that the degree of stress and self-esteem do not have as much power over the academic performance of students in private university as is confirmed in the literature on the topic by (Farhan, & Khan, 2015). Thus, the study demonstrates that the students' academic achievement is high when they have high self-esteem. However, this study was limited to only one tehsil of Rawalpindi. Also, only about public school which is the main limitation of the study. This study may be prolonged by geographically and academically also.

CONCLUSION

1. Respect has the lowest mean score, showing that it is comparatively weaker than other components.
2. A low mean score implies that the classroom environment is comparatively poorer than other elements examined.
3. There is positive, strong and significant relationship between self esteem and academic achievement among secondary school students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Lessons and activities that may be practiced in schools may help to foster the confidence and self-worth of students as well as promote their self-efficacy. This may involve goal-setting workshops, summative feedback programs and personal development programs.
- Train Teachers to Support Student Confidence. Professional development for teachers may include strategies to recognize students' strengths, provide constructive feedback, and create a safe and encouraging classroom environment.

- Promote Parental and Community involvement. Family and community support will be of importance in the development of self-esteem. Parents may be involved in schools by communication with parents, workshops and participation in the school events.
- The students may be assisted by the counseling services and peer mentorship which can help them overcome the self-doubt and emotional complications that might result in low self-esteem and failure in studies.
- Low self-esteem students may have to be subject to specific interventions to avoid a fall in academic achievements.

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