

## Research Articles

# Contribution of Self-Esteem and Collective Self-Esteem in Predicting Depression

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## Abstract

This research was conducted with the purpose to examine the relationship among self-esteem, collective self-esteem and depression. Another objective was to study the contribution of self-esteem and collective self-esteem in predicting depression. Beck Depression Inventory (1996), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (1985) and Collective Self-Esteem Inventory by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) were used to measure depression, self-esteem and collective self-esteem respectively. Study was carried out on 200 subjects in the age range of 17-23 years, selected from Agra city. The results of the research showed that there was significant positive relationship between self-esteem and collective self-esteem ( $p < .01$ ), significant negative relationship between self-esteem and depression ( $p < .01$ ). It was also found that collective self-esteem was a significant predictor of depression. This research implies that an optimum level of self-esteem and high collective self-esteem not only prevents depression but also enhances the positive aspects of personality.

**Keywords:** self-esteem, collective self-esteem, depression

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## Introduction

Self-esteem is a term that reflects a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of her or his own worth. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (for example, "I am competent", "I am worthy") and emotions such as triumph, despair, pride and shame. Self-esteem is a confidence in oneself, a satisfaction of what one is and the self-respect that confidence brings. It is the appraisal or assessment of a person on one's self worth. It encompasses belief about one's capacity and worthiness. Self-esteem is a complex phenomenon consisting of three components - competence, worthiness, self-evaluation. Competence means self-esteem is tied to and reflected in a particular class of behavior, namely behavior that is effective or successful. It has been found that there is negative relationship between self-esteem and anxiety (Pyszczynski, Greenberg, Solomon, Arndt, & Schimel, 2004, pp. 435-468). Moreover, individuals with high self-esteem and low anxiety are more inclined to engage in mastery behaviors. Low level of self-esteem has been linked to behavioral problems and poor school performance (Agarwala & Raj, 2003). It is related with serious issues such as teenage pregnancy (Crockenberg & Soby, 1994, pp. 125-164), suicides (Bhattacharjee & Deb, 2007, pp. 213-218; Choquet, Kovess, & Poutignat, 1993, pp. 649-659; National Crime Records Bureau, 2007) and maladjustment.

The recent interest has been shifted from self-esteem to collective self-esteem. Luhtanen & Crocker (1992, pp. 302-318) emphasized the importance of collective self-esteem. Collective self-esteem refers to the feelings and evaluations of the worthiness of a social group—such as racial, ethnic, or work group of which one is a member (Corning, 2002, pp. 117-126; Jetten, Branscombe, & Spears, 2002, pp. 105-123; Rahimi & Fisher, 2002, pp. 501-514). De Cremer and Oosterwegel (1999, pp. 326-339) found that subjects with collective self-esteem tended to view in-group members more positively than those with personal self-esteem. The high collective self-esteem individuals also seemed to expect more in-group cooperation. The impact of collective self-esteem on psychological functioning such as intergroup evaluation (Andreopoulou & Houston, 2002, pp. 243-256), in-group bias (Aberson & Howanski, 2002, pp. 225-243), coping styles (Constantine, Donnelly, & Myers, 2002, pp. 698-710) has been studied. Some evidence shows that collective self-esteem is a potentially strong predictor of mental health such as life satisfaction (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994, pp. 503-513; Mokgathe & Schoeman, 1998, pp. 28-35) and distress (Bizman, Yinon, & Krotman, 2001, pp. 1291-1300; Katz, Joiner, & Kwon, 2002, pp. 419-431).

Self-esteem and collective self-esteem are viewed as vicious cycle. Low self-esteem and collective self-esteem result among many behavioral problems and depression is among one of them. Depression among adolescents has become a very common problem. The literature survey depicts that self-esteem and collective self-esteem play a very important role in every individual's personality. Low level of self-esteem and depression create hindrance in balanced and positive development of personality. There is dearth of researches which examine the relationship between depression and collective self-esteem but low self-esteem and depression are negatively correlated, it has been found in many researches.

### Objectives

- To study the relationship between self-esteem and depression.
- To study the relationship between collective self-esteem and depression.
- To study the relationship between self-esteem and collective self-esteem.
- To study the contribution of self-esteem and collective self-esteem in predicting depression.

### Hypotheses

- There is a negative relationship between self-esteem and depression.
- There is a negative relationship between collective self-esteem and depression.
- There is a positive relationship between self-esteem and collective self-esteem.
- Self-esteem and collective self-esteem significantly account for in determining depression.

## Method

### Tools

**Beck Depression Inventory (1996):** Beck Depression Inventory II edition (BDI II) is a 21 items self report instrument for measuring the depression in adults and adolescents aged 13 years and older. The test-retest reliability of the inventory is .93 (Beck, Steer, & Brown, 1996).

**Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965):** The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965) was used to measure self-esteem among subjects. It consisted of 10 items ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Rosenberg (1965) reported internal consistency reliability of the scale, ranging from .85 to .88 for college students.

**Collective Self-Esteem Scale (1992):** The Collective Self-Esteem Scale developed by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) was used to measure the collective self-esteem of the subjects. The Collective Self-Esteem Scale is a 16-item measure 7-point Likert-type measure.

### Sample

Initially Beck's Depression Inventory (Beck et al., 1996) was administered on 800 undergraduate students in the age range of 17-23 years, selected from Agra and Firozabad. Among 800 subjects 334 subjects had low level of depression and 179 subjects had high level of depression. From 334 subjects having low level of depression, 100 subjects (50 males and 50 females) and from 179 subjects having high depression, 100 subjects (50 males and 50 females) were randomly selected for the final sample. Subjects having any other somatic and/or psychological disorders were excluded from the sample.

### Statistical Analysis

To study the relationship between depression and self-esteem, depression and collective self-esteem and self-esteem and collective self-esteem product moment coefficient of correlation was calculated. Multiple regression analysis was done to study the contribution of predictor variables (self-esteem and collective self-esteem) in predicting depression.

## Results

It can be observed from Table 1 that there was significant negative relationship between self-esteem and depression. The value of  $r$  was  $-.46$  that was significant at .01 level. If level of self-esteem increased, the level of depression decreased and vice versa. Similarly, it can be observed that between collective self-esteem and depression also there was inverse relationship. The obtained  $r$  value was  $-.77$  which was significant at .01 level. If level of collective self-esteem increased, level of depression decreased and vice versa. Further, it can be observed from Table 1 that there was significant positive relationship between self-esteem and collective self-esteem. The value of  $r$  was  $.54$  that was significant at .01 level. It suggests that as the self-esteem enhanced the level of collective self-esteem would also increase and vice versa.

Table 1

*Correlation Matrix: Coefficient of Correlation Among Depression, Self-Esteem, Collective Self-Esteem*

Variables	Depression	Self-esteem	Collective Self-esteem
Depression	1		
Self-esteem	$-0.46^{**}$	1	
Collective self-esteem	$-0.77^{**}$	$0.54^{**}$	1

$^{**}p < .01$ .

Moreover, in order to determine the specific contribution of each of the predictor variables in the determination of depression, multiple regression analysis was done and to generalize the results multiple regression equation was formed.

The value of  $R$  square for depression (criterion) was .609 which meant that about 60.9% of contribution was accounted for by the predictor variables self-esteem ( $X_1$ ) and collective self-esteem ( $X_2$ ). The adjusted  $R$  square value is .605 which suggested that 60.5% variance in depression was to be explained by combined predictor variables (see Table 2).

Table 2

Summary of Output From Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression Statistics	Values
Multiple $R$	0.78
$R$ Square	0.60
Adjusted $R$ Square	0.60
Standard Error	6.30
Observations	200

Table 2 shows the results of multiple regression. The value of multiple  $R$  was .78. The value of multiple  $R$  square was .60 which indicated that 60% of the variance in well-being was to be accounted for by these predictor variables.

The adequacy of the regression equation model is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance

Variables	$df$	$SS$	$MS$	$F$
Regression	2	12208.80	6104.40	153.79**
Residual	197	7819.20	39.69	

\*\* $p < .01$ .

As shown in Table 4, the individual contribution of self-esteem scores was found to be 2.3% and 58.6% variance out of 60% variance in depression was due to collective self-esteem.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Coefficient

Variables	$B$	$SE$	Beta	$T$	$R$	Coefficient of determination
$SE$	-0.09	1.61	-0.05	-0.94	-0.46	0.02
$CSE$	-0.54	0.09	-0.75	-14.11**	-0.77	0.58
Constant	47.17		0.038			
$R$ Square = $S_r \times \beta$						0.609

\*\* $p < .01$ .

Further, Table 4 shows that collective self-esteem was found to be higher predictor of depression than the self-esteem. Both predictor variables were found to be negatively related with depression. As shown in Table 4 self-esteem was not found significant predictor of depression whereas collective self-esteem was significant predictor of depression.

## Discussion

Results of the present study lead to the acceptance of the first hypothesis that there is significant negative relationship between self-esteem and depression. Result of the present research was also supported by the previous researches. [Deb and Bhattacharjee \(2009, pp. 213-218\)](#) conducted a research on 118 depressive patients and their counterparts. Findings revealed that self-esteem of depressive patients and normal population of same age group differed significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) which indicates that depressive patients have low self-esteem. [Martyn-Nemeth et al. \(2009, pp. 96-109\)](#) examined the relationships among self-esteem, stress, social support, and coping. They tested a model of their effects on eating behavior and depressive mood in a sample of 102 high school students. Results indicated that stress and low self-esteem were related to avoidant coping and depressive mood. Another hypothesis that there is significant negative relationship between collective self-esteem and depression has also been accepted. Results reveal high significant negative relationship between collective self-esteem and depression. When self-esteem goes beyond optimal level it may lead to egotism, sense of pride and dominance. Collective self-esteem is the positive feeling not for self only but for the group and community individual belongs to. Collective self-esteem is the degree to which individuals evaluate their social or cultural groups positively. When individual thinks positive about others then it enhances the social support and prevents the genesis of depression. Another hypothesis that there is positive relationship between self-esteem and collective self-esteem has also been accepted in the present research. [Bettencourt et al. \(1999, pp. 213-222\)](#) conducted a study and investigated whether collective self-esteem predicts adjustment in a particular domain. Researchers measured collective self-esteem as it relates to students' memberships in their residence halls. The results showed that academic adjustment at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> year in college was predicted by development in collective self-esteem. Moreover, development in collective self-esteem was associated with improvements in adjustment to college from the first semester to the second semester. Collective self-esteem enhances the co-operative attitude among adolescents and decreases the biases for others among peer group ([Andreopoulou & Houston, 2002, pp. 243-256](#)).

As the result proves, self-esteem is negatively related with depression but not a significant predictor of it. When self-esteem remains within an optimal level, it would lead to good performance and achievement but when it goes beyond an optimal level, it could increase violence, dominance and aggression and all these are negative aspects of personality which lead to lack of social support and rejection and avoidance. It has been proved in many previous researches that lack of social support, rejection and avoidance cause depression. Optimal level of self-esteem prevents depression while very high self-esteem may result in depression. Further, it has been found that collective self-esteem significantly account for in determining depression. Collective self-esteem is favorable view not only for self but for the group also. Individual with high collective self-esteem thinks positive for the group and community they belong to. Collective self-esteem enhances social support and prevents depression.

Depression among adolescents was associated with decreased self-esteem and collective self-esteem. These associations are in agreement with many past findings on the same issues ([Yaacob, Jauhari, Talib, & Uba, 2009, pp. 85-94](#)). The findings implied that low self-esteem and collective self-esteem were risk factors for depression among adolescents. When depression goes beyond an optimal level and remains untreated it may cause severe physical as well as psychological problems. Therefore, it is of great importance that focus should be given on managing self-esteem and collective self-esteem.

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