Research Article

Educational
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Theory and Practice

Role Of Emotional Intelligence And Self-Esteem On Social Anxiety Among College Students.

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to examine the role of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem in Social Anxiety among Indian college students. Three different screening tools—the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS), and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)—were used for assessment. A total of 317 subjects were selected through stratified random sampling from private colleges in Jalandhar, Punjab, with an age range of 19 and above. All the measures were administered to each subject. Results revealed a very weak positive correlation (0.024) between Emotional Intelligence and Social Anxiety, which was not statistically significant. Similarly, the analysis found a very weak positive correlation (0.002) between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem, which was not statistically significant. The most significant finding from the analysis was the moderate negative correlation (-0.214) between Social Anxiety and Self-Esteem, which was statistically significant at the 0.01 level. The major findings indicate that while Emotional Intelligence does not significantly correlate with either Social Anxiety or Self-Esteem within this sample, there is a significant negative relationship between Social Anxiety and Self-Esteem. **Keywords:** EI(EmotionalIntelligence),SelfEsteem,SocialAnxiety,College Students.

Introduction

The college stage is characterized by tremendous change, including the shift from adolescence to maturity, academic expectations, and other social and personal duties. Furthermore, modern systems of assessment and apprehension of failures might elicit unpleasant emotions that may affect academic achievement (Bozal et al., 2019). Research indicates that anxiety disorders, stress, and fear of being examined are common causes of psychological issues among college students. Emotions have a significant part in shaping a student's lifestyle and interactions with their surroundings (Enríquez et al., 2017). Students at college face a new social milieu unlike any other. In this context, they have to collaborate with a diverse range of persons. (Kahraman, n.d.). Emotionalintelligencereferstotheabilitytonotice,express,comprehend,understand,andregulateemotions in oneself and others (Moussa et al., 2024; Iyer et al., 2024; Jaafari et al., 2023; Gilani et al., 2023; Tantry & Singh, 2016).

Meanwhile, other studies agree that EI can be defined as a set of personality qualities associated with emotion. They specifically describe EI as "a combination of disposition and self-perceived competencies rather than a group of cognitive-emotional abilities" (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). One of the most productive areas of EI studies focuses on presenting evidence of the link among EI and psychological and physical health. Furthermore, the effective application of specific emotional methods may contribute to experiencing more happy emotional states and fewer negative emotional states. As a result, emotional techniques will improve people's well-being and health (Cejudo et al., 2018). Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to perceive, recognize, and control emotions in oneself and others. According to certain studies, emotional intelligence has a favorable correlation with academic success. The idea of behavioral intelligence can be employed in educational settings. (Gernal et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2023; Tantry & Ali, 2020; Greenberg, 2019; Majeed, 2018a, 2018b; Tantry & Singh, 2017).

It is a greater predictor of social accomplishment than intellectual quotient, which is a traditional idea. High emotional skills are associated with improved social skills, stable relationships, and problem-solving abilities. Children with strong emotional skills excel at problem-solving, leading to improved cognitive abilities (Jenaabadi, 2014). William James (1890) defined self-esteem as the good self-regard that arises from continuously meeting or exceeding major goals in life. It is the evaluative part of self-knowledge that reflects people's liking of themselves and belief in their competence (Ditzfeld & Showers, 2013). Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as the individual's negative and positive attitudes toward oneself. He believes that self-esteem results from an individual's self-evaluation. The judgment obtained as a result of self-evaluation indicates the level of self-worth. Self-esteem is a judgment of worthiness associated with the concept of self (Ümmet, 2015). Internal aspects such as how you speak to yourself, how you think, and what you believe in all have an impact on your self-esteem. External influences that influence self-esteem include the surroundings in which you reside and work. Those that make you feel special and worthwhile boost your self-esteem, but those that make you feel horrible diminish your self-esteem. Self-esteem benefits us in all environments and situations. It enables us to adopt the appropriate mindset for success in all aspects of life (Bhatt & Bahadur, 2018). Mark Leary's sociometer theory

suggests that self-esteem is a subjective indicator of how others value one's relationships. The self-esteem system functions as a sociometer, monitoring the quality of a person's interpersonal interactions and motivating behaviors that allow the person to keep up an adequate level of acceptability from others (Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Social anxiety is a widespread concern of being judged by others during social situations. When social anxiety disorder (SAD) or social phobia becomes severe enough to hinder functioning, it is classified as such. (Sorour et al., 2024; Al Jaghoub et al., 2024; Mainali & Tantry, 2022; Nivetha & Majeed, 2022; Tantry & Singh, 2018).

Social anxiety is a global condition. Individuals have varying levels of social anxiety, from fearlessness to crippling worry and avoidance (Herbert et al., 2010). College peers perceive socially anxious individuals as scared, self-pitying, and unassertive, with poor social skills and awkward relationships with strangers of the opposite gender (Creed & Funder, 1998). Social anxiety disorder affects 50–80% of teenagers and has a lifetime prevalence of 12-16% in people of all ages. It has been linked to alcohol and substance addiction, depression, damaged relationships, higher suicide risk, reduced educational attainment, and lower pay (Honnekeri et al., 2017). According to the National Mental Health Survey 2015-16, 1.9% of individuals in India suffer from phobic anxiety disorder across all age categories (Murthy, 2017). Anxiety can be triggered by particular social circumstances, such as interacting with strangers, attending gatherings, or presenting in front of an audience. Symptoms of this condition include intense self-consciousness, dread of disgrace, extreme temperature flashes, nausea, and the tendency to call in sick to avoid situations (Contractor et al., 2018).

RESEARCHMETHODOLOGY
Sample: The sample was selected via random sampling method. The sample included 317 students for data collection purpose.
Instruments:
The researchers employed the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (Schutte et al., 1998), which was utilized by (Austin et al., 2004) to assess the emotional intelligence of university students. It consists of a unidimensional 33-item scale indicating trait emotional intelligence (Pisnar et al., 2022). Respondents utilize a 5-point scale, with a "1" representing "strongly disapprove" and a "5" representing "completely agree," to indicate how much each item characterizes them (Schutte et al., 1998a).
The self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Rosenberg, 1965), a Likert scale with four points with response possibilities ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The RSES contains ten items with minimum and maximum scores ranging from 0 to 30. High scores imply that the individual has a high level of self-esteem. (Gilani et al., 2024; Farooq & Majeed, 2024; Achumi& Majeed, 2024; Hussein & Tantry, 2022)
The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) was created to measure typical social phobias (Mattick & Peters, 1988). The SIAS aims to assess social interaction anxiety. The SIAS identifies two types of social anxiety: those related to interactions with other people (e.g., conversations) and those involving scrutiny (e.g., public speech or eating; Liebowitz, 2015; Mattick & Clarke, 1998b). The SIAS has 20 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale, from "not at all characteristic of me" to "extremely characteristic of me" (Herbert et al., 2014).
Hypotheses:
1.There is a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and social anxiety.
2.   There is a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and self-esteem.
3.   There is a negative correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:
X = Emotional Intelligence
Y = Social Anxiety
Z = Self-Esteem
DescriptiveStatistics

	Mean	Std.Deviation	N
x	120.23	15.469	317
y	29.46	12.904	317
z	15.73	2.217	317

Descriptive statistics provide valuable insights into the characteristics of a dataset, offering a summary of the central tendency, variability, and distribution of the variables under consideration. In your case, you've provided three variables: X for Emotional Intelligence, Y for Social Anxiety and Z for Self-Esteem. Let's delve

Emotional Intelligence (X)
Emotional Intelligence (EI) encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively. Your data reveals a mean (average) EI score of 120.23, with a standard deviation of 15.469. This suggests that, on average, individuals in your sample possess a moderately high level of emotional intelligence. However, the standard deviation indicates some variability in EI scores, implying that while many individuals may score around the mean, there are also those who deviate significantly, either scoring higher or lower.
A high mean EI score within your sample could signify several positive attributes such as empathy, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills. These individuals may excel in understanding their own emotions and those of others, facilitating effective communication and conflict resolution. Moreover, individuals with higher EI often exhibit greater resilience in dealing with stress and adversity, contributing to overall psychological well-being.
Social Anxiety (Y)
Social Anxiety refers to the fear of social situations and the negative evaluation by others, leading to avoidance behaviors and significant distress. Your data shows a mean social anxiety score of 29.46, with a standard deviation of 12.904. This suggests that, on average, individuals in your sample experience moderate levels of social anxiety. However, similar to EI, the standard deviation indicates variability in social anxiety scores, with some individuals reporting significantly higher or lower levels of social anxiety than the mean (Vibin & Majeed, 2024; Monika et al., 2023a, 2023b; Kendler & Prescott, 2021; Tantry et al., 2019; Gilani, 2014).

The presence of social anxiety within your sample may have implications for interpersonal relationships, academic or occupational performance, and overall quality of life. Individuals with higher levels of social anxiety may struggle with initiating and maintaining social interactions, leading to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Moreover, social anxiety can interfere with academic or professional pursuits, as individuals may avoid situations that require public speaking or group collaboration (Gambiza et al., 2023; Yachna & Majeed, 2023; Sulthan et al., 2022; King & Hopwood, 2021; Tantry et al., 2018).

Self-Esteem (Z)

Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall subjective evaluation of their own worth and value. Your data displays a mean self-esteem score of 15.73, with a standard deviation of 2.217. This suggests that, on average, individuals in your sample possess a moderately high level of self-esteem. However, similar to the other variables, the standard deviation indicates variability in self-esteem scores, with some individuals reporting higher or lower levels of self-esteem than the mean (Bhardwaj et al., 2023; Sabu et al., 2022; Brown & Barlow, 2022; Tantry & Ahmad, 2019; Majeed, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c; Cacioppo & Patrick, 2018).

Self-esteem plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' perceptions of themselves and their capabilities. Individuals with higher self-esteem tend to exhibit confidence, assertiveness, and resilience in the face of challenges. They are more likely to pursue their goals ambitiously and persistently, even in the face of setbacks. Conversely, individuals with lower self-esteem may experience self-doubt, insecurity, and a heightened sensitivity to criticism, which can hinder their personal and professional growth.

Interplay and Implications

The descriptive statistics of emotional intelligence, social anxiety, and self-esteem offer valuable insights into the psychological profiles of individuals within your sample. The interplay between these variables can elucidate complex dynamics in interpersonal relationships, mental health outcomes, and overall well-being.

1.**Emotional Intelligence and Social Anxiety:** Individuals with higher emotional intelligence may be better equipped to manage and cope with social anxiety. They may possess greater emotional regulation skills, enabling them to navigate social situations with confidence and adaptability. Conversely, individuals with lower emotional intelligence may struggle to understand and regulate their emotions, exacerbating social anxiety symptoms.

2. **Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem:** Emotional intelligence and self-esteem are closely intertwined, as individuals with higher emotional intelligence often possess a more accurate and balanced self-perception. They are better able to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, leading to a more resilient sense of self-esteem. Moreover, individuals with higher emotional intelligence may be more empathetic and compassionate towards themselves, mitigating the impact of self-critical thoughts on self-esteem.

3. **Social Anxiety and Self-Esteem:** Social anxiety can significantly impact self-esteem, as individuals may internalize negative beliefs about themselves based on perceived social shortcomings. Individuals with high social anxiety may engage in self-critical thoughts and negative self-evaluations, leading to a diminished sense of self-worth. Conversely, individuals with high self-esteem may be more resilient in the face of social anxiety, as they possess a strong internal sense of worth and value that is less contingent on external validation.

In conclusion, the descriptive statistics of emotional intelligence, social anxiety, and self-esteem provide valuable insights into the psychological characteristics of individuals within your sample. Understanding the interplay between these variables can inform targeted interventions aimed at enhancing emotional well-being, improving interpersonal relationships, and fostering personal growth and development. By addressing factors contributing to social anxiety and promoting emotional intelligence and self-esteem, individuals can cultivate a more positive and fulfilling quality of life.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is a statistical method used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. In your dataset, you've provided correlation coefficients for three variables: Emotional Intelligence (X), Social Anxiety (Y), and Self-Esteem (Z). Let's delve into each correlation coefficient and its implications within the context of psychological well-being and interpersonal dynamics.

Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Social Anxiety

The correlation coefficient between Emotional Intelligence (X) and Social Anxiety (Y) is 0.024, which indicates a very weak positive correlation. Additionally, the p-value of 0.665 suggests that this correlation is not statistically significant. In practical terms, this means that there is no meaningful relationship between emotional intelligence and social anxiety within your sample.

However, it's important to note that even though the correlation is not significant, it doesn't necessarily mean that there is no relationship between emotional intelligence and social anxiety in the broader context. Other factors not considered in your dataset may influence this relationship, such as coping mechanisms, past experiences, or individual differences in emotional regulation.

Correlations

		x	y	z
x	PearsonCorrelation	1	.024	.002
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.665	.976
	N	317	317	317
y	PearsonCorrelation Sig. (2-tailed)	.024 .665	1	-.214[**] .000
	N	317	317	317
z	PearsonCorrelation	.002	-.214[**]	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.976	.000	
	N	317	317	317

**.Correlationissignificantatthe0.01level(2-tailed).

Implications and Interpretation
The correlation analysis provides valuable insights into the relationships between emotional intelligence, social anxiety, and self-esteem within your sample. While there is no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and either social anxiety or self-esteem, there is a significant negative correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem.
These findings have several implications for understanding psychological well-being and interpersonal dynamics:
1. Interplay of Factors: The lack of significant correlations between emotional intelligence and the other variables suggests that emotional intelligence alone may not be a strong predictor of social anxiety or self-esteem within your sample. Other factors, such as cognitive biases, past experiences, and environmental stressors, may also influence these outcomes.
2. Complexity of Social Anxiety and Self-Esteem: The significant negative correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem highlights the intricate relationship between these constructs. Individuals with social anxiety may experience a vicious cycle, where their fears of negative evaluation and rejection in social situations further erode their self-esteem, leading to increased social anxiety.
3. Targeted Interventions: Understanding the relationship between social anxiety and self-esteem can inform targeted interventions aimed at improving psychological well-being. Interventions that focus on enhancing self-esteem and reducing social anxiety, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and exposure therapy, may be particularly beneficial for individuals struggling with these issues.
4. Individual Differences: It's essential to recognize that correlation does not imply causation, and individual differences play a significant role in shaping psychological outcomes. Factors such as personality traits, coping strategies, and social support networks can influence how individuals perceive and respond to emotional challenges.
In conclusion, correlation analysis provides valuable insights into the relationships between emotional intelligence, social anxiety, and self-esteem within your sample. While emotional intelligence may not directly correlate with social anxiety or self-esteem, the significant negative correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem underscores the importance of addressing both constructs in interventions aimed at promoting psychological well-being and interpersonal functioning. Further research exploring the complex interplay between these variables and other psychosocial factors can deepen our understanding of human behavior and inform more effective interventions in clinical and community settings.

Major Findings
The major findings from the correlation analysis of Emotional Intelligence (X), Social Anxiety (Y), and Self-Esteem (Z) in your dataset can be summarized as follows:
1. Weak Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Social Anxiety: The analysis revealed a very weak positive correlation (0.024) between Emotional Intelligence and Social Anxiety, which was not statistically significant. This suggests that, within your sample, there is no meaningful association between emotional intelligence and social anxiety. This finding implies that while emotional intelligence involves understanding and managing emotions effectively, it may not directly impact the experience of social anxiety.
2. Lack of Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem: Similarly, the analysis found a very weak positive correlation (0.002) between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Esteem, which was not statistically significant. This indicates that emotional intelligence does not appear to have a significant influence on an individual's self-esteem within your sample. Despite emotional intelligence encompassing skills related to self-awareness and interpersonal relationships, it may not directly contribute to an individual's overall evaluation of their self-worth.
3. Moderate Negative Relationship between Social Anxiety and Self-Esteem: The most significant finding from the analysis was the moderate negative correlation (-0.214) between Social Anxiety and Self-Esteem, which was statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This suggests that, within your sample, there is a meaningful relationship between social anxiety and self-esteem. Specifically, as levels of social anxiety increase, self-esteem tends to decrease, and vice versa. This finding underscores the complex interplay between social anxiety and self-esteem, where negative evaluations and fears related to social interactions can detrimentally impact an individual's sense of self-worth.
In summary, the major findings indicate that while emotional intelligence does not significantly correlate with either social anxiety or self-esteem within your sample, there is a significant negative relationship between social anxiety and self-esteem. These findings highlight the importance of addressing social anxiety and promoting self-esteem in interventions aimed at improving psychological well-being and interpersonal functioning. Further research into the mechanisms underlying these relationships and exploring additional factors that may influence emotional well-being can provide deeper insights into effective intervention strategies.

Implications:
The implications of the major findings from the correlation analysis of Emotional Intelligence (X), Social Anxiety (Y), and Self-Esteem (Z) within your dataset are far-reaching and can inform various aspects of psychological research, clinical practice, and personal development. Here are some key implications:
1. Targeted Interventions: Understanding the significant negative correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem suggests the importance of implementing targeted interventions aimed at addressing both constructs simultaneously. Interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), exposure therapy, and self-esteem enhancement programs can help individuals build coping strategies to manage social anxiety while simultaneously improving their self-esteem. By addressing both issues concurrently, individuals may experience more comprehensive improvements in their overall psychological well-being.
2. Holistic Approach to Well-Being: The lack of significant correlations between emotional intelligence and social anxiety/self-esteem highlights the need for a holistic approach to mental health and well-being. While emotional intelligence is valuable for understanding and managing emotions, it may not be the sole determinant of social anxiety or self-esteem. Therefore, interventions and therapeutic approaches should consider multiple factors, including cognitive, emotional, and social aspects, to address individuals' complex needs comprehensively.
3. Early Intervention and Prevention: Recognizing the interplay between social anxiety and self-esteem underscores the importance of early intervention and prevention strategies, particularly among vulnerable populations such as adolescents and young adults. By identifying and addressing issues related to social anxiety and self-esteem early

on, mental health professionals, educators, and policymakers can mitigate the negative impact on individuals' psychological development and improve long-term outcomes.

4. Promotion of Emotional Resilience: While emotional intelligence may not directly correlate with social anxiety or self-esteem within your sample, promoting emotional resilience remains crucial for overall well-being. Interventions aimed at enhancing emotional regulation skills, empathy, and interpersonal communication can contribute to individuals' ability to navigate social interactions and manage stress effectively, thereby indirectly influencing social anxiety and self-esteem.

5. Tailored Support and Resources: Recognizing the diversity of individual experiences and needs, it's essential to provide tailored support and resources that address the specific challenges faced by individuals with varying levels of social anxiety and self-esteem. This may involve offering a range of interventions, including individual counseling, group therapy, peer support programs, and self-help resources, to accommodate different preferences and circumstances.

6. Further Research and Exploration: The findings from your correlation analysis provide a foundation for further research and exploration into the complex interrelationships among emotional intelligence, social anxiety, and self-esteem. Future studies could investigate additional factors that may moderate or mediate these relationships, such as personality traits, attachment styles, cultural influences, and environmental stressors, to deepen our understanding and inform more targeted interventions.

In conclusion, the implications of the major findings underscore the importance of adopting a comprehensive and nuanced approach to promoting psychological well-being, addressing social anxiety, and enhancing self-esteem. By recognizing the interplay between these constructs and implementing tailored interventions and support systems, individuals can cultivate greater resilience, improve interpersonal relationships, and achieve more fulfilling and satisfying lives.

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