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## Relationship between Self-Esteem and Examination Anxiety Among Students

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### Abstract :

Examination anxiety is one of the most common psychological problems experienced by students in academic settings. It can negatively influence students' concentration, confidence, and overall academic performance. Self-esteem is an important psychological factor that affects how students perceive their abilities and cope with stressful situations such as examinations. The present study aimed to examine the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety among students.

A descriptive correlational research design was used for the study. The sample consisted of 100 students selected from educational institutions using a random sampling method. Data were collected using standardized psychological instruments, namely the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Examination Anxiety Scale. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated to determine the levels of self-esteem and examination anxiety among students, while Pearson's correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between the two variables.

The results revealed that students demonstrated moderate levels of both self-esteem and examination anxiety. The correlation analysis indicated a moderate negative relationship between the variables ( $r = -0.45$ ), suggesting that students with higher self-esteem tend to experience lower examination anxiety.

**Keywords:** Self-esteem, Examination Anxiety, Students, Academic Stress, Educational Psychology.

### Introduction :

Examinations are an essential component of the educational system. They are widely used to assess students' knowledge, skills, and academic progress. Through examinations, teachers and educational institutions evaluate how effectively students have understood the subject matter. However, despite their importance in the learning process, examinations often create stress and pressure among students. Many students experience feelings of nervousness, fear, and worry when they are required to perform in examination situations. This psychological condition is commonly referred to as **examination anxiety**.

Examination anxiety refers to a feeling of tension, apprehension, or fear that occurs before or during examinations. While a moderate level of anxiety may motivate students to study and prepare more effectively, excessive anxiety can negatively affect their concentration, memory, and ability to recall information during tests. Students who experience high levels of anxiety may find it difficult to focus on questions, organize their thoughts, or demonstrate their knowledge effectively. As a result, examination anxiety can significantly influence students' academic performance and overall learning experience.

One of the important psychological factors that may influence examination anxiety is **self-esteem**. Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their own worth, abilities, and competence. It reflects how individuals perceive themselves and how confident they feel about their capabilities. Students with high self-esteem generally believe in their abilities and are more confident in handling academic challenges. Such students are more likely to approach examinations with a positive attitude and are better able to manage stress and pressure.

On the other hand, students with low self-esteem may doubt their abilities and fear failure in academic tasks. They may develop negative expectations about their performance and feel less confident in their capacity to succeed. These negative perceptions can increase their level of anxiety, especially during examination situations where performance is being evaluated. As a result, low self-esteem may contribute to higher levels of examination anxiety among students.

Understanding the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety is therefore important for educators, psychologists, and parents. If students' self-esteem influences their level of anxiety during examinations, then improving students' confidence and self-belief may help reduce examination stress and promote better academic outcomes. Educational institutions can play a significant role in developing positive self-esteem among students by providing supportive learning environments, encouraging participation, and offering counseling or stress-management programs.

In this context, the present study aims to examine the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety among students. By exploring the levels of these two psychological variables and analyzing their relationship, the study seeks to provide a better understanding of how self-esteem influences students' emotional responses in examination situations. The findings of the study may help educators develop strategies to support students in managing examination anxiety and improving their academic performance.

#### **Objectives of the Study :**

1. To examine the level of self-esteem among students.
2. To study the level of examination anxiety among students.
3. To determine the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety.

#### **Hypotheses :**

1. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety.
2. There is a significant relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety.

#### **Research Methodology :**

The present study adopted a descriptive correlational research design to examine the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety among students. The sample consisted of 100 college students selected through a random sampling method. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses would remain confidential. Data were collected using two standardized psychological instruments: the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Examination Anxiety Scale.

After collecting the responses, the data were organized and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated to determine the levels of self-esteem and examination anxiety. In addition, Pearson's correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between the two variables and to understand the strength and direction of their association.

### Descriptive Statistics :

**Table 1 Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Self-Esteem	100	27.75	3.74	18.97	35.00
Examination Anxiety	100	31.33	3.41	23.04	40.39

The above Table presents the descriptive statistics for the variables self-esteem and examination anxiety among the sample of 100 students. The results indicate that the mean score of self-esteem is **27.75**, with a standard deviation of **3.74**. The minimum score recorded for self-esteem is **18.97**, while the maximum score is **35.00**. These values suggest that the level of self-esteem among students in the sample is generally **moderate**, although some variation exists among individuals.

The table also shows that the mean score of examination anxiety is **31.33**, with a standard deviation of **3.41**. The minimum score of examination anxiety is **23.04**, and the maximum score is **40.39**. This indicates that students in the study experience **moderate levels of examination anxiety**, with some students reporting lower anxiety levels while others experience relatively higher anxiety.

The relatively moderate standard deviation values for both variables suggest that the responses are **fairly consistent across participants**, with no extreme variability in the scores. Overall, the descriptive statistics indicate that while students possess moderate self-esteem, they also experience moderate levels of examination anxiety, highlighting the importance of examining the relationship between these two psychological variables.

### Correlation Between Self-Esteem and Examination Anxiety

Variables	Self-Esteem	Examination Anxiety
Self-Esteem	1	-0.45
Examination Anxiety	-0.45	1

Table no 2 presents the Pearson correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety among students. The correlation coefficient between self-esteem and examination anxiety is  $r = -0.45$ , which indicates a moderate

negative relationship between the two variables. A negative correlation means that the variables move in opposite directions. In this study, it suggests that as self-esteem increases, examination anxiety tends to decrease.

Students who have higher levels of self-esteem generally possess greater confidence in their abilities and are better able to manage academic pressure and examination stress. Consequently, they tend to experience lower levels of anxiety during examinations. In contrast, students with lower self-esteem are more likely to experience higher levels of examination anxiety. These students may doubt their abilities, fear failure, and feel less confident about their academic performance, which may increase their level of worry and nervousness during examinations.

Overall, the findings indicate that self-esteem plays an important role in influencing students' experience of examination anxiety, highlighting the need to promote positive self-esteem among students.

#### self-esteem and examination anxiety among students.

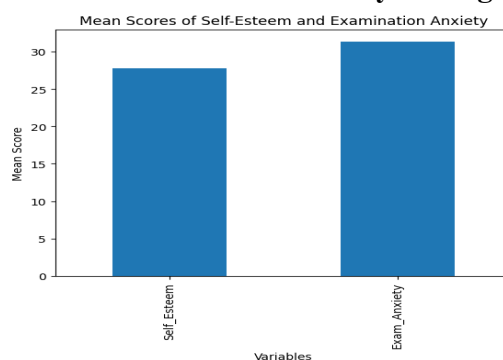


Figure 1 presents a bar chart illustrating the mean scores of self-esteem and examination anxiety among the students included in the study. The mean score of self-esteem is 27.75, while the mean score of examination anxiety is 31.33. The graphical representation allows an easy comparison of the two variables and helps in understanding the general trend of the data.

The bar chart indicates that students demonstrate moderate levels of both self-esteem and examination anxiety. Although students appear to have a reasonable level of self-confidence, examinations still create noticeable psychological pressure. This suggests that academic expectations, fear of failure, and performance pressure may contribute to anxiety among students.

The comparison of the two mean scores shows that even students with moderate self-esteem may experience examination stress. Therefore, the graph highlights the need for supportive academic environments and strategies such as counseling and stress-management programs to help students improve their coping abilities and emotional resilience during examinations.

#### Examination Anxiety Distribution

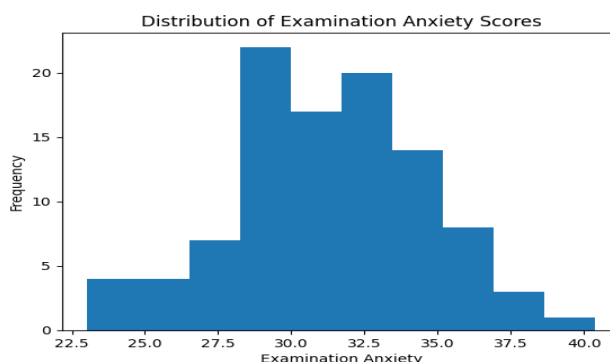


Figure 2 presents a histogram illustrating the distribution of examination anxiety scores among the students included in the study. The histogram visually represents how the anxiety scores are spread across the sample population. The graph shows that most students' scores fall within the range of 28 to 34, indicating a moderate level of examination anxiety among the majority of participants.

The frequency of scores within this range is higher compared to other score ranges, suggesting that many students experience similar levels of examination-related stress. The distribution appears relatively normal and symmetrical, which indicates that anxiety levels are fairly evenly distributed without extreme variations. Only a small number of students show very low or very high levels of anxiety.

Overall, the histogram demonstrates that examination anxiety is a common experience among students, highlighting the need for psychological support and stress-management strategies in educational institutions.

#### Relationship between Self-Esteem and Examination Anxiety.

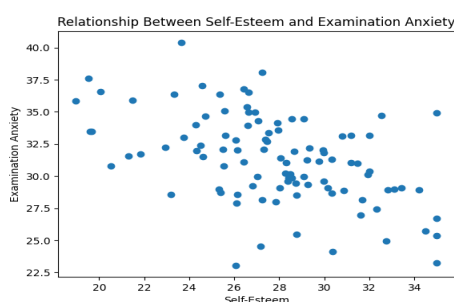


Figure 3 presents a scatter plot illustrating the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety among students. Each point on the graph represents the score of an individual student on both variables. The pattern of points helps in understanding the direction and nature of the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety.

The scatter plot shows a downward trend, indicating a negative relationship between the two variables. As the scores of self-esteem increase along the horizontal axis, the scores of examination anxiety tend to decrease along the vertical axis. This visual pattern supports the results obtained from the Pearson correlation analysis.

Students with higher levels of self-esteem tend to experience lower examination anxiety, whereas those with lower self-esteem report higher anxiety. Overall, the scatter plot visually

confirms that improving students' self-esteem may help reduce examination anxiety and support better emotional adjustment.

### Discussion :

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety among students. The results of the statistical analysis revealed a moderate negative correlation ( $r = -0.45$ ) between the two variables. This indicates that students with higher levels of self-esteem tend to experience lower levels of examination anxiety, whereas students with lower self-esteem are more likely to experience higher anxiety during examinations. This finding highlights the important role of self-esteem in influencing students' emotional responses in academic situations.

The descriptive statistics showed that students in the sample demonstrated moderate levels of both self-esteem and examination anxiety. This suggests that examination stress is a common experience among students in academic environments. Examinations often involve high expectations from teachers, parents, and society, which can create pressure and feelings of nervousness among students. Even students with reasonable confidence in their abilities may feel anxious when faced with performance evaluation and time pressure during examinations.

The negative relationship found in this study suggests that self-esteem acts as a protective psychological factor against examination anxiety. Students with higher self-esteem generally have greater confidence in their abilities and maintain a positive self-image. As a result, they are better able to cope with academic challenges and manage examination stress effectively. They are more likely to view examinations as opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge rather than as threatening situations.

In contrast, students with low self-esteem may doubt their abilities and fear failure. These negative thoughts can increase worry, tension, and nervousness during examinations. Such anxiety may interfere with concentration, memory, and problem-solving abilities, which may ultimately affect academic performance.

The graphical analyses presented through the bar chart, histogram, and scatter plot further support the statistical findings. Overall, the results emphasize the importance of promoting positive self-esteem among students. Educational institutions should therefore encourage supportive learning environments, provide counseling services, and organize stress-management programs to help students improve their confidence and reduce examination anxiety.

### Major Findings :

1. The mean score of **self-esteem (27.75)** indicates that most students possess a **moderate level of self-esteem** and have a reasonable level of confidence in their abilities.
2. The mean score of **examination anxiety (31.33)** shows that students experience a **moderate level of anxiety during examinations**, suggesting that examination stress is common among students.
3. The **standard deviation values** show moderate variation in the responses, indicating that the scores of students are relatively consistent within the sample.

4. The **Pearson correlation analysis** revealed a **moderate negative relationship** ( $r = -0.45$ ) between self-esteem and examination anxiety.
5. The negative correlation indicates that **students with higher self-esteem tend to experience lower levels of examination anxiety**, whereas **students with lower self-esteem are more likely to experience higher anxiety** during examinations.
6. The **graphical analysis (bar chart, histogram, and scatter plot)** also supports the statistical findings and clearly shows the inverse relationship between the two variables.
7. Overall, the findings suggest that **self-esteem plays an important psychological role in helping students manage examination stress and academic pressure.**

### **Conclusion :**

The present study examined the relationship between self-esteem and examination anxiety among students and found a moderate negative relationship between the two variables. The results indicate that students with higher self-esteem tend to experience lower levels of examination anxiety, while students with lower self-esteem are more likely to experience higher anxiety during examinations. Self-esteem plays an important role in shaping students' confidence, emotional stability, and ability to cope with academic stress.

Students with positive self-esteem generally show greater confidence in their abilities and are better able to manage examination pressure. In contrast, students with low self-esteem often experience fear of failure, self-doubt, and nervousness, which may increase their level of anxiety during examinations. Therefore, promoting positive self-esteem among students is essential for improving their psychological well-being.

Educational institutions, teachers, and parents should encourage supportive learning environments and provide guidance and counseling that help students develop confidence and effective coping strategies.

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