

# THE IMPACT OF SELF-ESTEEM AND LIFE SATISFACTION ON SELF-EFFICACY AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN FAISALABAD, PAKISTAN

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## Abstract:

The paper presents the connections between self-esteem, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy among college students. Considering that the levels of stress and life satisfaction decrease with the difficulties that students have to address, the study examined the impact of self-esteem and life satisfaction on self-efficacy, which is the key to personal and academic achievement. The study utilized a sample of 270 college students of Faisalabad to measure self-esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy using standardized scales. The results showed that the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy is significant ( $r = -0.24, p < 0.01$ ), meaning that the low self-esteem correlates with low self-efficacy. Conversely, self-efficacy was positively associated with life satisfaction ( $r = 0.25, p < 0.01$ ), which implied that increased life satisfaction is a factor that leads to more confidence in the abilities of a person. Besides, life satisfaction was correlated with self esteem in a negative manner ( $r = -0.20, p < 0.01$ ) suggesting that high self esteem is not necessarily associated with high life satisfaction perhaps because of expectations and pressures. These findings are in line with the Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura (1997), who points out the significance of positive self-beliefs and emotional well-being on the determination of self-efficacy. The paper has shown the importance of promoting self-esteem and life satisfaction to improve self-efficacy, especially in educational institutions, and the future research should investigate the mechanisms and cultural factors behind these relationships.

**Keywords:** Self-Efficacy, Self-esteem, Life Satisfaction, College Students, Psychological Well-being, Academic Success.

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## INTRODUCTION:

The modern digital environment, where instant gratification comes as an access to the internet and the utilization of the social media, has experienced an impressive increase in the number of sedentary lifestyles. In conjunction with this, other stress causative factors, especially the ones that students are exposed to, lead to a reduction in the level of life satisfaction and a rise in their level of stress. It is this concern that has led to the interest in knowing the interrelationship between self-efficacy, self-esteem and life satisfaction. Self-esteem as one of the main factors determining the individual value has been previously investigated in psychological and educational studies (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, and Vohs, 2003). It has also been identified that narcissism and its role in self-esteem have been identified, but it is all too frequently stated that self esteem does not necessarily translate into academic achievement but as a consequence of success in academics, it may result in an increase in self esteem. Self-efficacy, which refers to the belief that an individual has in his or her ability to succeed, is very important in promoting success in various undertakings in the context of this study. College students, who are in their developmental stage in life, are the most suitable group to study the issue of how these psychological constructs influence the academic and personal success of college students.

### Definition of the Terms:

#### Self-Esteem:

Self-esteem is the total assessment of the worth of a person either good or bad as perceived by the person (Rosenberg, 1965). It is said to be a cognitive assessment as well as an affective assessment of self. High self-esteem is a sign of support in the capabilities and knowledge of value of self worthiness and success. Empirical studies have emphasized that self esteem is vital in career development, career choices and general satisfaction with life. An example is that low self-esteem was linked to career indecision whereas self-efficacy and self-esteem showed a positive relationship concerning career decisions (Choi et al., 2015). The research indicates that when self-esteem is high, as a person will take action towards proficiency, they will experience higher career success, higher satisfaction in life and their psychological well-being (Lent & Fouad, 2013).

**Life Satisfaction:**

Life satisfaction can be described as a cognitive judgement of the overall life as one evaluates his/her life, which is usually based on mood, relationships, goal accomplishment, and his/her capacity to handle the issues of life (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985). Good life experiences that foster the feeling of satisfaction serve as powerful stimulants to goal-pursuing. The other important emotions are hope and optimism which also lead to satisfaction in life and the research revealed that positive thinking is closely related to the life satisfaction whereas negative thinking is related to the depressive symptoms (Seligman, 2002). During the adolescence period academic success, social competence and capability to avoid risky behavior contributes a lot to increased life satisfaction (Roeser et al., 1999).

**Self-Efficacy:**

The self-efficacy is the conviction of the capability of a person to complete something and meet the objectives (Bandura, 1997). It affects various aspects of life, in particular, decision-making and coping mechanisms. It has been established that self-efficacy greatly affects health behaviors since high self-efficacy levels enable individuals to cope better with stress and also believe that challenges are an opportunity to learn (Luszczynska and Schwarzer, 2005). Conversely the individuals with low self-efficacy have more anxiety and view the tasks as challenging than they are. Moreover, self-efficacy is important in life satisfaction where studies have revealed that a person with stronger self-efficacy will have higher reports on life satisfaction (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985). Moreover, increased self-efficacy prevents the adverse effects of stress on life satisfaction (Burger et al., 2016). The following paper will examine such interconnections in order to gain a more in-depth insight into how the three concepts of self-esteem, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy influence each other in a collective manner to form a psychological well-being.

**Research questions:**

1. Do self-esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy have a significant relationship amid college students?
2. Is self-esteem a predictor of self-efficacy among college students?
3. Does life satisfaction play an important role in predicting self efficacy among college students?
4. Are demographic variables (gender, residence (urban vs. rural), and socioeconomic status) related to self-esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy among college students?

**Objectives:**

- To determine the correlation between self-esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy among college students.
- To investigate how self-esteem and satisfaction of life affect self-efficacy in college students.
- To gain access to the predictive value of self-efficacy in defining levels of self-esteem and life-satisfaction amongst college students.

**Hypothesis:**

- There is correlation between self-esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy among college students.
- Self-esteem is a major predictor of self-efficacy in college students.
- Self-efficacy is largely predicted by life satisfaction in college students.

**LITERATURE REVIEW:**

The issue of self-esteem and life satisfaction has been identified as a significant factor that can affect different psychological and behavioral outcomes in people. Self-efficacy is one of the consequences that have been highly considered because it shows the belief of an individual to complete the tasks and accomplish goals (Bandura, 1997). The scholars have also examined the relationship between self-esteem and satisfaction in life as predictors of self-efficacy especially among college students who experience numerous academic and social problems throughout their studies.

Self-esteem, which is a subjective assessment of one on the worth (Rosenberg, 1965), is important in determining how individuals see themselves in regard to their abilities. The research indicates that self-esteem correlates with a high level of self-efficacy (Moirangthem, 2023). Students with a high degree of self-esteem are more confident about their academic and personal skills, which results in increased levels of self-efficacy (Rezaei, Bayani, and Shariatnia, 2015). Moreover, self-esteem increases the resilience of the academic challenge and stressor to the individual (Wilcox and

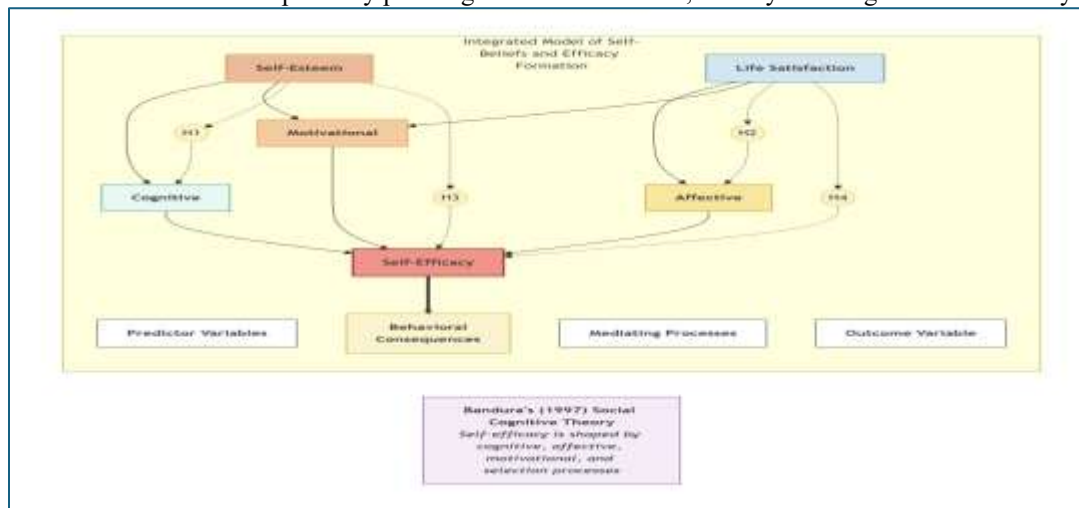
Nordstokke, 2019). In this way, high self-esteem students are more likely to feel pushed through when they face a failure, which enhances their self-efficacy.

Another important predictor is life satisfaction which is a cognitive determination of the quality of his life as a whole (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985). It has been demonstrated that life satisfaction is connected to greater motivation and goal-setting practices (Joseph, Royse, Larsen, and Pekmezi, 2014). College students with increased pattern of life satisfaction show improved performance in academic work and with increased tendency to view themselves as capable to perform in different academic activities (Khaleghinezhad and Shabani, 2016). Moreover, life satisfaction improves emotional wellbeing, which also results in increased belief in self-efficacy (Moirangthem, 2023). The relationship between self-esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy has been brought out in several studies. As an example, it was highlighted in a study by Ling and Ee (2023) that self-esteem and life satisfaction were predictors of academic self-efficacy and academic achievement among university students. The authors established that students who rated themselves as more self-esteemed and satisfied with life had better chances of feeling competent in their academic potential and the same showed in their academic performance. Equally, researchers such as O'Sullivan (2011) have examined the importance of life satisfaction in predicting self efficacy where the authors have opined that life satisfaction and emotional well being have a role to play in how students view their abilities in different areas of life, which include academics and personal life.

Consistent with these findings, recent researches have indicated that the joint association of self esteem and life satisfaction can provide an effective base of increased self-efficacy in college students. According to a study conducted by Moirangthem (2023), self-efficacy was positively related to self-esteem and life satisfaction, which implies that participants with a high level of personal value and life satisfaction tend to believe in their power to achieve success in their academic and personal activities.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Social Cognitive theory proposed by Bandura (1997) is a helpful model that can be applied to the issue of self-esteem, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy. This theory states that cognitive, emotional, and motivational processes have a way of shaping self-efficacy. Self esteem is essential in increasing self-efficacy since with positive self-perceptions, people tend to carry out tasks with confidence and perseverance with the result of achieving more success (Bandura, 1997). Moreover, life satisfaction, which shows the general assessment of the quality of life of a person creates positive emotional conditions that enhance self-efficacy. In cases where individuals are content in their lives, positive feelings are generated and increases motivation and optimism on their abilities to achieve (Diener et al., 1985; Bandura, 1997). Consequently, self-esteem and life satisfaction also help a person in believing in his/her ability to accomplish and goals, which highlights the essence of positive self-beliefs and moods in the development of self-efficacy among college students. This framework brings out the importance of the fact that students who are competent and satisfied with their lives will more probably pursue goal-oriented actions, thereby boosting their self-efficacy.



The diagram depicts the Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (1997), the connection between self-esteem and life satisfaction with self-efficacy in influencing cognitive, motivational and affective processes. It emphasizes the effect of these factors on the result of behavior and the development of self-efficacy.

#### Research Gap:

Despite the fact that much research has been done on the personal impact of self esteem and life satisfaction on self efficacy, there is also a significant gap in the knowledge of how the two work together to influence self efficacy in

college students. Although research has identified self-esteem and self-efficacy (Rezaei, Bayani, and Shariatnia, 2015) and life satisfaction and self-efficacy (Moirangthem, 2023) are interconnected, little has been done to determine the overall effect of these variables on academic and personal growth among students. Also, literature tends to explain self-esteem and life satisfaction as independent predictors, which is why synergies between these two constructs in promoting self-efficacy have not been taken into account. This study will fill this gap looking into the extent to which self-esteem and life satisfaction together as predictors of self-efficacy among college students influence both academic performance and psychological well-being. And thirdly, although much of the existing research has relied on a general population, very little has been done to specifically examine such relationships within the specific framework of college students, a group that is in transitioning some key aspects of their lives.

**METHODOLOGY:**

This analysis was based on a survey research design and purposive sample which constituted 270 college students (120 males, 150 females) aged between 15 and 20 years and who were enrolled in the Faisalabad district, the Graduate College of Samnabad and the Government Girls Higher Secondary College. The inclusion criteria were that the respondents had to be college students of Faisalabad and those in matriculation programs or who were not within the district were not to be included.

A variety of standardized scales were used to obtain the data: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) to measure self-esteem, Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) to measure life satisfaction, and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) to measure self-efficacy. The correlation between self esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy was analyzed utilizing SPSS to determine the relationships between them. Informed consent and confidentiality were followed in the study and ethical approval to conduct the research was given by Ethics review board at the graduate college of Samnabad.

**Data Analysis:**

**Table 1** *Participant Characteristics of College Students*

Characteristics	N	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	120	44.4
Female	150	55.6
<b>Birth Order</b>		
First	72	26.7
Second	65	24.1
Third	43	15.9
Fourth	31	11.5
Fifth	30	11.1
Sixth	12	4.4
Seventh	6	2.2
Last Born	9	3.3
<b>Family System</b>		
Nuclear	172	63.7
Joint	98	36.3
<b>Residential Area</b>		
Urban	228	84.4
Rural	42	15.6
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>		
Upper	18	6.7
Middle	243	90.0
Lower	9	3.3
<b>Religion</b>		

Characteristics	N	%
Muslims	265	98.1
Non-Muslims	5	1.9

**Note.**  $N = 270$  ( $n = 120$  males and  $n = 150$  females).

The sample of the study in terms of participant was diverse with a representation of college students. Most of the respondents were women (55.6%), but 44.4% included males. In terms of birth order, 26.7 percent of the participants were first born (26.7), and 24.1 percent were second born (24.1), with the low number (7.5) of third or above-born participants. The percentage of the participants who lived in a nuclear family was large (63.7%), and most of them lived in cities (84.4%). The socioeconomic status was majorly middle class (90.0%), and the percentage made up of the upper (6.7%), and lower (3.3%) socioeconomic classes. The predominant religion was Muslim which constituted 98.1 percent of the sample. These features indicate that it is an urban and mostly middle-class and predominantly Muslim in nature with a mixed gender composition which reflects the demographic structure of college students in the area.

**Table 2 Psychometric Properties for Scales**

Scale	M	SD	Range
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale	20.21	2.60	12-29
Life Satisfaction Scale	24.03	5.18	7-34
Self-Efficacy Scale	29.76	4.25	15-38

**Note.**  $M =$  Sample Mean,  $SD =$  Standard Deviation, Range shows minimum and maximum scores.

There was a moderate variability of the scores in the psychometric properties of the scales. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale ( $M = 20.21$ ,  $SD = 2.60$ ) indicated moderate self-esteem whereas the Life Satisfaction Scale ( $M = 24.03$ ,  $SD = 5.18$ ) indicated general satisfaction with life. Self-efficacy was comparatively high with the Self-Efficacy Scale ( $M = 29.76$ ,  $SD = 4.25$ ) giving a great difference in the scores of all the scales.

**Table 3 Multiple Regression Coefficients for Study Variables**

Variables	B	SE	t	P	95% CI
Constant	32.287	2.488	12.978	.000	[27.39, 37.19]
Rosenberg Self-Esteem	-0.329	0.097	-3.392	.001	[-0.52, -0.138]
Satisfaction with Life	0.171	0.049	3.527	.000	[0.076, 0.27]

**Notes.**  $N = 110$ ,  $B =$  Regression coefficient,  $SE =$  Standard Error,  $CI =$  Confidence Interval.

As seen in the regression analysis, self-esteem was a significant negative predictor of the dependent variable ( $B = -0.329$ ,  $p = .001$ ), which means that the higher the self-esteem, the lower the scores on the dependent construct. Conversely, satisfaction with life was a strong positive predictor ( $B = 0.171$ ,  $p = .000$ ) which implied that the greater the life satisfaction, the greater the score in the dependent variable. The constant ( $B = 32.287$ ,  $p = .000$ ) was important and this shows the baseline of the dependent variable when predictors take the value of zero.

**Table 4 Correlations for Study Variables**

Variables	N	M	SD	1	2	3
Self-Efficacy	270	29.76	4.25			
Self-Esteem	270	20.21	2.59	-0.24**		
Life Satisfaction	270	24.03	5.18	0.25**	-0.20**	

**Note.** \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 4 shows that there is a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and self-esteem ( $r = -0.24$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and life satisfaction ( $r = 0.25$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Self-esteem is also related to life satisfaction negatively ( $r = -0.20$ ,  $p < .01$ ). These findings imply that the higher the self-efficacy the better the life satisfaction and the less the self-esteem, the less the life satisfaction.

## DISCUSSION:

The current research investigated the connections between self-esteem and life satisfaction as well as self-efficacy among college students in Faisalabad, which provided important insights that are consistent with and generalized literature. The findings indicated a relatively high negative association between self-esteem and self-efficacy ( $r = -0.24, p < 0.01$ ) indicating that students with low self-esteem are likely to have a low self-efficacy. The same result is aligned with the previous research, which opined that the self-esteem is one of the key factors influencing the perceptions of people about their abilities and overall sense of competence (Rezaei, Bayani, and Shariatnia, 2015). Bandura (1997) postulates that self-efficacy is dependent on self beliefs, and people with more self esteem tend to exhibit confidence in their abilities. But it is possible that the negative correlation observed in this research is due to other factors such as social comparison or unrealistic expectations which are to be investigated further.

Conversely, self-efficacy and life satisfaction were found to have positive correlation ( $r = 0.25, p < 0.01$ ), which confirms the assumption that students with optimistic belief in their self-efficacy have higher life satisfaction. This finding can be correlated with the current literature by Moirangthem (2023), who emphasized that those who possess greater self-efficacy tend to be more inclined to become more goal-setting, feel positive emotions, which, in the end, contributes to a more significant life satisfaction. It also follows the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997) which is based on the premise that self-efficacy is related to emotional well-being and motivation which are the determining factors to the overall satisfaction of the life of an individual.

Another result of the study was that there was a negative association found between self-esteem and life satisfaction ( $r = -0.20, p < 0.01$ ), whereas some literature indicated that there exists a positive relationship between the two constructs (Diener et al., 1985). This was a surprising observation that could be used to suggest that people with high self-esteem may have more pressure to achieve personal expectations and hence become dissatisfied although they have a positive self-image. It may also be a symptom of other underlying causes, e.g. perfectionism or social comparison that were not directly measured in the current study. Previous studies, such as those by Proctor et al. (2009), had identified a positive relationship between an individual's self-esteem and the levels of satisfaction with their lives, however the results here may indicate that the two variables are more intertwined and that more studies should be conducted to determine the interactions between these two variables in various settings.

On the demographic variables, the researcher established that urban students also had high levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction than students in rural areas, which aligns with the results of Wilcox and Nordstokke (2019). These writers pointed out that those students living in the urban areas usually have superior access to resources, social circles, and opportunities, which have the potential to lead to the increase of self-esteem and the rise of life satisfaction. This is in line with the wider literature of how the environmental factors influence psychological wellbeing and academic performance (Khaleghinezhad and Shabani, 2016). The variations noted in urban and rural students imply that the environmental setting is important in determining self-esteem, life satisfaction and self efficacy.

The findings also present the role of nurturing self-efficacy as it has been demonstrated to be positively contributed by life satisfaction and self-esteem. The finding is similar to the results obtained by Moirangthem (2023) who established a positive association between self-esteem and self-efficacy. This underscores the importance of intercessions that will enhance self-esteem and life satisfaction to enhance self-efficacy of students which is an important aspect of both academic and personal success.

## CONCLUSION:

The research offers ample information on the connections between self-esteem, life satisfaction, and self-efficacy in Faisalabad among college students. These findings prove that self-efficacy is a significant positive predictor of life satisfaction in favor of Hypothesis 3 ( $B = 0.171, p = 0.000$ ). This observation is consistent with the literature as it points out that people experiencing more life satisfaction are more likely to believe in their potential. Nevertheless, Hypothesis 1 that postulated the positive relationship between self-esteem, life satisfaction and self-efficacy was partially supported as there was significant negative correlation between self-esteem and self-efficacy ( $r = -0.24, p < 0.01$ ). This undesirable interconnection between self-esteem and self-efficacy came as a surprise, and it indicates that in this sample, increased self-esteem does not necessarily correlate with increased self-efficacy. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 that self-esteem would positively predict self-efficacy was rejected ( $B = -0.329, p = 0.001$ ). The negative forecast requires additional research to investigate the factors that control this relationship and whether any factors, including culture, environment, and personal one, can have an impact.

Conclusively, although life satisfaction has a positive impact on self-efficacy, the connection between self-esteem and self-efficacy is negative, and it needs to be investigated. The practical implications of these findings are that the interventions that should be created to help in improving the self-efficacy particularly by improving the life satisfaction. Additional studies are warranted into the complex interactions between self-esteem and self-efficacy and the role of outside influences in determining these two variables.

## Suggestions

- Increase the Sample: Have a more diverse and larger sample of geographical locations, level of education, and demographics in order to increase the generalizability.
- Longitudinal Studies: The longitudinal designs are used to determine causations and the impact of self-esteem and life-satisfaction in the long-run on self-efficacy.
- Objective Measures: Add objective measures/ratings by peers to reduce bias related to self-report and increase the reliability of the data.
- Test More Predictors: Test other predictors (e.g. academic motivation and social support) which could influence self-efficacy.
- Intervention Programs: Determine the level of effectiveness of the programs that may assist in improving self-esteem and life satisfaction to improve self-efficacy and academic performance.
- Cross-Cultural Studies: Form relationships in other cultures by carrying out research in other populations.

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