



A STUDY ON SELF-ESTEEM AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG STREET CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT Self esteem can be defined as the way in which people perceives himself/ herself. It is a judgment of oneself as well as feelings toward the self. Emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability to correctly understand, evaluate and communicate emotions. Individuals who can comprehend and direct their emotions are able to generally maintain a better view of life and go through better psychological well-being as compared to those who can't. The present study was done to explore the relationship between self esteem and emotional intelligence among street children. The study was conducted with the sample size 80 street children (40 boys=40 girls) between the age group of 5-16 years. The study was conducted in some selected areas of Lucknow city. Self esteem was measured by Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale (RSES) and Emotional Intelligence was measured using Emotional Intelligence Scale EIS-sans. The data was analyzed by t-test, f test and correlation. Coefficient of correlation was used in order to find out the relationship between self esteem and emotional intelligence among street children and it was found that girls are more emotionally intelligent as compare to boys. Results indicated a positive correlation between self esteem and emotional intelligence. The study concluded that development of positive self esteem and emotional intelligence play a vital role in the life of street children.

KEYWORDS : Street children, Self- Esteem, emotional intelligence.

INTRODUCTION: Self esteem can be defined as the way in which people perceives himself/ herself. It is a judgment of oneself as well as feelings toward the self. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs about oneself. In contrast, self esteem means that how people think about themselves, how much they like themselves and whether they are satisfied about their performance especially what their response is about their social and educational condition and how much coordination is there between their ideal and real selves (Husseini,2007)

People are often described as having either high self esteem, meaning they think very well of oneself and their ability. People with low self esteem indicate that they are filled with suspicions and criticisms about themselves and their ability. People with low self esteem may experience many troubles in their lives. It is a well proven concept self esteem developed during the childhood will last all through the life. Self esteem can be defined as the way in which child recognize himself or herself. The development of healthy self esteem begins during infancy when infant and caregiver create an emotional bond. As children get older their social experiences and success and disappointment effect their development of high and low self esteem. Children with positive self esteem will generally approach things thinking they are good who deserve love and support and in life. (Gray, 2001)

Children with low self-esteem rely on coping strategies that are counterproductive such as bullying, quitting, cheating, avoiding etc. Although all children will show some of these behavior at times, low self-esteem is strongly indicated when these behaviors appear with regularity. In public, children with low self-esteem can be withdrawn or shy, and find it difficult to have fun. Even though they may have a large circle of friends they are more likely to yield to group pressure and more vulnerable to being bullied. At school they keep away from trying new things (for fear of failure) and will give up easily.

All humans have a need to be appreciated and to have self-esteem and self-respect. Esteem presents the normal human want to be accepted and valued by others. People need to engage themselves to gain appreciation and have activities that give the person a sense of contribution, to feel self-valued. Discrepancy at this level can result in low self-esteem or an inferiority complex. Street children will still have problems interacting with peers and adults outside the institutions. Furthermore, Children with high self-esteem have a much closer relationship with their parents and peers than do children with low self-esteem (Hodges and Tizard, 1989a, Gunnar et al, 2007).

Children of different ages have different developmental levels of cognitive and emotional resources that may influence how they respond to parental separation and divorce. While some reports demonstrate that children of particular ages, in a study conducted by

Palosaari and Aro (1995), reported that lower self-esteem at the age of 16 was more common among girls from divorced families. However boys from divorced and non-divorced families did not differ from each other. The prevalence of depression was highest among children from divorced families who had reported low self-esteem at the age of 16. Mruk in 1995 also noted that children with parents who are absent regularly or for long periods of time display lower levels of self-esteem. In another study, it was found out that two years after the divorce, children display lower levels of social and poor functioning as well as lower self-esteem, than they did immediately following the divorce. Self-esteem can be defined as a value that has information within self-imagination of a person and it is shaped by the person's beliefs about all attribute, aspects and personality within him. Several researches have proved that there exists a positive relationship between the emotional intelligence and self-esteem.

Tosang et al. conducted a quantitative study to investigate the relationship between self-esteem with Emotional Intelligence and marital satisfaction among women in Karaj in Iran. Study was conducted with the sample of 100 women with simple random sampling framework. It was found positive relationship exists between the self-esteem and emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction among women in Karaj in Iran.

Maxwell (1992) studied hostility, depression and self-esteem among troubled, abused, neglected and homeless adolescents. This heuristic study found evidence that suggests that the adolescent participants in the sample showed greater hostility, greater depression and lower self-esteem. **Smith and Mackie (2007)** defined it by saying self-esteem, is the positive or negative evaluation of the self, as in how we feel about it."

Olubunmi (2015) - conducted a study on age and gender as determinants of street children self-esteem and risk attitude and examined whether there were differences in self-esteem and risk taking attitudes based on gender and age.

Emotional intelligence refers to the capability to perceive, direct, and evaluate emotions. Some researchers suggest that emotional intelligence can be learned and strengthened, while other claims it is an inherent characteristic. Emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability to correctly understand, evaluate and communicate emotions. Individuals who can comprehend and direct their emotions are able to generally maintain a better view of life and go through better psychological well-being as compared to those who can't. Emotional intelligence can be defined as the skill to supervise one's own and other people's emotions, to distinguish between different emotions and label them properly, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior. Emotional intelligence also reflects abilities to join intelligence, empathy and emotions to improve thought and

understanding of interpersonal dynamics.

The emotional intelligence is considered a subject that attempts to explain, understand and interpret the individual's emotion, pleasures and ability condition. The emotional intelligence has also been defined as an ability to comprehend the emotions in order for evaluating thoughts, good manners and to put them in a way that makes emotion and intelligent growth and maturity. Various testing tools have been developed to measure emotional intelligence, although the content and approach of each test varies. If a child has high emotional intelligence, he or she is more likely to be able to express his or her emotions in a healthy way, and understand the emotions of those he or she works with, thus enhancing work relationships and performance. Emotional Intelligence is not about being soft. It is a different way of being smart having the ability to use his or her emotions to help them make choices in the moment and have more effective control over themselves and their impact on others. Emotional Intelligence, as a psychological theory, was developed by Salovey and John Mayer. "Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thinking, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to sympathetically regulate emotions so as to encourage emotional and intellectual growth." (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Research has explored that girls have higher emotional intelligence than boys because girls are more emotional and warm in relationship than boys, so they are considered more emotionally intelligent as compared to boys. Society plays a vital role in making girls more emotionally intelligent. Moreover, higher emotional intelligence among girls are expected to be more warming, emphatic and social and they are reared in a way which make them more emotionally intelligent.

Oliviera, Baiserman and Pellet (1992) studied 71 Brazilian street children aged from 8-18 years, where he evaluated the mental health status of these children. He found several resilience characteristics, including a high degree of intelligence, a concern for each other and good self-esteem.

Mayer et al. (2000) also showed with a sequence of studies that emotional intelligence increased with age and experience which qualifies it as ability rather than a personality trait.

Katyal and Awasthi (2005) studied the gender differences in emotional intelligence among the adolescents of government schools in Chandigarh. It was found that majority of the boys; girls had good followed by low emotional intelligence. Girls were found to have higher emotional intelligence than that of boys. Though the difference touched only 0.10 levels, the conclusions are just suggestive of the trend.

Bastia et al. (2005) claimed that people with advanced emotional intelligence are more satisfied in their life and they perceived better problem solving and coping ability. A different study shows different amazing results on emotional intelligence.

OBJECTIVE

To determine the relationship between self esteem and emotional intelligence among street children

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was planned to investigate relationship between self esteem and emotional intelligence of children living on street. As per objectives, the study was conducted in some selected areas of Lucknow city. For the present research, snowball sampling technique was adopted to select street children as a sample. The sample was selected from various crowded places, inclusive of children from railway station, bus depots, slum area, market place, and temple. For the proposed study, 80 street children in the age group of 5-16, from various places were selected. Variable is a set of value that forms a classification. A value is anything which can be predicted. For the present study, the variables have been grouped in two types, the dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable is the factor that is measured to determine the effect of independent variables. Self esteem and emotional intelligence was taken as dependent variable. Self esteem was assessed by Rosenberg's Self esteem Scale (RSES), a 20-item scale that measures participant's self-esteem at a given point in time. The 20 items are subdivided in to 3 components of self-esteem, performance self-esteem, social self-esteem and appearance self-esteem. All items are answered using a 5-

point scale not at all, a little bit, somewhat, very much, extremely. Emotional intelligence was assessed by using Emotional Intelligence Scale EIS- sans. The relationship between both the variables across various independent variables was studied and compared.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Assessment of emotional intelligence of street children

Table 1: Self esteem among street children across gender

| Variable | Gender | | | | T value | P value |
|-------------|--------|------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| | Boys | | Girls | | | |
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| Self-esteem | 61.133 | 5.11 | 60.17 | 6.01 | .195 | .660 |

It is evident from the data presented in the table above that even though no significant differences were found in self esteem among boys and girls, from mean scores, it can be noted that the self esteem of boys is higher than girls. This may be due to the reason that girls may be prone to various kinds of abuses lower their self esteem.

Table 2: Self-esteem among street children across age

| Variables | Age | | | T value | P value |
|-------------|-------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| | Mean | SD | | | |
| Self esteem | 5-7 | 56.50 | 4.53 | 3.27** | .026 |
| | 8-10 | 60.11 | 5.39 | | |
| | 11-13 | 60.45 | 5.34 | | |
| | 14-16 | 63.09 | 5.35 | | |
| | Total | 60.71 | 5.51 | | |

Highly significant differences in the self esteem across various age groups is evident from the data presented in the table 2. It can be portrayed from the data that as the age increased, self esteem also was found to be increased. Almost similar pattern of self esteem was found in the children in the age group of 8-10 years and 11-13 years. Increase of self esteem with age indicates influences of enhanced coverage to face the society and other related factors.

Table 3: Self-esteem among street children and Parent's presence

| Variable | Self esteem | | T value | P value |
|----------|-----------------|-------|---------|---------|
| | Parent presence | | | |
| | Mean | SD | | |
| Yes | 61.01 | 5.20 | 2.79* | .098 |
| No | 59.7 | 5.46 | | |
| Total | 120.71 | 10.66 | | |

A significant difference in the mean values is evident due to presence of parents. Children living with parents feel protected and evidently have higher self esteem in comparison to children who do not have parents. This may be due to the protection provided by the parents.

Table 4: Self-esteem among street children across category of children

| Variable | Self esteem | | T value | P value |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------|---------|---------|
| | Category of children | | | |
| | Mean | SD | | |
| Slum area | 59.91 | 5.27 | .580 | .678 |
| Railway station | 62.33 | 6.020 | | |
| Bus station | 61.83 | 4.62 | | |
| Street/roadside | 60.66 | 5.71 | | |
| Temple | 60.00 | 7.64 | | |
| Total | 60.71 | 5.51 | | |

The study also focused to dwell upon the differences in the self esteem among street children living in various places. Though no significant differences were found due to place of stay, it can be noted that children living in railway stations has higher self esteem and children living in temple and road sides have lower self esteem.

Assessment of emotional intelligence of street children.

Table 5: Emotional intelligence among street children across gender

| Variable | Gender | | | | T value | P value |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| | Boys | | Girls | | | |
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| Emotional intelligence | 4.64 | 1.64 | 4.85 | 1.53 | .015 | .902 |

It is evident from the data presented in the table above that even through no significant differences was found in emotional intelligence among boys and girls, from mean scores, it can be noted that the emotional intelligence of girls is higher than boys.

Table6: Emotional intelligence among street children across age

| Variable | Emotional Intelligence | | T value | P value |
|----------|------------------------|------|---------|---------|
| Age | Mean | SD | 1.345 | .266 |
| 5-7 | 5.12 | 1.24 | | |
| 8-10 | 4.11 | 1.49 | | |
| 11-13 | 4.90 | 1.46 | | |
| 14-16 | 4.81 | 1.56 | | |
| Total | 4.73 | 1.49 | | |

No significant differences in emotional intelligence across various age groups is evident from the data presented in table 6. It can be portrayed from the data that the age group of 5-7 has the highest mean (5.12) indicating higher emotional intelligence and children belonging to the age group of 8-10 have the lowest mean (4.11) indicating lowest emotional intelligence. Almost similar pattern of self esteem was found in the children in the age group of 11-13 and 14-16 years.

Table7: Emotional intelligence among street children across parent presence

| Variable | Emotional intelligence | | T value | P value |
|-----------------|------------------------|------|---------|---------|
| Parent presence | Mean | SD | .065 | .799 |
| Yes | 4.81 | 1.51 | | |
| No | 4.47 | 1.42 | | |
| Total | 9.28 | 2.93 | | |

A significant difference in the mean values is evident due to presence of parent. Children living with parents displayed higher emotional intelligence in comparison to children who do not have parents. This may be due to the protection provided by the parents.

Table8: Self-esteem among street children across category of children

| Variable | Self esteem | | T value | P value |
|----------------------|-------------|-------|---------|---------|
| Category of children | Mean | SD | .580 | .678 |
| Slum area | 59.91 | 5.27 | | |
| Railway station | 62.33 | 6.020 | | |
| Bus station | 61.83 | 4.62 | | |
| Street/roadside | 60.66 | 5.71 | | |
| Temple | 60.00 | 7.64 | | |
| Total | 60.71 | 5.51 | | |

Table8: The study also focused to dwell upon the differences in emotional intelligence among street children living in various places. Through no significant differences were found due to place of stay, it can be noted that children living in railway stations has higher emotional intelligence and children living in slum area and temple have lower emotional intelligence.

Determination of relationship between Self esteem and Emotional intelligence among street children

Table9: Relationship between self esteem and emotional intelligence

| Variables | Mean | SD | R | Sign |
|------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| Self-esteem | 60.71 | 5.51 | .154 | .000 |
| Emotional intelligence | 4.73 | 1.49 | | |

R= .154**, N=80

The result indicates that there is positive correlation between self-esteem and emotional intelligence. It signifies that with the increase in self esteem the emotional intelligence also increasing but the relationship is found to be not very high.

CONCLUSION

As children get older their social experiences and success and disappointment effect their development of high and low self esteem. Children with positive self esteem will generally approach things thinking they are good who deserve love and support and in life. If a child has high emotional intelligence, he or she is more likely to be able to express his or her emotions in a healthy way, and understand the emotions of those he or she works with, thus enhancing work relationships and performance. The findings of present study indicate

that there is positive correlation between self-esteem and emotional intelligence. Children living with parents displayed higher emotional intelligence in comparison to children who do not have parents. It was found that with the increase in self esteem the emotional intelligence also increasing but the relationship is found to be not very high. Research has explored that girls have higher emotional intelligence than boys because girls are more emotional and warm in relationships than boys, so they are consider more emotionally intelligence as compared to boys and it can be noted that the self esteem of boys is higher than girls. The study indicates that development of positive self esteem and emotional intelligence play important role in the life of street children.

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