

## IMPLICATIONS OF SELF-ESTEEM IN ADOLESCENCE

Ioana Ancuța FRANȚ, Ph.D.,  
West University, Timișoara  
[anca.frant@e-uvt.ro](mailto:anca.frant@e-uvt.ro)

**Abstract:** *Adolescence is a time of many changes, and psychologically, we can speak of self-definition, shaping and strengthening of the self-image. Outlining the new identity and shaping the self-image require evaluation against the image of an adult, along with acceptance of a set of social and group norms retrieved from other teenagers. In the present study we wanted to find a link between self-esteem in adolescents and their educational profile, and last but not least, the correlation between self-esteem and emotional intelligence within the same age period.*

**Keywords:** *adolescents, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, real field, humanities field*

### 1. Theoretical Framework

Self-esteem refers to how we relate to our own image. We cannot talk of self-esteem without regard to self-image. There is a very close relationship between the two concepts. *"Self-esteem is an important dimension for any human being, whether child, adult or elderly person, regardless of culture, personality, interests, social status, abilities. Self-esteem shows how "good" we consider ourselves in relation to our own expectations or with others."* (Băban, A., eds., 2001, p. 72). In other words, self-esteem includes our sense of worthiness as a person, our life objectives, our relationship with others, our social status, our emotional autonomy.

Scientific research in the field notes that self-esteem is based on the following elements: self-knowledge, sense of security, sense of belonging (belonging to a family, a group of friends etc.), sense of competence. Self-knowledge refers to several dimensions. Rogers identifies *the Real Self* which includes the real capacities available to the person (way of thinking, reactions, skills, competences etc.), and the *Ideal Self*, involving the same capabilities available to the individual, this time projected on an ideal level

(as a person would like to be, or would like to react etc.). *"Self is not a given biological element (even if it includes some elements relating to the somatic self) but shapes and develops in the ontogenesis of an individual, throughout social experience and activity. The mechanism of self-formation and development consists of individual interaction with others in a social, interpersonal and group setting."*(Dumitru, I. Al., 2000, p. 65)

In order to be able to shape our self-esteem we must have self-confidence, and family and educators play a key role in this respect. However, *"when it comes to regulating specific learning activities, the concept of self-confidence does not tell us much about individual perceptions regarding his/her capabilities specific to the activity concerned."* (Boncu, Del., Ceobanu, C., 2013 pages 154). The feeling of belonging in adolescence is exacerbated, not in relation to the family, but to the environment, as social relations hold increasing importance in the period under discussion.

Self-esteem, especially in adolescence, has many influences, from socializing with others to the results achieved by a person.

Numerous studies in Psychology emphasize that in view of helping adolescents develop positive self-esteem, it is desirable that various aspects and situations of life should be discussed (in an optimistic approach) within the family, but also the control of parents on teenagers should be lessened, stimulating the emergence of new experiences, and even decisions. All these things increase self-confidence, while determining a positive self-image and deeper self-esteem.

Specialized literature presents numerous studies related to self-esteem, related to many variables (consumption of drugs, success / failure in school, responsiveness to evaluative events, frustration, depression, hostility, etc.)

In what follows, we want to establish a relationship between self-esteem and educational profile, and between it and emotional intelligence, in adolescence. The methodological approach is outlined below.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Objectives**

This paper has the following objectives:

- Measuring the level of self-esteem;
- Identification of a link between low self-esteem and high school profile;
- Determining the level of emotional intelligence;
- Establishing a relationship between self-esteem to emotional intelligence

### **2.2. Research Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis no. 1** There are statistically significant differences between teenagers from different specializations in terms of self-esteem level.

**Hypothesis no. 2** There is a significant correlation between adolescents' emotional intelligence and self-esteem.

### **2.3. Sample description**

To investigate the abovementioned hypotheses we selected a sample consisting of 68 adolescents (students XIth and XIIth grades) from high schools in Timisoara, divided as follows:

- 34 adolescents (students in XIth and XIIth grades) who follow high school courses in real science;
- 34 adolescents (students in XIth and XIIth grades) who follow high school courses in the field of humanities ;

Students between 16 and 19 years old participated willingly, without receiving any reward as a result of their cooperation.

## **2.4. Overview of tools**

In this study, we employed the following instruments: **Scale of self-esteem assessment in adolescents**, known as the Self-Esteem Scale ETES (Echelle d'estime de Soi Toulousain), which was calibrated to our population by psychologist Adriana Crăciun in 1998. It was first published in the European Journal of Applied Psychology in 1994 by N. Oubrayrie, M. Léonardis și C. Safont, based on the Coopersmith, Rosenbergscales already available to assess self-esteem. The scales involve the existence of a global score which in turn is composed of five partial scores, corresponding to partial aspects of the self that they measure.

It consists of 60 items grouped into five dimensions, 12 for each, and the subjects must answer yes or no. The subcomponents of the self which are measured are: physical self, emotional self, academic self, social self and prospective self. By analyzing these subcomponents, fragility areas of global self are highlighted, namely the factor with the major impact on the adolescent's self-esteem. The grid includes both *partial scores*, corresponding to the five dimensions of self-esteem, and the *overall self-esteem score*.

The second tool used is the **Emotional Intelligence Test** (version for teens) developed by Reuven Bar-On & Daniel Goleman, and adapted for the Romanian population by Mihaela Rocco. The test places a person in different situations (scenarios), and involves the transposition of the individual in those situations, along with the selection of one choice from the response options. Test may be taken individually or in groups no larger than 15 participants.

Scoring and interpretation of responses to the emotional intelligence test involves the sum of points corresponding to the 10 items, reported to standard results.

## **2.5. Quantitative and qualitative Interpretation of results - Hypothesis no. 1**

In order to ensure the validity of proposed hypotheses data is processed using SPSS 10.0. Statistical processing results are presented for each assumption in turn as follows:

- Tables No. 1 - No. 6 present descriptive statistics Rating Scale for *global self-esteem, physical self, emotional self, school self, social self, prospective self*.

Table no. 1 Descriptive statistics for global self-esteem

<b>Sample</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>m</b>	<b><math>\sigma</math></b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Real science	34	35,50	6,92	12	46
Human science	34	42,85	7,36	23	54
Unified samples	68	39,17	7,20	12	54

Table no. 2 Descriptive statistics for self-esteem- physical self

<b>Sample</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>m</b>	<b><math>\sigma</math></b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Real science	34	7,53	2,65	2	12
Human science	34	8,88	2,00	5	12
Unified samples	68	8,20	2,60	2	12

Table no. 3 Descriptive statistics for self-esteem- emotional self

<b>Sample</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>m</b>	<b><math>\sigma</math></b>	<b>Minim</b>	<b>Maxim</b>
Real science	34	7,29	2,46	1	12
Human science	34	8,15	2,92	1	12
Unified samples	68	7,72	2,68	1	12

Table no. 4 Descriptive statistics for self-esteem- school self

<b>Sample</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>m</b>	<b><math>\sigma</math></b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Real science	34	5,26	1,64	2	7
Human science	34	8,00	2,06	2	11
Unified samples	68	6,63	1,83	2	11

Table no. 5 Descriptive statistics for self-esteem- social self

Sample	N	m	$\Sigma$	Minimum	Maximum
Real science	34	8,24	1,92	4	12
Human science	34	9,44	1,69	3	12
Unified samples	68	8,84	1,82	3	12

Table no. 6 Descriptive statistics for self-esteem- prospective self

Sample	N	m	$\Sigma$	Minimum	Maximum
Real science	34	7,09	1,86	1	10
Human science	34	8,41	1,65	4	11
Unified samples	68	7,75	1,73	1	11

According to reported results adjusted to our country's population *a moderate global self-esteem*, physical self-esteem, emotional, academic, social and prospective self-esteem are evident as group trend for both specializations.

However, **within each** sample (real or humanities specialization) **variations** from one student to another were noticeable, in relation to the level of self-esteem - overall and across subcomponents. In order to verify the first hypothesis we used the t test. Thus:

The comparison between the values of the two specializations, concerning physical, emotional and social esteem register a significance threshold higher than  $p = 0.05$ , which shows that these differences are statistically insignificant across these dimensions.

For global self-esteem at school level and at prospective level the values have a significance threshold lower than  $p = 0.05$ , which indicates that there are significant differences between the two specializations.

- *Self-esteem at school level* requires self-perception of skills, school performance and relationships in schools, which is modeled by specific educational training.

• *Prospective self-esteem* entails the self-perception of one's capacity to integrate into the adult world, to value the self and one's role in building the future. The way one values one's skills sketches the image of one's career development. **In conclusion, hypothesis 1 is partially confirmed.**

**2.6. Quantitative and qualitative Interpretation of results - Hypothesis no. 2**

**Hypothesis no. 2** There is a strong correlation between emotional intelligence and self-esteem, in adolescents.

In order to test the connection between emotional intelligence and self-esteem we used correlation analysis as a testing technique- the Pearson correlation coefficient.

Table no 7 The correlation between *emotional intelligence* and *self-esteem*

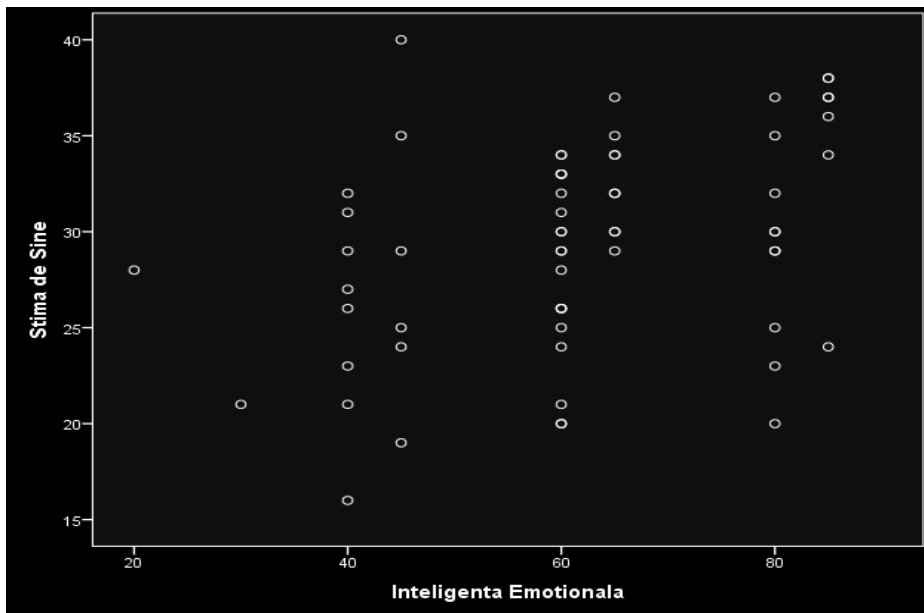
		<b>Emotional intelligence</b>	<b>Self-esteem</b>
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>	Pearson correlation coefficient	<b>1</b>	<b>.373(**)</b>
	Significant (bidirectional hypothesis)		<b>.003</b>
	Number of subjects	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Self-esteem</b>	Pearson correlation coefficient	<b>.373(**)</b>	<b>1</b>
	Significant (bidirectional hypothesis)	<b>.003</b>	
	Number of subjects	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>

**\*\* Correlation significant at a significance level  $p < .01$**

As shown in Table 7, the correlation between *emotional intelligence* and *self-esteem* has a value equal to:  $r(60) = .373$ , where  $p < .01$ . The value of .373 is the result noted at the meeting point between *emotional intelligence* and *self-esteem*. The fact that we have a  $p < .01$  indicates the probability of obtaining the data where there is no association between *emotional intelligence* and *self-esteem*.

To evaluate the association between the two variables in graphic terms of graphics we used *the dotted cloud*. It provides information concerning: the shape of the relationship between two variables, the direction and intensity of the relationship between variables. As can be seen in Fig. 1 in relation to the shape of the relationship we are dealing with a linear shape, as the dotted cloud has one direction, represented by a straight "line". Regarding the direction of the relationship, we notice the cloud has a positive direction, as confirmed by the positive value of the coefficient of relationship (.373).

**Figure no 1 Diagram of correlation between variable emotional intelligence and variable self-esteem**



Thus there is a significant correlation between *emotional intelligence* and *self-esteem*, confirming the second hypothesis advanced. As to the existing correlation between *emotional intelligence* and *self-esteem*, we can appreciate that *self-esteem* is a central factor of emotional competence. The way we perceive our own skills (self-knowledge), the skills we have, will remarkably influence self-perception about our own *self-esteem*, which also serves as a barometer of *emotional intelligence*.



### 3. Conclusions

As we reported earlier, the first hypothesis, according to which there are significant differences in self-esteem in teenagers who come from different secondary educational specializations, was partly verified.

- **Overall self-esteem, with its sub-components: school self-esteem and prospective self-esteem registers significant variations** depending on the specialization followed by teenagers. This can be explained by the fact that the real specialization is more oriented towards jobs with a much more practical application, while those from the humanities are not. The various specializations in the educational system fail to shape the adolescents' perception of their identity in their developing personalities.

- **Self-esteem at school level** can be linked to **prospective self-esteem**, so that differences found between groups can be explained by the link between the two subcomponents of self-esteem. Not all subcomponents of self-esteem are related to the educational profile, which is only relevant for school self-esteem and prospective self-esteem. The other subcomponents of self-esteem are formed and developed predominantly under the influence of other factors such as family, media, cultural and economic context of our contemporary society.

*In contrast, the second hypothesis, assuming the existence of a correlation between emotional intelligence and self-esteem has been confirmed.*

- *Emotional intelligence* is a central factor involved in building a positive self-image which generates *high self-esteem*, with positive effect on performance and adaptation;

The topic of self-esteem, especially related to teens, is one of paramount importance, precisely because the transition from puberty to adulthood takes place, a period which will influence the further development of future adults, so that the way they perceive themselves will determine the choice of their path in life.

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