# Self-Esteem And Academic Performance Of Tribal And Non-Tribal Students: The Moderating Role Of Gender

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## Abstract
*There is a robust association between one's self-esteem and their academic success. A person's self-esteem is their internal appraisal of their own value, competence, and contributions to the world. It plays a pivotal role in the formation of one's identity and has far-reaching effects on one's way of thinking, feeling, and behaving. The main objective of the research was to compare the prevalence of self-esteem and academic performance between tribal and non-tribal students in West Bengal and to examine the relationship between these major dependents. 300 students from both tribal and non-tribal backgrounds who attended schools were selected at random for a cross-sectional study. The data was gathered with the use of a questionnaire based on Rosenberg's Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE, 1995). Major findings indicated that non-tribal students appeared with higher self-esteem and academic performance than tribal students and statistical significance was found in both ($p<0.05$). On the basis of gender, it was found that female students showed better self-esteem than male students ($p<0.05$) and male students performed higher in academics than female students ($p>0.05$). The study also found a positive correlation between self-esteem and academic performance, but it was statistically not significant ($p>0.05$).*
*Keywords – Self-Esteem, Tribal students, School going adolescents, Academic performance, Well-being.*

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Date of Submission: 26-07-2023                                                                Date of Acceptance: 06-08-2023
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## I.    Introduction
Self-esteem is a collection of beliefs about an individual's fundamental essence, distinctive qualities, and typical behaviour. The majority of tribal communities in India lived in remote, isolated regions. These tribal communities are commonly known as socially disadvantaged people and are distinguished by their distinct cultures, languages, and customs. This has contributed to their relative isolation. Consequently, medicinal, social, and developmental services lag behind. (Mosse, 2013). Indians made up 8.6% of the tribal population in India's 2011 census, and 9.0% of them were adolescents. (censusinfo, 2011). According to Nathaniel Branden, "Self-esteem is the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and as being worthy of happiness." Self-esteem is a crucial life skill that influences how we perceive ourselves and how we behave in a variety of ways. It is essential for having positive relationships, being resilient, being motivated, being emotionally healthy, making decisions, having self-assurance, and taking the initiative. Self-esteem stems from self-awareness, self-acceptance, and self-compassion. A positive self-perception can help you enjoy a richer, happier existence overall. People believe that having a strong sense of self-worth is crucial for happiness, life satisfaction, and good health. (Pattanshetty et al., 2013) and having low self-esteem can lead to anger, anxiety, sadness, and other mental and behavioural issues (Biro et al., 2006). Several studies have shown that during adolescence, particularly for females, self-esteem declines significantly. (Edlina et al., 2020). Therefore, the researchers made an attempt to investigate the current state and relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of tribal and non-tribal students in the Indian context, especially in West Bengal.

### Significance of the study
The relationship between self-esteem and academic performance is intricate and influenced by numerous variables. Positive self-esteem can enhance academic performance, while negative self-esteem can hinder it. This relationship between tribal and non-tribal students is shaped by cultural and socioeconomic factors, the educational environment, the support of family and community, and the threat of stereotyping. Supportive and inclusive educational environments that provide equal opportunities and resources can have a positive effect on the academic success of both groups. However, the presence of preconception threats and unique challenges confronted by tribal and non-tribal students can hinder their academic performance. Creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment is essential for all students' academic and personal success.

Self-esteem is crucial for tribal and non-tribal because it positively influences academic performance, social interactions, and well-being as a whole. A healthy sense of self-worth can foster confidence in one's abilities, promote active participation in educational activities, and mitigate the adverse effects of discrimination and marginalization (Quinn et al, 2009). Furthermore, the psychological health of tribal and non-tribal students is essential because it has a significant impact on their academic achievement, social functioning, and overall quality of life. In addition, it promotes emotional stability and mental health by boosting individuals' resistance to stress and adversity. (Miller et al, 2018). Positive psychological health can positively influence social interactions and relationships within the tribal community and the larger society. By nurturing a sense of belonging and connectedness, it promotes social support and reduces feelings of isolation or exclusion. (Ali & Eqbal, 2019). Additionally, psychological health enables tribal and non-tribal students to engage in constructive peer relationships, effective communication, and conflict resolution. Keeping in mind the significance of self-esteem and academic performance among tribal and non-tribal students, it is meaningful to understand the present scenario. Therefore, the researchers aimed to investigate the prevailing situation of Self-Esteem and academic performance of tribal and non-tribal students in West Bengal.

**Objectives of the study**
Pertaining to the purpose of the study, the following objectives have been identified-
i) To examine the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance among students (Both tribal and non-tribal) of West Bengal.
ii) To compare the self-esteem of tribal and non-tribal students in West Bengal.
iii) To compare the academic performance of tribal and non-tribal students in West Bengal.
iv) To find out the variation of gender on self-esteem among students (Both tribal and non-tribal) of West Bengal.
v) To find out the variation of gender on academic performance among students (Both tribal and non-tribal) of West Bengal.

**Delimitation of the study**
        The researchers limited the scope of the study and restricted the present study on some grounds that the researchers willingly described as shortfalls to undertake all the aspects of the problem. The followings are the delimitations of the study-
i. Only one district i.e., Jhargram in West Bengal was surveyed only.
ii. Only 300 school-going tribal and non-tribal students were considered as a sample.
iii. School-going adolescents of rural areas in the Jhargram district were taken.
iv. The study delimited to only two demographic or independent variable i.e., Gender and social class.
v. Only descriptive and parametric tests were used to present the actual nature of the data and analysis procedure.

**Hypotheses of the study**
Keeping the objectives in mind, the following hypotheses were formulated-
$H_01$: Self-esteem of students does not significantly correlate with academic performance.
$H_02$: Mean score of self-esteem does not significantly differ between tribal and non-tribal students in West Bengal.
$H_03$: Mean score of academic performance does not significantly differ between tribal and non-tribal students in West Bengal.
$H_04$: Mean score of self-esteem does not significantly differ among students (Both tribal and non-tribal) when gender is concerned.
$H_05$: Mean score of academic performance does not significantly differ among students (Both tribal and non-tribal) when gender is concerned.

**Study design**
        A cross-sectional survey design was implemented to fulfil the aim of the present study. School-going adolescents belonging to tribal and non-tribal communities in Jhargram, West Bengal were considered as the population of the study and only 300 samples of school-going tribal and non-tribal students were drawn randomly from secondary and higher secondary schools situated in the Jhargram district of West Bengal. Self-esteem and academic performance were considered as dependent variables in this study which were supposed to have a connection with different independent variables i.e., gender and social class.

**Instrument for data collection**

To access the major dependent variable i.e., self-esteem, highly reliable and standardised bilingual measuring instruments were adopted. Morris Rosenberg's Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE, 1995) was implemented to investigate the current state of self-esteem of school-going tribal students. RSE consisted of ten (10) items, within them five (5) questions were positively phrased and five (5) questions were negatively phrased. Again, a basic demographic information schedule was attached to access the gender and social class of school-going students (Both tribal and non-tribal) in West Bengal.

## II. Results

**Descriptive Analysis**

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics regarding Self-esteem of students (both tribal and non-tribal)**

| Self-Esteem | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Variables** | **Category** | **N (Frequency)** | **Mean** | **SD** |
| **Gender** | Male | 183 | 25.60 | 5.413 |
| | Female | 117 | 28.09 | 4.717 |
| | | | | |
| **Social Class** | Non-tribe | 150 | 27.73 | 4.730 |
| | Tribe | 150 | 25.41 | 5.567 |

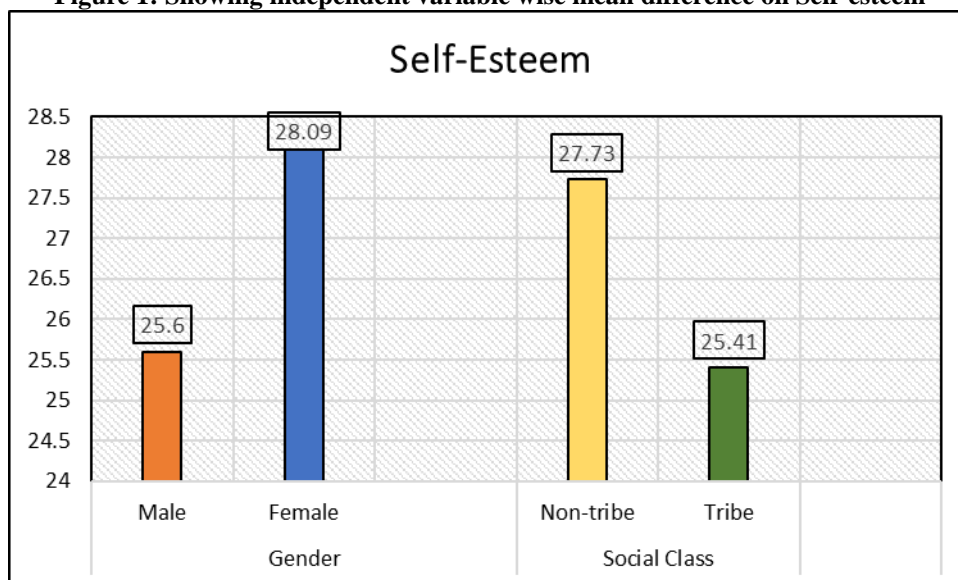**Figure 1: Showing independent variable wise mean difference on Self-esteem**



Figure 1 showing two independent variables wise mean difference on self-esteem of students (both tribal and non-tribal) in West Bengal. Gender wise male students scored 25.60 and female students scored 28.09. Social class wise non-tribe students scored 27.73 and tribe students scored 25.41.

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics regarding academic performance of students (both tribal and non-tribal)**

| Academic Performance | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Variables** | **Category** | **N (Frequency)** | **Mean** | **SD** |
| **Gender** | Male | 183 | 70.00 | 13.07 |
| | Female | 117 | 67.25 | 12.34 |
| | | | | |
| **Social Class** | Non-tribe | 150 | 70.56 | 14.25 |
| | Tribe | 150 | 67.29 | 11.07 |

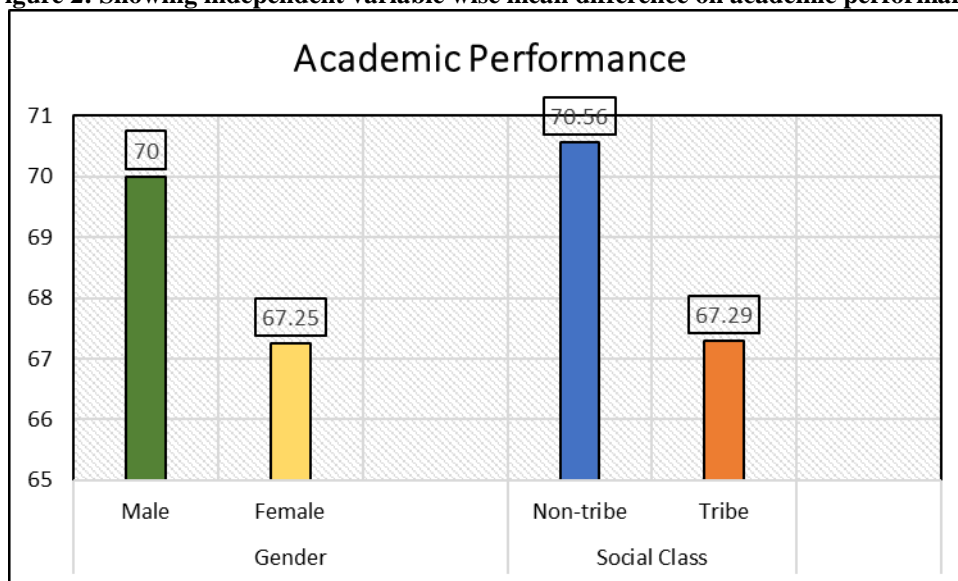**Figure 2: Showing independent variable wise mean difference on academic performance**



Figure 2 showing two independent variables wise mean difference on academic performance of students (both tribal and non-tribal) in West Bengal. Gender wise male students scored 70.00 and female students scored 67.25. Social class wise non-tribe students scored 70.56 and tribe students scored 67.29.

**Hypothesis testing**

**Table 3: Correlation table based on $H_0 1$.**

| Pearson Correlation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Self-Esteem | Academic performance |
| Self-Esteem | Pearson Correlation | 1 | **0.113** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0.051 |
| | N | 300 | 300 |
| Academic performance | Pearson Correlation | **0.113** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.051 | |
| | N | 300 | 300 |
| | | | |

**Results of $H_0 1$:** Table 3 showed that self-esteem is positively correlated with academic performance that shows positive increment of self-esteem enhances academic performance of students. Correlation between self-esteem and academic performance is statistically not significant at 0.05 level (r=0.113; p>0.05), Therefore, the aforesaid null hypothesis is failed to reject and there exists no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students (both tribal and non-tribal).

**Table 4: Inferential statistics based on $H_0 2$ to $H_0 5$.**

| Independent samples T-Test | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dependent Variables | Independent Variables | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Remarks (0.05 level) | Hypotheses Testing (95%) |
| **Self-esteem** | Gender | -4.082 | 298 | **0.000*** | -2.490 | Significant | **Rejected** |
| **Academic performance** | | 1.816 | 298 | 0.070 | 2.750 | Not Significant | **Failed to reject** |
| **Self-esteem** | Social Class | 3.889 | 298 | **0.000*** | 2.320 | Significant | **Rejected** |
| **Academic performance** | | 2.217 | 298 | **0.027*** | 3.267 | Significant | **Rejected** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**Results of $H_0 2$:** It can be observed from the table 4 that computed t-value of self-esteem based on social class is $t_{(300)}$= **3.889; p-value=0.000**. Found difference in mean is statistically significant at 0.05 level (p<0.05). Therefore, the aforesaid $H_0 2$ is rejected and found differences cannot be attributed to any chance factor.

**Results of $H_0 3$:** It can be observed from the table 4 that computed t-value of academic performance based on social class is $t_{(300)}$= **2.217; p-value=0.027**. Found difference in mean is statistically significant at 0.05 level (p<0.05). Therefore, the aforesaid $H_0 3$ is rejected and found differences cannot be attributed to any chance factor.

. **Results of $H_0 4$:** It can be observed from the table 4 that computed t-value of self-esteem based on gender is $t_{(300)}$= **-4.082; p-value=0.000**. Found difference in mean is statistically significant at 0.05 level (p<0.05). Therefore, the aforesaid $H_0 4$ is rejected and found differences cannot be attributed to any chance factor.

**Results of $H_0 5$:** It can be observed from table 4 that the computed t-value of academic performance based on gender is $t_{(300)}$= **1.816; p-value=0.070**. Found difference in mean is statistically not significant at 0.05 level (p>0.05). Therefore, the aforesaid $H_0 5$ is failed to reject and found differences can be attributed to any chance factor.

### Major Findings
**Overall**
* Present status of self-esteem among tribal and non-tribal school-going students was found to be 26.6.
* Present status of academic performance among tribal and non-tribal school-going students was found to be 68.9.

### Based on social class
* Non-tribe students showed higher self-esteem than tribe students and the difference was statistically significant.
* Non-tribe students performed higher in academics than tribe students and the difference was statistically significant.

### Based on Gender
* Female students showed higher self-esteem than male students and the difference was statistically significant.
* Male students performed higher in academics than female students but the difference was statistically not significant.

### Based on the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance
* Self-esteem is positively correlated with academic performance that shows positive increment of self-esteem enhances academic performance of students (both tribal and non-tribal) but correlation between self-esteem and academic performance is statistically not significant.

## III.    Conclusion

Currently, all of us are facing globalization. Globalization has connected countries via trade, culture, and technology. It has increased international trade and investment and facilitated migration. Globalization causes economic inequality and cultural conflict. People need skills to succeed in this globalized world. These talents include adaptability to changing employment markets, working with people from diverse cultures, technology, creativity, problem-solving, business, continual learning, cultural understanding, and tackling global challenges. Learn and strengthen these skills for personal and professional progress in today's connected and rapidly changing world. In our globalized world, self-worth or self-esteem is crucial to success and transformation. Positive self-esteem boosts confidence, resilience, communication, teamwork, and willingness to try new things. In a globalized society, cultural awareness, tolerance, and a growth mindset help individuals solve global issues and succeed.

The findings of the study appeared with some vital evidence that non-tribe students showed higher self-esteem than tribal, similar findings were found in another research that non-tribe possessed better self-esteem rather than tribe (Céspedes et al., 2021; Sprecher et al., 2013). In the case of academic performance, researchers observed, non-tribe students found with higher in academic performance than tribal students. Again, this finding is also supported by a research work that non-tribe were better than tribes in terms of academic performance (Meeuwisse, 2013) and apart from that no other handful study was found in the same context.

The study revealed that gender was a significant indicator of self-esteem and only a few studies found the same acquaintance (Jenaabadi, 2014); Khan, 2019). Also, it was found that Male students performed higher in academics than female students but the difference was statistically not significant (Omirin, 2007; Razavi, 2018). Finally, the study appeared with a positive correlation between self-esteem and academic performance (Liu et al., 2021; Padhy et al., 2011; Gebka, 2014; Priyadharshini, & Relton, 2014).

In conclusion, it may be said that tribes in India need heightened attention and support as a result of their past socioeconomic challenges. Areas for development include education, healthcare, economic opportunities, land rights, and cultural preservation. In order to enhance their overall well-being, individuals must engage in the cultivation of a diverse range of soft skills. The primary objective of the study was to analyze the prevalence of self-esteem and academic performance among both tribal and non-tribal students in West Bengal. Additionally, the researchers sought to explore the relationship between these two key components. Based on the stated goals, the obtained results were deemed sufficient and acceptable across all instances.

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