

# The Study on Shyness and Self-esteem Among Young Adults During COVID-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract:** *Aim:* Shyness is the tendency to feel awkward, worried or tense during social encounters, especially with unfamiliar people (APA, 2012). Self-esteem is defined as general self-worth and affective experiences of the self that are linked to these global appraisals (Murphy, Stonsy and Morrel, 2005). The young adult period is the time between 18 and 24. The present study aimed to investigate the shyness and self-esteem among young adults during covid-19 pandemic. Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and middle east respiratory syndrome (MERS). *Method:* The study was done on 240 young adults aged 18 to 24, out of which 120 were males and 120 were females through purposive sampling methods. Social Reticence scale (Jones and Briggs, S,1975) for measuring shyness and Rosenberg's Self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, M, 1960) were used to collect data. The data were analyzed by using Mean, Standard deviation, Independent sample t-test, and Pearson's product moment correlation. *Result:* Result proves that, there is no significant difference in the level of shyness among young adults across gender. There is no significant difference in the level of self-esteem among young adults across gender. Statistically there is no significant correlation between shyness and self-esteem among young adults.

**Keywords:** Self-esteem, Shyness.

## 1. Introduction

Shyness is very common among young adults. Some people's shyness is so intense, however, that it can keep them from interacting with others even when they want or need to leading to problems in relationships and at work. Self-esteem can influence life in myriad ways, from academic and professional success to relationships and mental health. Shyness is an emotion that affects how a person feels and behaves around others. Shyness can mean feeling uncomfortable, self-conscious, nervous, bashful, timid, or insecure. There are people with too much or too little self-esteem and both can make a person more insecure to one's self. Shyness is the tendency to feel awkward, worried or tense during social encounters, especially with unfamiliar people (APA, 2012). When people feel shy, they might hesitate to say or do something because they're feeling unsure of themselves and they're not ready to be noticed. People are more likely to feel shy when they're not sure how to act, don't know how others will react, or when attention is on them. Feeling of high or low self-worth often starts in childhood. Family life that is riddled with disapproval can follow a person into an adult life. Poor

school environment, dysfunctional workplace or an unhappy relationship can also alter a person's self-worth. Self-esteem is defined as general self-worth and affective experiences of the self that are linked to these global appraisals (Murphy, Stonsy and Morrel,2005). Abraham Maslow described two different forms of "esteem": the need for respect from others in the form of recognition, success, and admiration, and the need for self-respect in the form of self-love, self-confidence, skill, or aptitude. In this study young adults were concentrated during COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO)declared covid-19 outbreak a pandemic. Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)and middle east respiratory syndrome (MERS). Young adulthood is the critical period of maturation when stable behavioral styles emerge that pave the way for the personality traits and related psychopathology in adulthood. Both self-esteem and shyness play a crucial role in our intellectual abilities and analyzing them and working on it can make one stronger than they think. The present study aimed to investigate the shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID-19 pandemic.

### A. Definition of key terms

Shyness is the tendency to feel awkward, worried or tense during social encounters, especially with unfamiliar people, negative feelings about themselves; worries about how others view them; and a tendency to withdraw from social inventions (APA, 2012).

Self-esteem is defined as general self-worth and affective experiences of the self that are linked to these global appraisals (Murphy, Stonsy and Morrel,2005).

### B. Relevance of study

Present study on shyness and self-esteem is relevant as it tries to make it clear that if there exists any significant difference in the level of shyness and self-esteem among young adults across gender. Young adults were concentrated in this study so that after the study they can be benefited to lead a better adulthood. This study was conducted during the COVID-19 outbreak; thus, the study has its relevance in understanding the level of shyness and self-esteem among young adults across gender in Kerala while coping up with this unpredictable and uncontrollable situation i.e., lockdown.

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### C. Review of literature

Roswell, H.C and Coplan. J (2013) conducted a study on exploring links between shyness, romantic relationship quality, and well-being. Two studies were carried out and in each of 1159 and 400 participants indicated that shyness was lower in participants who were currently in a romantic relationship. Also, the shyness was negatively associated with relationship quality and positively associated with insecure romantic attachment beliefs attenuated the negative association between shyness and well-being.

Sternke, J.C (2010) conducted a study on Self-Concept and Self-Esteem in Adolescents with Learning Disabilities During childhood and adolescence, self-concept and self-esteem begin to develop. As such, it is important for adolescents to develop a positive self-concept and high self-esteem in order to better their chances for a happy and satisfying adulthood. Of particular interest are students with learning disabilities (LD); these students encounter a more challenging adolescence than many others. Research shows that students with LD commonly have more negative self-concepts than students without LD. There are many facets to self-concept and self-esteem, and coping with a learning disability has an influence on a student's quality of life. For both students with LD and students who have not been diagnosed with LD, positive parental involvement can directly influence a student's self-concept and self-esteem.

Nelson, L. Walker, P. L.M, Badger. S, Barry, C. N, Carroll. S and Stephine (2008) conducted a study on shyness and internalizing behaviours, externalizing behaviours, and the relationship during emerging adulthood. The result of the study on 813 college students including 500 women and 313 men showed that both men and women are relatively shy emerging adults, had more problem of internalizing and engaged in fewer externalizing behaviours having experienced poor relationship with parents, romantic partners than the non-shy peers.

### D. Rationale

After reviewing literature researchers found that there is no research related with shyness and self-esteem among young adults, so that researcher is trying to research on this topic. Researcher is hopeful of finding relevant information from the study that may help the young adults in future.

## 2. Methodology

### A. Problem

Is there any difference in the level of shyness and self-esteem among young adults across gender during COVID-19 pandemic?

*Aim:* To understand shyness and self-esteem among young adults across gender during COVID -19 pandemic.

### B. Objectives

1. To study shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To study the relationship between shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID-19 pandemic.
3. To study the differences in the level of shyness and self-

esteem among young adults based on gender during COVID -19 pandemic.

### C. Variables

- Independent variable: Gender
- Dependent variable: Shyness and self-esteem

### D. Hypothesis

Pursuant of the above objectives, three hypotheses are formulated and to be tested on the sample of 24 - young adults during COVID-19 pandemic.

1. There will be no significant difference in the level of shyness among young adults across gender during COVID-19 pandemic.
2. There will be no significant differences in the level of self-esteem among young adults across gender during COVID-19 pandemic.
3. There is no significant correlation between shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID -19 pandemic.

### E. Research Design

The study was quantitative type and used a correlational design to determine if there exists a relationship between shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID -19 pandemic. The study also adopted a between group research design to assess the difference in shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID -19 pandemic.

### F. Research Sample

Purposive sampling method was used for this study. The study sample was of 240 young adults at age range from 18-24 from different parts of Kerala, out of which 120 are males and 120 are females.

The sample belongs to different gender, religious family type, area of residence.

### G. Sampling Criteria

#### Inclusion criteria:

1. Willing participants through online.
2. Young adults at Kerala.
3. Age limit 18-24.
4. Those who have given consent for participation.
5. People under quarantine were included.

#### Exclusion criteria:

1. Young adults from other states.
2. Mentally disabled
3. Those who haven't given consent for participation.

### H. Tools

Following tools were used for the data collection:

1. Social Reticence Scale (Jones and Briggs. S,1975)
2. Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg. M, 1960)

### I. Procedure

Purpose of the study was explained to the participants through online and their willingness to participate in the study was ascertained. The Social Reticence Scale (Jones and

Table 1  
Mean, SD and significant value on shyness and self-esteem among young adults across gender during COVID-19 pandemic

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.value (2-tailed)
Shyness	Male	120	55.4667	13.43890	.938	.349
	Female	120	53.9917	10.77306		
Self-esteem	Male	120	19.1333	5.68343	.443	.658
	Female	120	18.8083	5.67361		

Briggs.S,1975) of 20-items and Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg.M,1960) of 10-items were given to sample through online with proper instruction one after the other. Responses were collected from the participants. The scoring of the two assessments were done and interpreted according to the manual.

#### J. Analysis of data

The collected data were analyzed using following statistical tests.

1. Mean, Standard deviation
2. Independent sample t-test
3. Pearson's product moment correlation.

#### K. Ethical Issues

1. Data collected has been used only for research purposes.
2. Confidentiality and of the obtained information have been maintained throughout the study.
3. Informed consent of each and every participant was acquired.

### 3. Result

#### A. Data analysis and its interpretation

The main purpose of the present study was investigating the shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID-19 pandemic. For this purpose, the investigator formulated 3 hypotheses. Results are shown in the table 1 and 2.

Table 2  
Correlation coefficient value between shyness and self -esteem among young adults during COVID-19 pandemic

Variable		Shyness	Self-esteem
Shyness	Pearson correlation	1	.033
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.607
	N	240	240
Self-esteem	Pearson correlation	.033	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.607	
	N	240	240

Table 1 shows that, the null hypothesis one says that, there is no significant difference in the level of shyness among young adults across their gender during COVID-19 pandemic. The significant value of shyness among young adults across gender is (.349) with t value (.938). Thus, the first null hypothesis was accepted. The null hypothesis two states that there is no significant difference in the level of self-esteem among young adults across gender during COVID -19 pandemic. The significant value of self-esteem among young adults across gender is (.658) with t value (.443). Thus, the second null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 2 shows that, the significant values of correlation between shyness and self-esteem is (.607) which is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the third null

hypothesis is accepted so there is no significant correlation between shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID-19 pandemic.

### 4. Summary and Conclusion

Shyness is the tendency to feel awkward, worried or tense during social encounters, especially with unfamiliar people. Self-esteem is defined as general self-worth and affective experiences of the self that are linked to these global appraisals. Young adulthood is the critical period of maturation when stable behavioral styles emerge that pave the way for the personality traits and related psychopathology in adulthood. Both self-esteem and shyness play a crucial role in our intellectual abilities and analyzing them and working on it can make one stronger than they think. The purpose of the study was to determine shyness and self-esteem among young adults across gender during covid-19 pandemic. Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome(SARS)and middle east respiratory syndrome(MERS). In March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO)declared COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. The Social Reticence Scale (Jones and Briggs. S,1975) of 20-items and Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg.M,1960) of 10-items were given to sample through online with proper instruction one after the other. Responses were collected from the participants. For data analysis Pearson's product moment co-efficient of correlation was employed.

#### A. Major findings

1. There is no significant difference in the level of shyness among young adults across gender during COVID -19 pandemic.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of self-esteem among young adults across gender during COVID -19 pandemic.
3. There is no significant difference between shyness and self-esteem among young adults during COVID -19 pandemic.
4. The males have higher levels of shyness and self-esteem as compared to female counterparts.

#### B. Limitations

1. Sample of young adults was only from Kerala state.
2. Sample size was small.

#### C. Implications

The present study indicated that the males have higher levels of shyness and females have low level of self-esteem as compared to their counterparts, so we can use some intervention programs for them.

*D. Scope for Study*

- Further research can be done on a larger population.
- Qualitative research methods can be done for improving the quality of the paper.

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