

AGE AND GENDER PATTERNS OF SELF-ESTEEM AMONG YOUTH IN KOSOVO



Assoc. Prof. Naim Fanaj¹, Assoc. Prof. Erika Melonashi², Dr. Sci. Sevim Mustafa³,

¹ College of Medical Sciences Rezonanca, Prishtina, Kosovo; ² Wisdom University College, Tirana Albania; ³ College AAB, Prishtina, Kosovo

Introduction

Self-esteem is a widely investigated variable, across different countries and cultures. Levels of self-esteem seem to vary across cultures, and also cultural similarities and differences have been reported in several studies. Some aspects of age and gender differences seem to be universal across cultures. The aim of the present study was to assess age and gender patterns of self-esteem among Kosovo youth.

A systematic literature review on self-esteem and well-being in Kosovo (Fanaj & Melonashi, 2014) concluded that self-esteem values were comparable to other Balkan countries. As regards gender differences, only one of the reviewed studies reported higher self-esteem for boys as compared to girls; other studies have reported no gender differences.

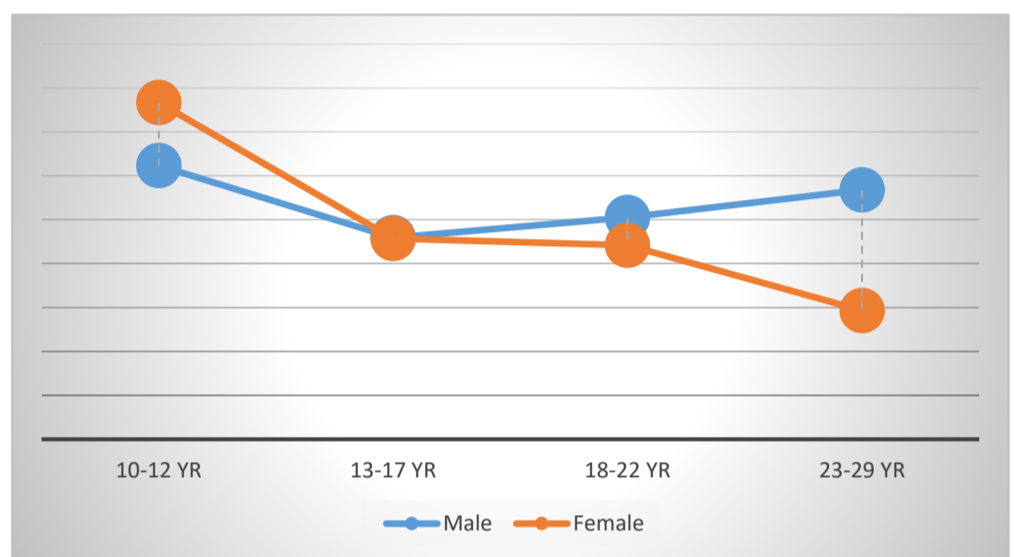


Fig. Graphical display of self-esteem among youth based on gender and age group

Tab. Total self-esteem by age-group: Kosovo vs. Europa/Central Asia

Age groups	10-12 years		13-17 years		18-22 years		23-29 years	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Europa/Central Asia	29.2	NA	22.82	25.69	25.31	27.26	26.91	26.89
Kosovo	29.66	28.23	26.57	26.59	26.42	27.05	24.93	27.68

Conclusion

Although Kosovo mostly holds collectivistic values, self-competence scores are higher than self-liking scores and only Japan revealed slightly lower scores than Kosovo. This finding requires further investigation, particularly as regards the presence of any cohort effects in the findings. Indeed, authors caution the interpretation of findings strictly in developmental terms due to the cross-sectional and not longitudinal character of the study. Despite these limitations the present study represents an important contribution to the investigation of self-esteem in Kosovo, and provides several directions for further research particularly as regards gender or developmental studies.

Results

Results indicated a slightly but not significantly higher level of self-esteem for men. The mean reported value for self-esteem, might be considered above the theoretical average, i.e., positive self-esteem value which has been replicated across cultures (Schmitt & Allik, 2005).

The gender difference reached significance only for the age groups 18 to 22 years old and 23-29-years old. The study revealed developmental trajectories of self-esteem and gender patterns which are comparable to findings from other countries, although with some slight difference.

As regards cross-country comparisons, the study showed that mean values for self-esteem in the present sample were lower as compared to other countries, except for Japan.

The study sample included 4303 participants, 45.5% male and 54% female. The mean age of participants was 16.57 years (SD=2.99). Composition by age group was as follows: 3.7% 10-12 years old, 66.4% 13-17 years old, 25.8% 18-22 years old and 2.8% 23-29 years old (1.3% information on age was missing). The measuring instrument was the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg 1965).