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Impact of Friendship Quality on Self-Esteem and Resilience Among Adolescents

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Abstract

Adolescence is an integral developmental stage of change in social, emotional and psychological aspects of an individual's life. Friendship is an essential component of this period that helps to provide social support and emotional comfort. The present research gaps are not fully addressed by the existing literature on friendship quality, self-esteem, and resilience among adolescents. Hence, the present study sought to establish whether friendship quality and its sub-dimensions of safety, closeness, acceptance and help predict self-esteem and resilience. A quantitative, correlational research design was employed, and the participants were 80 adolescents (40 males and 40 females) 13 to 19 years of age, randomly selected. The variables were measured by Friendship Quality Scale by Thien et al. (2012), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 2006) [14], and the Brief Resilience Scale by Smith et al. (2008). Descriptive statistics indicated no significant gender differences in friendship quality, self-esteem, or resilience. Correlation analysis did not reveal any significant relationship between the overall friendship quality and self-esteem or resilience. Very low and insignificant correlations were observed with self-esteem for closeness and help, while acceptance had the highest correlation with resilience. Regression analysis also supported the fact that friendship quality and its domains failed to predict self-esteem and resilience significantly. The study concluded that friendship quality is not a primary determinant of self-esteem or resilience in adolescents which suggests that personal achievements, coping mechanisms and family environment may play a more crucial role. These findings further highlight the need for broader social support systems and interventions beyond peer relationships to foster adolescent well-being. Future research should explore longitudinal approaches and additional psychological factors contributing to self-esteem and resilience.

Keywords: Adolescents, friendship quality, self-esteem, resilience, psychological well-being

INTRODUCTION

The phase of adolescence is infamously understood and defined as a crucial developmental stage that marks its commencement with the onset of puberty and terminates as individuals approach adulthood. According to WHO, the age characteristic of adolescence is highlighted between 10 and 19. As adolescents transit into an individual's developmental journey, an increase in the importance distinguishes early adolescence prompted to friends. Distress-causing life events harm our overall health and well-being. Therefore, social surroundings are deemed as an important source of strength, resilience and optimism that can result as an influential factor affecting their well-being.

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Friendship Quality

Friendship is described as a relationship established by choice between two or more individuals. It is characterized by a purpose to fulfil

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each other's needs while also pursuing one's interests and desires. Friendships can be intentional and/or coincidental, and they can be developed as part of common experiences where the individual learns that their companionship with others is fulfilling and desirable (APA, 2025). The quality of friendship is characterized by how a person views the positive (intimacy, trust, and support) and negative elements (conflict, rivalry, and control) of their relationships with others (Abdillah et al., 2020).

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is considered the value judgment that an individual holds about themselves. The concept was first conceptualized by William James [6] in the 1890s, suggesting that it is defined more by one's success than their pretensions. APA (2025) [1] defines self-esteem as characterized by a person's perception of their physical self, abilities, successes, values and perceived expectation in living by them alongside how the person thinks they are being viewed by others. Rosenberg (196) has also conceptualized it as an attitude that an individual holds towards oneself, whether positive or negative. He believed that individuals naturally tend to hold a positive sense of themselves. The development of a negative view of oneself is instilled by one's experience and maladaptive patterns (García, 2019) [7].

Resilience

Resilience is known as the capability to "bounce back" from adversity. APA (2025) [2] [3] defines resilience as "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress". Resilience as a process can be understood concerning the evaluation of risk and protective factors. As an outcome it is viewed in terms of the benefits yielded by an individual who practices or is resilient. As a trait, it is "the ability resist illness, adapt to stress, or thrive in the face of adversity". Resilience plays a key role in an adolescent's lives as it helps them to regulate and manage their emotional distress. It is a protective factor from mental health issues (Surzykiewicz et al., 2022, Mesman et al., 2021) [19].

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bouchillon (2024) [4] explored quality of networked friendships concerning loneliness and self-esteem on 2252 Americans. Findings suggested that friendships affected self-esteem, which reduced feelings of loneliness.

Sharma (2023) [16] evaluated the role of gender, friendship quality, family environment and self-esteem on the psychological well-being on 340 adolescents (16-19 years old) from Aligarh revealing that all the variables were positively related to well-being and friendship quality's domains.

Pranowo et al. (2023) [12] researched the impact that peers may have on the self-resilience of 160 eighth-grade students. Results revealed that peers contributed significantly, up to 14.9% to students' self-resilience.

Sharma and Parveen (2021) [18] explored the role of perceived social support in gender, self-esteem and resilience on 100 Indians between 18 to 26 years, revealing that both variables were positively correlated with perceived social support.

Trzesniewski, K. H. (2001) [13] explored the association between self-esteem, parenting practices and life satisfaction on 382 students (13-19 years) suggesting that self-esteem acted as a partial mediator between parenting approach, self-disclosure and life satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

The present study was aimed at investigating the impact between Friendship Quality, Self-Esteem and Resilience among adolescents.

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Objectives

1. To assess the gender differences between Friendship Quality, its domains, Self-Esteem and Resilience among adolescents.
2. To study the relationship between Friendship Quality and Self-Esteem among adolescents.
3. To study the relationship between Friendship Quality and Resilience among adolescents.
4. To assess whether Friendship Quality and its domains will predict Self-esteem.
5. To assess whether Friendship Quality and its domains will predict Resilience.

Hypothesis

H1: There will be no gender differences between Friendship Quality, its domains, Self-Esteem and Resilience among adolescents.

H2: There will not be a significant relationship between Friendship Quality and its domains and Self-Esteem among adolescents.

H3: There will not be a significant relationship between Friendship Quality and its domains and Resilience among adolescents.

H4: Friendship Quality and its domains will not significantly predict Self-esteem.

H5: Friendship Quality and its domains will not significantly predict Resilience.

Research Design & Sample

This research study is a cross-sectional, quantitative and non-experimental research. Descriptive research, correlation and regression analyses were used. It consisted of 80 adolescents 13-19 years of age, 40 males and 40 females using a random sampling method.

Tools Used

Friendship quality scale (thien et al., 2012) [20]

It was designed by Lee Mei Thien, Nordin Abd Razak, & Hazri Jamil in 2012. It assesses 4 positive features of quality of friendship via 21 items from which statements 1 to 8 assess safety, 9 to 14 assess closeness, 15 to 18 assess acceptance, and 19 to 21 assess help. It is a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (highly strongly) disagreement to 6 (highly strongly) agree. Overall Cronbach Alpha of the scale is 0.82, while the alphas for each separate dimension are 0.88 (safety), 0.83 (closeness), 0.84 (acceptance), and 0.81 (help) (Sharma, 2023) [17].

Rosenberg self-esteem scale (rosenberg, 2006)

It was developed by Dr Morris Rosenberg in 1965 [14]. It is a Guttman Scale however, the scale can also be scored by adding the individual 4-point items after applying reverse scoring to the negatively phrased items. The statements are rated from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). It incorporates a reproductivity coefficient of 0.92 and test-retest reliability coefficients of 0.85 and 0.88 over a two-week interval. It correlates with other measures such as Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.

Brief resilience scale (smith et al., 2008)

It was developed by Bruce W Smith, Jeanne Dalen, Kathryn Wiggins, Erin Tooley, Paulette Christopher & Jennifer Bernard. It consists of 6 statements. The individual rates them from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree', indicated by 1 to 5 respectively. Convergent validity was showcased by the positive correlations with tests of optimism, and a sense of purpose in life. Discriminant validity was established by a negative relationship with anxiety, depression, negative affect, and physical symptoms measures.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation, and Pearson correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to assess gender difference, relationship and whether friendship quality and its domains predict significantly self-esteem and resilience.

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Results and Interpretation

Table A1 (see Appendix) revealed that none of the p-values are less than 0.05, it indicates that none of the variables show any statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$). Closeness dimension to friendship quality had the lowest p-value, 0.160 which was still not statistically significant. All Cohen's d values are less than 0.5, with small effects across all variables.

Table A2 (see Appendix) revealed that Friendship Quality and its domains i.e., Safety (0.889), Closeness (0.829), Acceptance (0.843), and Help (0.807) are strongly positively correlated at 0.01 level. Self-esteem shows almost no relationship whether positive or negative with overall friendship quality (0.001). Acceptance (-0.044), and Help (0.016) does not have meaningful relationships with self-esteem. Safety and Closeness show an insignificant negative and positive correlation with self-esteem at values; -0.120 and 0.197.

Similarly, resilience has weak and insignificant correlations with all variables of friendship quality. It is weakly positively correlated with the first 3 dimensions of friendship quality (Safety, Closeness, Acceptance) and with overall friendship quality with values at 0.101, 0.088, 0.208 and 0.112 respectively. It is weakly negatively correlated with Help at the value of -0.027.

From Tables, A3.1 – A3.10 (see Appendix), friendship quality as a whole does not correlate with self-esteem ($R = 0.001$), explaining 0% of the variance ($p = 0.992$). Safety shows a weak correlation ($R = 0.120$), accounting for only 1.4% of self-esteem variance, Closeness exhibits a weak and statistically insignificant relationship ($R = 0.197$, $R^2 = 3.9\%$), ($p = 0.079$). Acceptance predicts almost no correlation ($R^2 = 0.2\%$) and remains insignificant ($p = 0.699$). Help exerts no correlation with self-esteem ($R = 0.016$, $R^2 = 0\%$).

Appendix

Table A 1. Mean, standard deviation, t-value, p-value and cohen's d for friendship quality and its domains, self-esteem & resilience among adolescents (males & females).

	Gender	Mean	Std. deviation	t	p	Cohen's D
Safety	1	34.80	6.545		.531	0.141
	2	33.85	6.960	.629	.531	
Closeness	1	30.43	3.587		.160	0.317
	2	28.95	5.519	1.417	.161	
Acceptance	1	18.78	3.270		.635	0.106
	2	18.40	3.761	.476	.635	
Help	1	14.90	2.872		.376	0.199
	2	14.25	3.614	.891	.376	
Friendship quality	1	98.90	12.866		.321	0.223
	2	95.45	17.658	.999	.321	
Self-esteem	1	26.33	2.422		.674	0.095
	2	26.13	1.757	.423	.674	
Resilience	1	3.035	.8113		.348	-0.211
	2	3.195	.6987	-.945	.348	

Table A 2. Correlation between friendship quality and its domains, self-esteem & resilience among adolescents.

Variables	Safety	Closeness	Acceptance	Help	Friendship quality	Self-esteem	Resilience
Safety	1	.574**	.677**	.595**	.889**	-.120	.101
Closeness		1	.620**	.638**	.829**	.197	.088
Acceptance			1	.631**	.843**	-.044	.208
Help				1	807**	.016	-.027
Friendship quality					1	.001	.112
Self-esteem						1	.071
Resilience							1

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

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Table A 3.1 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Safety and Self-Esteem**.**

Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate		
1		.120[a]	.014	.002	2.103		
	a. Predictors: (Constant), Safety						
	ANOVA[a]						
	Model		***Sum of squares***	***df***	***Mean Square***	***F***	***Sig.***
1		Regression	5.008	1	5.008	1.132	.291[b]
		Residual	344.942	78	4.422		
		Total	349.950	79			
	a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						
	b. Predictors: (Constant), Safety						
	Coefficients[a]						
	Model		**Unstandardized coefficients**		**Standardized coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
			B	***Std. Error***	***Beta***		
1		(Constant)	27.509	1.230		22.374	<.001
		Safety	-.037	.035	-.120	-1.064	.291
	a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						

A3.2 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Closeness and Self-Esteem.

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R square**	**Std. error of the estimate**		
1	.197[a]	.039	.027	2.077		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Closeness						
ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	13.617	1	13.617	3.158	.079[b]
	Residual	336.333	78	4.312		
	Total	349.950	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Closeness						
Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	***Std. Error***	***Beta***		
1	(Constant)	23.594	1.499		15.741	<.001
	Closeness	.089	.050	.197	1.777	.079
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						

A3.3 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Acceptance and Self-Esteem.

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R square**	**Std. error of the estimate**		
1	.044[a]	.002	-.011	2.116		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Acceptance						
ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of squares**	**df**	**Mean square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	.673	1	.673	.150	.699[b]
	Residual	349.277	78	4.478		
	Total	349.950	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						

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b. Predictors: (Constant), Acceptance						
Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized coefficients**		**Standardized coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	***Std. Error***	***Beta***		
1	(Constant)	26.714	1.284		20.806	<.001
	Acceptance	-.026	.068	-.044	-.388	.699
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						

A3.4 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Help and Self-Esteem.

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R square**	**Std. error of the estimate**
1	.016[a]	.000	-.013	2.118
a. Predictors: (Constant), Help				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	.089	1	.089	.020	.888[b]
	Residual	349.861	78	4.485		
	Total	349.950	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Help						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized coefficients**		**Standardized coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	***Std. Error***	***Beta***		
1	(Constant)	26.075	1.091		23.893	<.001
	Help	.010	.073	.016	.141	.888
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						

A3.5 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Friendship Quality and Self-Esteem.

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R square**	**Std. error of the estimate**
1	.001[a]	.000	-.013	2.118
a. Predictors: (Constant), Friendship Quality				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of squares**	**df**	**Mean square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	.000	1	.000	.000	.992[b]
	Residual	349.950	78	4.487		
	Total	349.950	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Friendship Quality						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized coefficients**		**Standardized coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	26.210	1.518		17.271	<.001
	Friendship Quality	.000	.015	.001	.010	.992
a. Dependent Variable: Self-Esteem						

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A3.6 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Safety and Resilience..

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	.101[a]	.010	-.002	.7575
a. Predictors: (Constant), Safety				

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.461	1	.461	.803	.373[b]
	Residual	44.761	78	.574		
	Total	45.222	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Safety						

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*		
1	(Constant)	2.725	.443		6.153	<.001
	Safety	.011	.013	.101	.896	.373
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						

A3.7 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Closeness and Resilience**.**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	.088[a]	.008	-.005	.7585
a. Predictors: (Constant), Closeness				

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.348	1	.348	.606	.439[b]
	Residual	44.874	78	.575		
	Total	45.222	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Closeness						

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*		
1	(Constant)	2.694	.547		4.921	<.001
	Closeness	.014	.018	.088	.778	.439
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						

A3.8 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Acceptance and Resilience.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.208[a]	.043	.031	.7448
a. Predictors: (Constant), Acceptance				

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.948	1	1.948	3.510	.065[b]
	Residual	43.274	78	.555		
	Total	45.222	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						

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b. Predictors: (Constant), Acceptance						
Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized coefficients**		**Standardized coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	***Std. Error***	***Beta***		
1	(Constant)	2.283	.452		5.051	<.001
	Acceptance	.045	.024	.208	1.874	.065
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						

A3.9 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Help and Resilience.

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.027[a]	.001	-.012	.7611
a. Predictors: (Constant), Help				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	.033	1	.033	.058	.811[b]
	Residual	45.189	78	.579		
	Total	45.222	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Help						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	***Std. Error***	***Beta***		
1	(Constant)	3.207	.392		8.176	<.001
	F1D4	-.006	.026	-.027	-.240	.811
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						

A3.10 Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Friendship Quality and Resilience.

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Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.112[a]	.013	.000	.7566
a. Predictors: (Constant), Friendship Quality				

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of squares**	**df**	**Mean square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	.567	1	.567	.990	.323[b]
	Residual	44.655	78	.573		
	Total	45.222	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Friendship Quality						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized coefficients**		**Standardized coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	***Std. Error***	***Beta***		
1	(Constant)	2.582	.542		4.763	<.001
	Friendship Quality	.005	.006	.112	.995	.323
a. Dependent Variable: Resilience						

Similarly, friendship quality as a whole does not correlate with resilience (R = 0.112), explaining

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1.3% of the variance (p = 0.323). Safety (R = 0.101, p = 0.373), Closeness (R = 0.088, p = 0.439) shows an insignificant weak correlation. Acceptance demonstrates a weak-to-moderate correlation (R = 0.208), explaining 4.3% of the variance, and is the closest to statistical significance (p = 0.065), suggesting a possible but inconclusive relationship. Help has almost no correlation contributing just 0.1% to resilience variance (p = 0.811).

DISCUSSION

This study aimed at discovering whether high-quality friendships lead to high self-esteem and resilience, or if other factors like family and academic achievement influenced these constructs more.

No significant gender differences were found in friendship quality (safety, closeness, acceptance, help). This is consistent with Mustapha Amoadu et al. (2024) [10] who discovered no statistical variations in academic resilience among male and female students. Likewise, described that overall self-esteem seems to be uniform among males and females. These outcomes imply that identified friendship quality, self-esteem, and resilience tend to be homogenous across the gender divide. Hence, the first null hypothesis is accepted.

Correlation analysis showed that there is no significant link between friendship quality and self-esteem. Sharma & Parveen (2021) [18] also found that self-esteem was positively correlated with closeness, acceptance and help but the correlation was non-significant. Beigi et al. (2022) established that peer attachment and trust in mother and peers, are significant predictors of self-esteem. Sushma & Kuldeep (2023) [9] also highlighted the factor of personal academic achievement which positively correlates with self-esteem. Hence, the second null hypothesis is accepted.

The study found insignificant and weak correlations between friendship quality and resilience. Among the domains, acceptance had the highest correlation, but it was non-significant. This is in concordance with Miliotis & Sebastian (2023) who established that friendship intimacy had a small negative effect on the prediction of resilience while peer belonging had a moderate positive correlation. Orozco-Solís et al. (2021) [11] also highlighted that teenagers with high family cohesion are likely to have higher levels of resilience, self-esteem, and social skills. Hence, the 3rd null hypothesis is accepted.

Regression analysis revealed that friendship quality is not a significant predictor of self-esteem. Beigi et al. (2022) established that parental and peer attachment, specifically trust in the mother and peers, significantly predict self-esteem. Likewise, Krauss et al. (2019) [8] underscored the influence of family environment on self-esteem in late childhood and adolescence. This means that the 4th null hypothesis is accepted.

Furthermore, the quality of friendship was not a significant predictor of resilience, indicating that it is a combined function of family support, coping styles and general resources in the environment. van Harmelen et al. (2020) [21] reported that high-quality friendships at age 14 did not predict higher levels of resilience by age 17, indicating that family relationships, coping styles, and social resources are also important. Therefore, the last null hypothesis is also accepted.

CONCLUSION

Findings highlight no notable gender differences in friendship-quality, self-esteem, or resilience were found. Between the overall friendship quality and self-esteem and/or resilience respectively, correlation and regression analysis revealed no outstanding relation or prediction. Consequently, the study recommends that educational institutions should encourage initiatives that help enhance a child's self-confidence and robustness through guidance and tutoring, student leadership and mentoring programs, counselling services and mental health campaigns. Programs that are aimed at educating parents on how to use positive reinforcement, emotional validation, and independence fostering should be supported to

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produce a nurturing home environment.

However, the research involved only 80 adolescents, lacking generalizability to other in different cultural, socio-economic or educational backgrounds. The study employed a cross-sectional design, lacking evidence for long-term changes. Data was collected through self-report questionnaires which can have social desirability or subjective perceptions bias. Future work should include larger samples, longitudinal designs, and the investigation of other factors that are related to self-esteem and resilience.

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