

Self-Esteem on University Students by Gender and Branch of Study

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Abstract : This work is part of an investigation into the relationship between romantic love and self-esteem in college students, performed by the students of matter "methods and techniques of social research", of the Master Gender at the University of Balearic Islands, during 2014-2015. In particular, we have investigated the relationships that may exist between self-esteem, gender and field of study. They are known as gender differences in self-esteem, and the relationship between gender and branch of study observed annually by the distribution of enrolment in universities. Therefore, in this part of the study, we focused the spotlight on the differences in self-esteem between the sexes through the various branches of study. The study sample consists of 726 individuals (304 men and 422 women) from 30 undergraduate degrees that the University of the Balearic Islands offers on its campus in 2014-2015, academic year. The average age of men was 21.9 years and 21.7 years for women. The sampling procedure used was random sampling stratified by degree, simple affixation, giving a sampling error of 3.6% for the whole sample, with a confidence level of 95% under the most unfavorable situation ($p = q$). The Spanish translation of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE), by Atienza, Moreno and Balaguer was applied. The psychometric properties of translation reach a test-retest reliability of 0.80 and an internal consistency between 0.76 and 0.87. In this paper we have obtained an internal consistency of 0.82. The results confirm the expected differences in self-esteem by gender, although not in all branches of study. Mean levels of self-esteem in women are lower in all branches of study, reaching statistical significance in the field of Science, Social Sciences and Law, and Engineering and Architecture. However, analysed the variability of self-esteem by the branch of study within each gender, the results show independence in the case of men, whereas in the case of women find statistically significant differences, arising from lower self-esteem of Arts and Humanities students vs. the Social and legal Sciences students. These findings confirm the results of numerous investigations in which the levels of female self-esteem appears always below the male, suggesting that perhaps we should consider separately the two populations rather than continually emphasize the difference. The branch of study, for its part has not appeared as an explanatory factor of relevance, beyond detected the largest absolute difference between gender in the technical branch, one in which women are historically a minority, ergo, are no disciplinary or academic characteristics which would explain the differences, but the differentiated social context that occurs within it.

Keywords : study branch, gender, self-esteem, applied psychology

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