

The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Political Participation Among University Professors: A Field Study at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of El-Oued – Algeria

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the relationship between self-esteem and political participation among university professors at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of El Oued, Algeria. Recognizing a gap in the integration of psychological dimensions into political science research, the study employs a descriptive correlational methodology. Using standardized instruments—the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Political Participation Scale—the research surveyed 46 faculty members. Results demonstrate statistically significant positive correlations between self-esteem and multiple forms of political engagement, including following political news, participating in discussions and seminars, voting, joining political parties, and engaging in political activities. The findings underscore the importance of self-esteem as a driver of political involvement and suggest that fostering positive self-perception can enhance civic engagement among academic professionals. The study contributes to the field of political psychology by offering empirical evidence from the Algerian academic context and provides recommendations for promoting political participation through psychological empowerment.

Keywords: Self-Esteem, Political Participation, University Professors, Political Psychology, Algeria, Rosenberg Scale, Civic Engagement

INTRODUCTION

One of the major mistakes made by political scientists is their neglect of the psychological dimension in analyzing political phenomena. It is inconceivable to overlook this influential and active element when addressing political phenomena. This point was articulated by the renowned political scientist *Lippmann* more than half a century ago, expressing the absence of a psychological perspective in dealing with political issues and the disconnection between psychology and political science.

This observation, advanced by a scholar who belonged to both the political and psychological fields, decisively and from an early historical period, underscores the need for each discipline to build bridges toward the other. Political science requires an attentive consideration of the psychological dimension of political phenomena, while psychology needs to devote greater attention to analyzing political issues and deeply understanding their psychological aspects. Today, the relationship between politics and psychology has gained increasing recognition. The psychological approach to analyzing political phenomena has become critically important and essential if we wish to comprehend these phenomena in their true and accurate dimensions (Muhanna, 1991, p. 33).

The present study seeks to describe the psychological state of the study sample in light of the two variables: **self-esteem** and **political participation**, both of which hold great significance in describing personality traits.

i. Research Problem

The current study aims to investigate the nature of the relationship between the variables of **self-esteem** and **political participation** among university professors by addressing the central research question:

What is the relationship between self-esteem and political participation among university professors?

ii. Research Hypotheses

Main Hypothesis:

There is a correlational relationship between self-esteem and political participation among university professors.

Sub-Hypotheses:

1. There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between self-esteem and following news bulletins and political news among university professors.
2. There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between self-esteem and engaging in political discussions and seminars among university professors.
3. There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between self-esteem and participation in elections and political parties among university professors.
4. There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between self-esteem and participation in political activities among university professors.

iii. Operational Definitions of Study Terms

a) Self-Esteem

The researchers adopt *Rosenberg's* definition as the operational definition for the current study, which includes the following points:

- The individual possesses an internal valuation of self-worth.
- The individual has cognitive, emotional, physical, and positive attributes. If the individual maintains these attributes, their self-esteem will be positive and high. Conversely, any deficiency in these attributes negatively affects self-esteem.

b) Political Participation

The researchers operationally define political participation as: *A legitimate method for expressing an individual's ideas and respecting their rights within the framework of societal institutions or groups, through contributing to and engaging in the process of decision-making or formulating community policies, thereby ensuring freedom of expression either directly or indirectly.*

iv. Significance of the Study

A) Theoretical Significance

The study of topics that closely relate individuals to their environment—across psychological, social, economic, and political levels, which grow increasingly complex day by day—can be expected to yield benefits for both individuals and society. Accordingly, the present study explores **self-esteem** and its relationship to **political participation** among university professors. This group is considered the intellectual and social elite and is viewed as role models who are particularly expected to engage in political participation and contribute to shaping public policies.

Hence, the importance of studying political participation, alongside psychological variables such as self-esteem, which may be linked to political participation or political apathy (non-participation), emerges as a means to

investigate and understand the underlying causes of these issues and ultimately propose potential solutions. As Ziyour (1986, p. 198) aptly stated, "Science that cannot dedicate itself to the welfare of the nation has no value."

Furthermore, political participation is a form of education that deserves attention. It is crucial to present to future generations a comprehensive and broad understanding of the concepts of homeland and society by emphasizing **citizenship, pluralism, tolerance, and acceptance of others**, and fostering coexistence within an integrated society. This includes guiding an entire generation towards conscious political participation through organizations and civil society institutions, which will find fertile ground among these generations to promote civil society concepts and to strengthen the role of these organizations in political participation.

Additionally, the environment—through its social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions—within which professors operate as key actors in the educational process, plays a significant role in influencing their performance and effectiveness. There is no doubt that a favorable political environment contributes to optimizing professors' outcomes.

B) Practical Significance

The practical importance of the study lies in its attempt to explore the relationship between self-esteem and political participation among a key segment of Algerian society: **university professors**. Given their scientific and social standing, it is imperative to assess the extent of their effectiveness and their involvement in public affairs. In any society, an individual's value is determined by the respect given to their opinions and their contributions to managing societal matters.

Moreover, studies within the field of **political psychology**, the framework within which this study falls, remain relatively scarce to the best of the researcher's knowledge. The researcher hopes this study will contribute a modest but meaningful addition to the field of political psychology. The findings are expected to benefit specialists and stakeholders in this field, whether in academic and research centers, related institutions, or practitioners. The study aims to provide **guidance and psychological support** to enhance self-esteem and political participation among this crucial segment of society—university professors.

v. Study Objectives

- To build upon previous research in political psychology, offering a new contribution to scientific inquiry aimed at understanding societal problems and seeking solutions.
- To explore the nature of the relationship between **self-esteem** and **political participation** among university professors, thereby assessing their psychological state.

vi. Review of Previous Studies

There are few studies that have examined the exact research problem with the same variables. However, numerous studies have explored each variable separately or alongside other variables. Some of these studies include:

1. Studies on the Concept of Self-Esteem

- **Zoubida Amziane (2017)**
The Relationship Between Adolescents' Self-Esteem, Their Problems, and Counseling Needs: A Comparative Study in Light of Gender Variable.
The study aimed to identify adolescents' problems, examine the relationship between self-esteem and these problems, and explore whether self-esteem is related to counseling needs or varies by gender. The sample included 222 students from various educational centers in Algeria. Results indicated a relationship between self-esteem, the problems faced by adolescents, and their counseling needs, with differences found between students with low and moderate self-esteem.
- **Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Ibrahim Al-Mutawa (2016)**
The Impact of Divorce on Children's Self-Esteem.
This study explored whether self-esteem differs between children of divorced and non-divorced parents and

examined demographic influences. Using a random sample and a self-esteem scale, findings revealed statistically significant differences favoring children from non-divorced families.

- **Al-Khudair (2011)**
The Effectiveness of an Assertiveness Training Program in Developing Self-Esteem Among Female University Students with High Depressive Symptoms.
Conducted at King Saud University, the study involved 39 students divided into control and experimental groups. Using a self-developed self-esteem scale and a depression scale, the study found statistically significant improvements in self-esteem and reductions in depression in the experimental group following the training program.
- **Ellis, S.J. (1999)**
The Concept of Self-Esteem Among Adolescents: A New Zealand Study.
This study investigated adolescents' self-esteem concepts and their alignment with psychological theories. The sample consisted of 24 students aged 14 to 15 from two secondary schools in Waikato, New Zealand. Findings suggested that self-esteem is linked to school behavior, academic success, internal personal factors, and, for some students, comparisons with peers.

Studies Addressing Concepts Related to Political Participation

➤ **Saeed Mohammed Nasr (1982):**

“Women’s Attitudes Toward Engagement in Political and Social Work”

The study aimed to examine the verbal attitudes of the research sample toward women’s political engagement. The sample consisted of **124 participants** (86 men and 38 women). The researcher used:

- **A Women’s Attitude Toward Political Work Scale** (developed by the researcher).

Key Findings:

- The attitude of educated Egyptian women toward political work is influenced by the lack of clarity regarding the concept of such work. However, there was a generally positive tendency regarding women's participation in elections and membership in political parties and organizations.
- Cultural heritage and role conflict between men and women were found to be significant barriers to women's involvement in political and social work. Both politically active and inactive women believed they approached political engagement with broad knowledge and understanding.
- About **12.28%** of participants felt that men were unfairly treated when women were prevented from political involvement, and there was noted resistance from society—and spouses in particular—toward women’s political participation.
- There were differences in attitudes between politically active men and women regarding women’s engagement in politics. Educated women displayed strong support for political involvement, while men generally did not favor women's participation in political fields.
- Politically active women differed in attitude from their inactive counterparts and, psychologically, were better prepared and exhibited greater self-confidence.

➤ **Saad Ibrahim Jumaa (1984):**

“Youth and Political Participation”

The study sought to assess the current state of Egyptian youth participation in political activities, the nature and type of this involvement, and the influence of familial, educational, social, economic, and political variables on the youth and their political participation.

The sample comprised **500 students** (male and female) from the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University.

Research Methods:

- **Social survey** using stratified random sampling.
- **Content analysis**, involving observation of students' political activities during the 1980/1981 academic year.
- **Analysis of researcher reports**, containing observational notes.
- **Questionnaire** on student participation in decision-making (developed by the researcher).

Key Findings:

- There was broad agreement that **socialization** is a primary variable influencing youth political participation, with the family playing a critical role.
- A correlation was found between **students' educational levels** and their engagement in political activities.
- Students from wealthier backgrounds demonstrated higher levels of political participation and party affiliation compared to those from less affluent backgrounds.

➤ **Knutson, J. N., et al. (1982):**

“Political Participation and Its Relation to Certain Psychological Needs of Ordinary Citizens”

The study examined the relationship between the level of **self-actualization** and political participation. The sample included **495 ordinary male and female citizens**.

Instruments Used:

- **Self-Actualization Questionnaire**
- **Political Participation Scale**

Key Findings:

- A **correlational relationship** was identified between self-actualization and political participation, although the correlation was relatively weak.

Commentary on Previous Studies

From the review of both Arabic and foreign studies addressing concepts related to **self-esteem** and **political participation**, the following observations can be made:

- Positive **self-esteem** is commonly found among individuals who are politically active.
- **Political culture** plays a significant role in shaping political participation.
- **Men** tend to engage in political activities more than women.
- **Socialization** has an effective role in promoting political participation.
- The **measurement tools** used vary according to the study environment.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that not all studies necessarily produce consistent results, as findings tend to differ based on the environment and society in which the research is conducted.

1. Definition of Self-Esteem

Tariq Abdel-Raouf Mohamed Amer (2016), *Concept and Self-Esteem*, Dar Al-Ilm Publishing, Cairo, Egypt.

Many researchers have offered different definitions of self-esteem, including:

- **Cohen (1959)**: Defined it as "the degree to which the ideal self and the real self coincide" (Violet, 1988, p. 85).

- **Coopersmith (1967):** Defined self-esteem as "an individual's evaluation of themselves and their abilities, which they believe they possess and which distinguish their success, worthiness, and what they believe they rightfully deserve, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of others" (Abdel-Raouf, 2016, p. 69).
- **Nathaniel Branden:** Described self-esteem as an individual's tendency to feel that they are competent and capable of adapting to the fundamental challenges of life and deserving of happiness.
- **Shevelson (1982) and Mars (1983):** Defined self-esteem as "a fundamental factor for success in various areas of an individual's life" (Abbas, 1982, p. 181).
- **Maslow:** Defined self-esteem as "the individual's need for social status, the feeling of respect, the need to feel valued, a sense of power, self-confidence, ability, and competence" (Zahra, 2006, p. 42).
- **Paladino (2002):** Defined it as "a person's appreciation of themselves and their significance, acting responsibly toward others" (Mohamed, 2010, p. 76).
- **Sheikh Khalil (2008):** Defined it as "the judgment an individual makes about themselves, whether positive or negative, affecting their nature, activity, competence, and compatibility with themselves and their surrounding society" (Mohamed A., 2006, p. 76).
- **Dennis & Whetley:** Described it as "the feeling of value and personal competence linked to one's self-concept and development."

Additionally, self-esteem can be seen as an individual's evaluation of themselves in their effort to maintain this assessment, including both positive aspects that foster self-respect compared to others, and negative aspects that do not diminish their standing among others, even as they strive to overcome them (Abdel-Raouf, 2016, p. 8).

From all these closely related definitions, we can derive a comprehensive definition: Self-esteem is the image an individual holds of their worth—whether positive or negative. It is a continuous process in which the person evaluates themselves based on their abilities, performance levels, desires, and ambitions, sometimes comparing themselves to peers to achieve high self-esteem. This aims at gaining the respect and appreciation of others while maintaining self-respect, which fosters confidence and helps face the challenges of daily life.

2. FACTORS INFLUENCING SELF-ESTEEM

The concept and evaluation of self-esteem in individuals are shaped by multiple, interrelated factors, some intrinsic—such as aptitudes and abilities—and others external, such as socialization, societal values, and cultural influences. These factors can either enhance or diminish self-esteem and can be summarized as follows:

2.1 Personal Factors

An individual's self-esteem varies across different situations. For example, one may rate themselves highly in interpersonal relationships but feel low self-esteem in scenarios requiring intelligence or problem-solving. At work, self-assessment might fall somewhere in between, depending on the context.

2.2 Social Factors

An individual's interaction within their environment extends beyond family and school to the broader social sphere. These interactions shape behavior, self-acceptance, social acceptance, and self-awareness. Social factors include social norms, social roles, and social interactions.

2.3 Past Experiences

Success and failure in achieving personal goals influence self-expectations and ambition levels. Success and perceived ability foster positive self-esteem and encourage further achievements, while failure often leads to frustration, maladjustment, withdrawal, and stagnation.

These are the primary factors that either positively or negatively influence the development of self-esteem. When these factors are supportive, they promote high self-esteem; when adverse, they lead to low self-esteem (Bokhabza, 2020, pp. 45–48).

3. LEVELS OF SELF-ESTEEM

A) Low Self-Esteem

Individuals with low self-esteem may believe they deserve respect and recognition but often have a limited, constrained self-concept. They typically lack confidence, struggle with emotional instability, believe most of their efforts will fail, and expect low performance.

B) High Self-Esteem

Individuals with high self-esteem regard themselves as important and deserving of respect and recognition. They possess a well-defined and sufficient understanding of their beliefs and exhibit high, consistent confidence. They are proactive, open to new experiences, and trust in their knowledge (Saad, 2016, pp. 21–22).

4. Theories of Self-Esteem

There are several theories that have attempted to explain the concept of self-esteem. The most significant among them include:

A) Rosenberg's Theory (1989)

Rosenberg's work revolves around studying the development and enhancement of individuals' self-evaluation behaviors, analyzed through the prevailing social standards within their environment. He paid particular attention to adolescents' self-assessment and later broadened his focus to include the dynamics of forming a positive self-image during adolescence. He also emphasized the family's role in shaping self-esteem and sought to clarify the relationship between self-esteem developed within the family context and subsequent social behaviors. Additionally, he examined differences in self-esteem between groups, such as Black and White adolescents.

Rosenberg's methodology was based on using the concept of *attitude* as a central tool linking previous experiences and future behaviors. He argued that self-esteem reflects an individual's attitude toward themselves. Initially, he suggested that individuals form attitudes toward themselves similarly to how they form attitudes toward other subjects. However, he later acknowledged that self-directed attitudes differ in degree from those directed toward other objects (Maqirhi, 2018, pp. 34–35).

B) Coopersmith's Theory (1989)

Coopersmith focused his work on studying self-esteem in pre-secondary school children. Unlike Rosenberg, Coopersmith sought to connect self-esteem research to a broader, more comprehensive theory. He viewed self-esteem as a *multidimensional concept* and a complex phenomenon involving both self-evaluation processes and defensive responses.

According to Coopersmith, self-esteem is the judgment an individual makes about themselves, encompassing attitudes they believe accurately describe them. He divided self-esteem expression into two components:

- **Self-expression:** The individual's perception and description of themselves.
- **Behavioral expression:** Behavioral patterns that reveal an individual's self-esteem.

He also distinguished between:

- **Authentic self-esteem:** Found in individuals who genuinely feel valuable.
- **Defensive self-esteem:** Present in individuals who feel unworthy but cannot acknowledge or act upon these feelings with themselves or others (Saif, 2017, pp. 78–79).

C) Zeller's Theory (1973)

Zeller considered self-esteem as a social construct of the self, which generally operates within a social reference framework. He described self-esteem as an individual's evaluation of themselves, playing the role of an *intervening variable* or occupying the middle ground between the self and the real world. Thus, when changes occur in a person's social environment, self-esteem determines the nature of the changes in self-evaluation.

According to Zeller, self-esteem connects *personality integration* with the individual's capacity to respond to various stimuli. He proposed that a highly integrated personality corresponds to high competence within its social context (Maqirhi, 2018, pp. 34–35).

5. MEASURING SELF-ESTEEM

The fact that the *self* cannot be directly observed presents a fundamental challenge in assessing self-concept at a given time. While the self cannot be seen directly, behavior can be observed. Therefore, self-esteem can be measured using the following methods:

A) Self-Assessment Method

Used to describe the actual or ideal self or to characterize a specific relationship. The participant is presented with cards containing statements such as "I work hard" or "I am easily upset." The participant selects and organizes the cards based on how accurately they reflect themselves. When describing the ideal self, the participant is asked to describe the person they aspire to become.

B) Interview Method

The best approach to understanding behavior is through the individual's internal frame of reference. Rogers and others emphasized creating conditions that foster openness and honest self-expression—this is evident in *client-centered therapy*, which provides a warm, accepting environment enabling individuals to express their feelings and self-concept freely.

C) Semantic Differential Method

Developed by Osgood to study meanings as perceived by the examinee through verbal semantics. Participants are presented with a stimulus word and asked to rate it using a seven-point scale between two opposing adjectives (e.g., happy–sad, strong–weak). This method objectively and flexibly explores the meanings of words and concepts.

Factor analysis of data collected using this method has identified three factors:

- **Evaluation factor:** e.g., good–bad.
- **Potency factor:** e.g., strong–weak.
- **Activity factor:** e.g., active–passive.

To accurately determine the value of direct self-assessment, the results must be compared with predictive assessments.

The Concept of Political Participation

Sayed Yassin (1977) defines political participation as: "*Those voluntary activities through which members of society contribute to choosing their rulers and shaping public policy either directly or indirectly. Traditional forms of such activities include voting, discussions, gathering supporters, attending public meetings, paying membership fees, and contacting representatives. More involved forms of participation include joining political parties, contributing to election campaigns, and engaging in party or public duties*" (Yassin, 1977, p. 25).

Ali Jalabi (1982) describes political participation as:

"The process through which an individual plays a role in political or community life, having the opportunity to contribute to setting public goals for society and determining the best means to achieve them. This may occur through both direct and indirect activities" (Jalabi, 1982, p. 529).

Galal Abdallah Moawad (1983) defines it as:

"In its broadest sense, it means the citizen's right to play a role in political decision-making. In a narrower sense, it refers to the right to monitor these decisions through evaluation and oversight after they have been issued by the ruler" (Moawad, 1983, p. 108).

Saad Jumaa (1984) sees political participation as:

"A voluntary behavior and an acquired process learned throughout life and through interactions with various reference groups, starting from the family and progressing to the classroom group, club group, friends, and workplace. An individual's engagement in political participation, as an acquired process, depends on the availability of ability, motivation, opportunities provided by society, its political traditions and ideologies, and the prevailing political climate" (Jumaa, 1984, p. 34).

Rush (1992) defines political participation as:

"An individual's engagement at different levels of activity within the political system, ranging from non-participation to holding a political office" (Rush, 1992, p. 110).

Mohamed Tawfiq Aliwa (1996) describes it as:

"A process through which an individual plays a role in the political life of society. It is a voluntary and optional process whereby individuals gain the right to vote or run for office, participate in discussions, join political parties or civic organizations, and contribute to state activities. Political participation requires granting democratic and constitutional rights to all sane, adult members of society to engage systematically in political decision-making, express their views freely, and strive for comprehensive development and the general welfare of society" (Aliwa, 1996, p. 60).

Shaaban Al-Haddad (2006) defines political participation as:

"A process through which individuals voluntarily and optionally play roles in political life, seeking to influence political decisions by engaging in activities such as voting, running for political office, attending political rallies and demonstrations, or following political affairs that may affect their community" (Al-Haddad, 2006, p. 12).

The Nature of Political Participation

The term "participation" generally refers to public support for influential government leadership and policies. It also implies public demands typically associated with such support, connecting political action to popular legitimacy derived from mass backing. Participation involves choosing political leaders, setting policies and plans, implementing programs at both the service and production levels, and allowing citizens the right to withdraw support or present demands when necessary.

A school of democratic thought argues that *representation*, typically through elections, is the most suitable mechanism for widespread participation in modern societies, where direct involvement of millions in governance is impractical (Jumaa, 1984, p. 2).

Political philosophers from **Aristotle** to **John Dewey** have emphasized participation as a source of vitality, creativity, and a safeguard against tyranny through deep involvement in state affairs. Participation promotes stability by allowing individuals to express their interests and defend them, maximizing benefits for the largest possible number by leveraging diverse skills. Some philosophers also assert that participation enhances individuals' self-respect and dignity and fosters shared responsibility and political understanding among both rulers and the governed.

Characteristics of Political Participation

Three key characteristics must be present for meaningful participation:

1. **Action:** Active public engagement toward achieving specific goals.
2. **Voluntarism:** Citizens contribute their efforts willingly and choose to engage based on a strong sense of social responsibility, not coercion.
3. **Choice:** Participants retain the right to support political actions and leaders or to withhold support if political efforts conflict with their legitimate interests and goals (Jumaa, 1984, p. 38).

Thus, political participation is neither an innate nor inherited behavior but an **acquired process** learned through life experiences and interactions with various **reference groups**, starting from the family and extending to peer, educational, social, and professional groups (Jumaa, 1984, p. 39).

Forms of Political Participation

Olsen (1980) developed a model identifying six categories of political participants based on cognitive or behavioral political involvement:

- Political leaders
- Political activists
- Politically connected individuals
- Ordinary citizens
- Marginalized individuals
- Isolated individuals (Aliwa, 1996, p. 81).

Wright (1992) distinguishes three forms of political participation:

1. **Free or voluntary participation:** Typical in liberal democracies, where individuals freely choose whether and how to participate, except in cases of mandatory voting (e.g., Australia, Belgium, and the Netherlands before 1970).
2. **Regime-supporting participation:** Structured to support existing power systems.
3. **Clientelistic participation:** Common in developing countries, where individuals offer political support to patrons (employers, leaders, religious figures) in exchange for protection or favors, reflecting a personal exchange based on unequal resource distribution (Wright, 1992, pp. 156–157).

Some scholars also classify participation by intensity:

- **Low-intensity participation:** Obeying laws, ethical behavior, national defense, and voting.
- **High-intensity participation:** Joining election campaigns, writing to representatives, engaging in political demonstrations.

The dominant mode of participation depends on the **prevailing political culture**, which shapes participation's overall framework.

Kasfir (1976) adds that participation's scope and impact depend on its influence over policymaking. He differentiates between:

- **Symbolic participation:** Honorary or superficial involvement with no real influence (e.g., predetermined elections or powerless committees).
- **Material participation:** Genuine involvement in decision-making processes.

Governments sometimes use symbolic participation to mask limited opportunities for genuine material participation (Kasfir, 1976, p. 10).

The Psychological Foundations of Political Activity

Sears and colleagues (1991) argue that people engage in political participation primarily to satisfy their personal needs, often rationalizing neurotic behaviors as actions taken in the public interest. For example, an individual with aggressive tendencies toward authority may engage in revolutionary activities, claiming motives of equality and democracy, thereby resolving personal conflicts with authority. According to Sears, individuals with **low self-esteem** are more inclined toward political participation than those with high self-esteem. Political engagement serves as compensation for feelings of inadequacy by offering the individual a sense of significance (Sears, 1991, pp. 532–533).

In contrast, political scientist **Lane** asserts that a successful politician requires a balanced personality, the ability to be well-liked, problem-solving skills, and flexibility in working with others. From Lane's perspective, political participation is not associated with pathological personalities but with psychologically healthy individuals who possess **high self-esteem**, a sense of security, personal competence, and the satisfaction of personal needs (Al-Omr, 1995, p. 35).

Similarly, **Barber (1985)** notes that **high self-esteem** leads to greater political activity. The more competent, confident, and healthy an individual is, the more they tend to engage in politics. Research has also found that individuals with higher self-esteem are more likely to vote and participate in elections (Barber, 1985).

Individuals' behavior toward others is influenced by environmental variables and external political considerations, as well as their own internal psychological world. This includes **internal determinants** such as physical states (e.g., fatigue or hunger), emotional conditions (e.g., anger or fear), personal factors, memory, and attitudes.

An **attitude** is a characteristic of personality expressed through three dimensions:

- **Cognitive components** (beliefs and thoughts),
- **Emotional components** (feelings and affect),
- **Conative or behavioral components** (intentions and actions).

The importance of psychological components and personal traits lies in their reflection of an individual's beliefs about social issues, awareness of political rights guaranteed by the constitution, and the responsibilities required of those engaged in political activities. These components also involve emotional and affective dimensions related to societal concerns, such as a person's interest in, and emotional response to, community issues, including running for office, voting, and joining political parties (Aliwa, 1996, pp. 72–73).

Some Psychological Aspects of Political Participation

There is a dynamic interaction between **political** and **psychological phenomena**. Political phenomena cannot be fully understood without considering psychological factors. This perspective is emphasized by the **psychoanalytic school**, which posits that political conflicts often stem from psychological deprivation connected to unresolved childhood conflicts lodged in the unconscious. One of the core principles of psychoanalysis is that **early childhood experiences play a critical role** in shaping an individual's personality and behavior. Consequently, understanding political phenomena depends on advancements in understanding psychological phenomena (Asaad, 1998, pp. 35–36).

There is a reciprocal relationship between individuals' psychological structures (or personalities) and the prevailing political, economic, and social systems—collectively referred to as the **social structure**. Political issues, processes, institutions, and conditions influence individuals' psychological well-being, just as individuals' psychological factors influence political conditions.

However, it is important not to assume that psychological factors alone determine political phenomena. Such one-sided explanations reflect narrow-mindedness and rigidity. Researchers caution against psychological reductionism, which involves focusing exclusively on psychological factors and attributing all political phenomena to them. Not all political phenomena have psychological dimensions.

The preceding discussion highlights the considerable attention given to the concept of political participation by scholars in the field of political psychology. This is because political participation is a key dimension in understanding individuals' political behavior.

Definitions of political participation consistently emphasize that it is an acquired behavior. Its practice depends on the availability of abilities, motivations, and opportunities provided by society and its political traditions.

Furthermore, political participation is fundamental to democracy. The evolution of democratic systems depends on expanding opportunities for political participation across different social groups and classes, ensuring that participation becomes a right for all members of society.

Widening participation opportunities helps eliminate abuses of power and reduces feelings of alienation among the public. As values of equality and freedom are realized, general political stability increases, fostering the social, cultural, and political conditions necessary for the success of development plans.

Field Study

1. Research Methodology

The **descriptive correlational method** was used, focusing on identifying the relationship between two or more variables.

2. Pilot Study

A **field pilot study** was conducted at the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the University of El Oued, involving a sample of **10 university professors**.

3. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES

To measure the study variables, **two standardized scales** were applied:

- **Self-Esteem Scale**
- **Political Participation Scale**

3.1 Self-Esteem Scale

3.1.1 Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

a. Scale Introduction

The **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)** was developed in the mid-1960s to assess self-esteem levels among adolescents aged 12 to 19 in 10 high schools in New York State.

The RSES uses a **Likert scale** with four response options: *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree*, *Strongly Disagree*. In some versions, five response options are used (*Tafarodi & William*). Initially, the scale was designed using the **Guttman scaling method**, but most studies now employ the Likert format. The scale consists of **10 items** measuring global self-evaluation: **five positive statements** and **five negative statements**, as follows:

Positive Items:

- Overall, I am satisfied with myself.
- I feel I have several good qualities.
- I am able to do things as well as most other people.
- I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.
- I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Negative Items:

- At times, I feel I am useless.

- I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
- I sometimes feel that I am a failure.
- I wish I could have more respect for myself.
- Generally, I tend to feel that I am a failure.

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is considered one of the most widely used tools for measuring self-esteem and is known for its **high validity and reliability** (Tafarodi, 1997).

The scale has been **translated into Arabic** and adapted to the Algerian context by researcher *Ali Boutaq*, and was employed by Dr. *Bouksara Mansour* at the University of Oran in his PhD dissertation.

b. Psychometric Properties of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

1. Reliability and Validity of the Original Version

- **Reliability:** Chubb and Fertman (1997) reported a **test-retest reliability coefficient** of **0.88** over a two-week interval. Blaskovich and Tomaka found a coefficient of **0.82** over a one-week interval.
- **Validity:**
 - **Self-validity:** Chubb et al. (1997) found a self-validity coefficient of **0.90**.
 - **Concurrent validity:** A statistically significant correlation of **0.60** was found between Rosenberg's scale and Coopersmith's self-esteem scale.

2. Reliability and Validity of the Arabic Version

Research by *Bouksara Mansour* (2007) titled "Achievement Motivation, Locus of Control, Self-Esteem, and Academic Achievement" used the Arabic version of the RSES on a sample of students from Oran and Mostaganem Universities.

Findings:

- **Reliability:** Using internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha), the coefficient was **0.71** after removing item 8 ("I wish I could have more respect for myself"). The split-half reliability coefficient was **0.79**, indicating good reliability.
- **Validity:** Experimental validity was tested by correlating self-esteem scores with scores on Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, yielding a significant negative correlation of **-0.30** at the **0.05** significance level.

These results confirm that the **Arabic version** of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale has strong psychometric properties, comparable to those reported in international studies. The scale is considered a reliable research tool for **educational, clinical, and social studies** (*Journal of Human Development*, 2007).

3.2 Political Participation Scale

Scale Description:

Shaaban Al-Haddad (2006) developed the Political Participation Scale, which consists of **60 items** covering various aspects of political participation, divided into four dimensions:

- Following political news and bulletins
- Participating in political discussions and seminars
- Participation in elections and political parties

- Engagement in political activities

Responses are rated on a **five-point Likert scale** (*Strongly Agree – Agree – Neutral – Disagree – Strongly Disagree*), scored **5 to 1**. Certain items (8, 14, 24, 28, 29, 35, 40, 50, 53, 54, 60) are **reverse scored**. The total score ranges from **60 to 300**.

Reliability:

The final version of the Political Participation Scale achieved a **Cronbach's alpha** of **0.885**, indicating a **high level of reliability** (significant at the **0.01** level).

Validity:

Al-Haddad validated the scale using internal consistency by correlating each item's score with the total scale score. Reliability was further confirmed through **test-retest** and **split-half methods** on a sample of university students, faculty members, and Palestinian security officers, producing statistically significant results, indicating that the scale is **well-standardized for the Palestinian context**.

4. EXPERT REVIEW OF STUDY INSTRUMENTS

The study instruments were reviewed by **five academic experts** in psychology to assess **face validity**. They provided feedback and suggestions regarding the instruments.

a. Expert Evaluation of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Table 2 below summarizes expert agreement on each item of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale:

Item Number	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	Expert 5	Agreement %
1	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	80%
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	80%
5	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	60%
6	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	60%
7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	100%
8	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	60%
9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	80%
10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	80%

Based on **Table 2**, it is evident that all items were deemed acceptable, taking into account the reviewers' suggestions for rephrasing certain items that required correction.

It should be noted that **items receiving an approval rate of 60% or higher** from the expert reviewers were accepted, while those scoring below this threshold were subject to complete revision.

Table 3

Summary of Expert Evaluations for the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Item	Appropriate	Suggested Revision	Item	Appropriate	Suggested Revision
01	+		06		+
02	+		07	+	
03	+		08		+
04	+		09	+	
05		+	10	+	

It is clear from the table that **most items were deemed appropriate and acceptable**, except for items **5, 6, and 8**, which required revision.

- A (+) mark in the "Appropriate" column indicates that the item was accepted.
- A (+) mark in the "Suggested Revision" column indicates that the item should be revised.

4. Main Study Sample

4.1 Population and Sample

The study population consisted of faculty members at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of El Oued, for the academic year 2022/2023, totaling 70 professors. The sample for the present study was selected using a comprehensive enumeration method from the entire population. After identifying the total population (70 professors), a random sample of 46 professors was selected, representing 76.19% of the total population.

1. Presentation of Results

1.1 Results of the First Hypothesis

Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and following political news and bulletins among faculty members at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of El Oued.

Table 1: Correlation coefficient between self-esteem and following political news and bulletins

Sample Size	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance Level	Decision
46	0.723	0.01	Hypothesis supported

Interpretation:

The results in Table 1 indicate that the calculated correlation coefficient (r) is **0.723**, which is statistically significant at the **0.01** level with degrees of freedom $(n - 2) = (46 - 2) = 44$. Thus, the hypothesis stating that there is a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and following political news and bulletins is supported. This suggests a **positive correlation** between self-esteem and following political news.

1.2 Results of the Second Hypothesis

Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in political discussions and seminars among faculty members.

Table 2: Correlation coefficient between self-esteem and participation in political discussions and seminars

Sample Size	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance Level	Decision
46	0.677	0.01	Hypothesis supported

Interpretation:

Table 2 shows that the calculated correlation coefficient (r) is **0.677**, significant at the **0.01** level with degrees of freedom (44). Therefore, the hypothesis suggesting a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and

participation in political discussions and seminars is confirmed. This indicates a **positive correlation** between the two variables.

1.3 Results of the Third Hypothesis

Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in elections and political parties.

Table 3: Correlation coefficient between self-esteem and participation in elections and political parties

Sample Size	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance Level	Decision
46	0.444	0.01	Hypothesis supported

Interpretation:

As shown in Table 3, the calculated correlation coefficient (r) is **0.444**, which is statistically significant at the **0.01** level. Therefore, the hypothesis proposing a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in elections and political parties is supported. A **positive correlation** exists between the two variables.

1.4 Results of the Fourth Hypothesis

Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in political activities.

Table 4: Correlation coefficient between self-esteem and participation in political activities

Sample Size	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance Level	Decision
46	0.364	0.05	Hypothesis supported

Interpretation:

Table 4 shows that the correlation coefficient (r) is 0.364, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level with degrees of freedom (44). Hence, the hypothesis suggesting a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in political activities is supported. There is a positive correlation between the two variables.

2. Discussion of Results

2.1 Discussion of the First Hypothesis Results

The results of the **first hypothesis**, which posited a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and following political news and bulletins among faculty members at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of El Oued, confirmed the hypothesis based on the statistical methods employed in the current study.

This relationship can be attributed to several factors, including personal interest in political and legal affairs and a desire to stay informed about developments in these fields. Individuals who perceive politics and law as integral to their identity and profession may exhibit a strong motivation to remain updated on news and knowledge in these areas.

The academic environment may also play a role in this relationship. In contexts where staying informed about political news is a key component of academic culture, particularly in faculties of law and political science, professors may feel compelled to engage and contribute within this framework. This could drive them to actively follow the news to adhere to cultural norms, engage with colleagues, and pursue continuous learning.

Self-esteem itself plays a crucial role. Individuals with high self-esteem feel a sense of personal value and self-confidence, which may translate into a desire to follow the news, expand their knowledge, and think critically about political and legal issues. In this sense, self-esteem serves as a motivation to stay informed and deepen knowledge.

Moreover, the relationship is likely reciprocal. Acquiring political and legal knowledge through news consumption may enhance self-esteem, as professors gain confidence in their knowledge base and ability to guide students and contribute academically and politically. Faculty members with high self-esteem may have a strong desire to stay informed, recognizing that ongoing awareness of political developments broadens their perspectives and enhances their teaching and research skills.

Overall, this relationship may be influenced by other factors, such as academic culture, personal motivation, cultural background, and professors' past experiences, leading to variations in the relationship across individuals.

2.2 Discussion of the Second Hypothesis Results

The results of the second hypothesis, which posited a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in political discussions and seminars, were confirmed by the statistical analyses used in the study.

This relationship can be explained by several factors affecting both self-esteem and engagement in political discussions and seminars. Social support is a key factor, enhancing professors' confidence and self-esteem as they feel supported and respected by their peers and the academic community. This support strengthens their confidence to participate in discussions and seminars, knowing that their opinions and ideas are valued.

Participating in political discussions and seminars also provides opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and expertise, reinforcing professors' self-esteem as specialists in political science. Receiving recognition and respect from colleagues, students, and audiences during these events boosts self-confidence and motivates continued engagement.

Additionally, the relationship may reflect critical thinking skills and the academic culture characteristic of professors in law and political science faculties. Self-esteem motivates individuals to pursue learning and self-development, prompting professors to engage in discussions and seminars to deepen their understanding of political and legal issues.

2.3 Discussion of the Third Hypothesis Results

The results of the **third hypothesis**, which posited a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in elections and political parties, were also supported by the statistical analyses.

This relationship can be attributed to several factors. First, professors may possess confidence in their personal abilities and their capacity to influence and effect change in society. Self-esteem reflects this confidence, encouraging active participation in elections and political parties.

Second, this may relate to social commitment and civic responsibility. Professors may feel a duty to contribute to public affairs and drive social and political change by participating in elections and supporting parties aligned with their values and principles.

Third, being in an academic environment focused on political and legal studies, professors likely possess advanced political knowledge and awareness. They may actively follow political developments and understand political systems and related issues, fostering personal interest in participating in the political process to express opinions and influence decision-making.

Furthermore, participation in elections and political parties can enhance self-esteem. Feeling part of the democratic process and recognizing the importance of their votes in shaping political decisions can increase professors' sense of self-worth and confidence in their political abilities.

By participating actively in elections and parties, professors may take pride in their impact and their contributions to shaping their country's political future. Political engagement can also broaden professors' knowledge and awareness, enabling them to better educate students and conduct academic research in law and political science.

Thus, the relationship between self-esteem and participation in elections and political parties is reciprocal and interconnected, with each reinforcing the other, fostering political engagement and effective participation in democratic processes.

2.4 Discussion of the Fourth Hypothesis Results

The results of the fourth hypothesis, which posited a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and participation in political activities, were also confirmed by the statistical analyses.

This positive relationship indicates that self-esteem plays a vital role in motivating professors to engage in political activities and contribute to the political field. Professors with high self-esteem and confidence in their abilities and knowledge feel capable of influencing and changing the political landscape. They are motivated to participate in political discussions and collaborative efforts to drive change and improve political conditions.

Participation in political activities can further enhance self-esteem, as professors gain opportunities to influence decision-making and receive recognition for their opinions and contributions. This reinforces their sense of personal value and self-confidence. Continuous political engagement fosters growth in self-esteem and encourages sustained political involvement.

The relationship between self-esteem and participation in political activities suggests that promoting self-esteem among professors can enhance their political engagement. Conversely, political participation can reinforce self-esteem, strengthening professors' sense of empowerment and their contributions to the political arena.

This relationship is not limited to professors of law and political science but applies to individuals across different communities. When people feel capable of influencing and changing their societies, their desire to participate in political and social activities increases. Effective political participation can boost self-esteem, as individuals take pride in their achievements and the positive impact they have on their communities.

Therefore, enhancing self-esteem can contribute to building more effective and positive societies. Self-esteem can be improved through various approaches, such as encouraging individuals to achieve goals, fostering confidence in their abilities, and developing personal and social skills. Strengthening self-esteem may promote effective political participation and help build more prosperous and dynamic societies.

Based on the preceding results, the general hypothesis—which posited a correlational relationship between self-esteem and political participation among university professors—was confirmed. This indicates that a statistically significant relationship exists between the two variables.

Recommendations and Suggestions

In light of the findings of this study, the researcher concludes by offering a set of recommendations directed toward the relevant authorities and stakeholders within Algerian society to enhance political engagement and capitalize on the results in practical political life:

- Organize political seminars within university campuses to provide faculty members with greater exposure to political topics.
- Enhance the role of political parties and organizations by increasing their activities to engage larger segments of society and reduce political apathy and isolation.
- Conduct similar studies to assess the impact of psychological factors on political engagement among other demographic groups.
- Undertake further research across other academic disciplines to explore comparable relationships.
- Foster interdisciplinary collaboration between political science, psychology, and other fields to develop joint research topics.
- Carry out comprehensive studies involving larger sample sizes and broader spatial and temporal scopes.
- Incorporate political psychology as a subject in political science and psychology curricula to enrich academic training and research in these fields.

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