

Correlating Verbal Self-Talk, Emotional Intelligence, and Creativity in Young Adults: A Survey-Based Study

Type: Research Article Received: April 14, 2025 Published: May 28, 2025

Citation:

Shamael AlSharif., et al. "Correlating Verbal Self-Talk, Emotional Intelligence, and Creativity in Young Adults: A Survey-Based Study". PriMera Scientific Engineering 6.6 (2025): 02-07.

Copyright:

© 2025 Shamael AlSharif., et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Shamael AlSharif* and Shayma AlSharif

Dar-Al Hekma University, Jeddah, KSA *Corresponding Author: Shamael AlSharif, Dar-Al Hekma University, Jeddah, KSA.

Abstract

The interplay between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity has been underexplored in the scientific literature. However, understanding the specific relationship between these constructs is crucial for comprehending human cognition and behavior across a variety of domains. This study aims to investigate the relationship between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity. A quantitative survey methodology was employed to collect data from young adults aged between 18-35. The survey instrument assessed the frequency of verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity using established scales. Correlational statistics and hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to examine the associations between these constructs. The findings reveal a significant positive association between frequent verbal self-talk and emotional intelligence, as well as between emotional intelligence and creativity. Furthermore, emotional intelligence was found to mediate the relationship between verbal self-talk and creativity. The study emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence in facilitating the creative potential of verbal self-talk. Developing positive self-dialogue habits and promoting emotional intelligence can enhance creative thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Keywords: Verbal self-talk; Emotional intelligence; Creativity

Introduction

This research explores the interconnectedness between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity. Each of these constructs plays a pivotal role in shaping individual cognition, behavior, and emotional regulation. Creativity is a multifaceted construct crucial in various life domains, attracting substantial interest from researchers seeking to understand its contributing factors [1]. Self-talk, characterized as internal dialogue, guides cognitive processes and problem-solving, with individuals varying in the frequency and content of their engagement [2, 3]. Emotional intelligence involves perceiving, understanding, and managing emotions, impacting inter-personal relationships and problem-solving abilities [4, 5]. The research question at the core of this inquiry is: Is there a relationship between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity? To address this question, three hypotheses have been formulated:

- 1. A higher frequency of verbal self-talk will be positively associated with higher emotional intelligence.
- 2. Higher emotional intelligence will be positively associated with higher levels of creativity.
- 3. The relationship between frequent verbal self-talk and creativity will be mediated by emotional intelligence.

This research holds significant implications for understanding the cognitive mechanisms underlying individual behavior and performance, with potential applications in educational, therapeutic, and organizational settings. By explaining the relationship between verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity, this study aspires to contribute to a deeper understanding of human cognition and its manifestations in everyday life.

Literature Review

The Dual-Process Theory of Cognition offers valuable insights into the cognitive processes underlying the research variables being examined. This theory proposes the existence of two cognitive processing modes: the intuitive, automatic, and experiential system (System 1) and the reflective, controlled, and analytical system (System 2) [6]. Frequent verbal self-talk can be viewed as a manifestation of both System 1 and System 2 processing. Spontaneous self-talk often emerges from automatic, intuitive processes, while goal-directed self-talk involves conscious, reflective thinking [7]. Emotional intelligence, on the other hand, requires the integration of both intuitive and reflective processes to accurately perceive and manage emotions [6]. This theory suggests that the relationship between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity may be influenced by the interplay between these two cognitive systems.

Depape et al. explored the predictors of emotional intelligence, revealing age and self-talk as significant predictors positively associated with emotional intelligence [8]. Another study focused on children's private speech (PS) and its association with inhibitory control (IC) and emotion regulation, highlighting the moderating role of temperament [5]. Moreover, the effects of positive and negative self-talk on brain functional connectivity demonstrate differential impacts on cognitive performance [3]. Besides this, examining the relationship between self-talk and emotions in tennis players emphasized the role of dual-process self-talk in emotion management during competitive matches [7]. Lastly, investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence, emotions, and creativity among EFL teachers suggested a positive influence on positive emotions but no direct link with creativity [4]. This study aims to address the gap regarding the specific interplay between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity.

Methodology

This research aims to investigate the relationship between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity among individuals through a quantitative survey methodology. It employed convenience sampling to recruit a group of 40 willing participants through social media. All participants are young adults aged 18 to 25 living in Saudi Arabia. The study did not put any emphasis on the gender of the participants.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any point without any consequences were ensured. The anonymity of the participants was maintained, and data was stored securely. The research also sought approval from the University's Ethics Review Board to ensure compliance with ethical standards and guidelines.

The data collection instrument for this study is a structured survey questionnaire created using Google Forms. The questionnaire assessed the relationship between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity among young adults. The survey comprises Likert scale items adapted from established scales, including the Functions of Self-Talk Questionnaire, Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale, and Varieties of Inner Speech Questionnaire. The items cover aspects such as the frequency and content of verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creative thinking. The use of social media, specifically Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and

WhatsApp, for survey circulation allows for broad outreach to the target demographic. Data collected was analyzed using correlational statistics and hierarchical regression analyses to examine the patterns in the relationship between the three variables.

Results

The descriptive findings of the sample indicate that only a sliver of about 27% of the participants engaged in a high level of Frequent Verbal Self-talk whereas 73% of them did not. On the other hand, approximately 63% of the participants exhibited high levels of emotional intelligence while 37% showed lower or average levels. Lastly, only about 30% of the participants engaged in regular creative activities, and the majority 70% did not. Moreover, the open-ended questions revealed that all participants who engaged in frequent verbal self-talk believed that their self-talk helps them understand feelings, emotions, and situations better and more clearly and deal with them appropriately. 78% of these participants stated that self-talk facilitates the development of innovative problem-solving techniques as well as the expression of emotions and ideas in various creative endeavors such as artistic works, acting, poetry, and novel writing. Also, it was expressed that their self-talk assists in reducing anxiety, regulating emotions, and channeling their emotion-al responses towards important tasks. 22% of these participants believed that verbal self-talk assists in over-coming self-doubt, fear of failure, and barriers to creative expression. Lastly, participants who exhibited higher emotional intelligence believed that creative activities can enhance emotional awareness, self-expression, emotional flexibility, and vice versa.

Analysis of the Hypotheses

The first hypothesis was formulated to determine the impact of emotional intelligence on frequent verbal self-talk, as it stated that: "A higher frequency of verbal self-talk will be positively associated with higher emotional intelligence."

Dependent variable	Model summary				ANOVA			
	R	\mathbb{R}^2	Adjusted R ² SE		DF	F Calculated Sig F		
Frequent verbal self-talk	0.918	0.843	0.838	0.667	39	203.295	0.000*	
*Statistically significant at a level of ($\alpha < 0.05$)								

To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression was used, as follows:

Table 1: Results of the simple linear regression for the first hypothesis.

Results of Table 1 indicate a strong and positive correlation between emotional intelligence and frequent verbal self-talk, by relying on the value correlation coefficient R that reached (0.918). The value of the R2 (0.843) indicated that (84.3%) of the change occurring in verbal self-talk can be justified through emotional intelligence, taking into consideration the reliability of other factors. Results indicate the significance of the model, based on the calculated F value that reached (203.295) at a significant level of (SigF = 0.000) which is less than 0.05, indicating the existence of a statistically significant impact of emotional intelligence on the verbal self-talk at a significant level of (α <0.05). Therefore, the first hypothesis was accepted, which states: "A higher frequency of verbal self-talk was positively associated with higher emotional intelligence".

The Second hypothesis was formulated to determine the impact of creativity on emotional intelligence, as it stated that: "Higher emotional intelligence will be positively associated with higher levels of creativity." To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression was used, as follows:

Dependent variable	Model summary				ANOVA			
	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE	DF	F Calculated Sig F		
Emotional Intelligence	0.943	0.890 0.887		0.516	39	306.220	0.000*	
*Statistically significant at a level of ($\alpha \le 0.05$)								

Table 2: Results of the simple linear regression for the second hypothesis.

Results of Table 2 indicate a strong and positive correlation between creativity and emotional intelligence, by relying on the value correlation coefficient R that reached (0.943). The value of the R2 (0.890) indicated that (89%) of the change occurring in emotional intelligence can be justified through creativity, taking into consideration the reliability of other factors. Results indicate the significance of the model, based on the calculated F value that reached (306.22) at a significant level of (SigF = 0.000) which is less than 0.05, indicating the existence of a statistically significant impact of creativity on the emotional intelligence at a significant level of ($\alpha < 0.05$). Therefore, the second hypothesis was accepted, which states: "Higher emotional intelligence was positively associated with higher levels of creativity."

The third hypothesis was formulated aiming at determining the role of Emotional intelligence on the impact of Creativity on frequent verbal self-talk, as it stated that: "The relationship between frequent verbal self-talk and creativity will be mediated by emotional intelligence". To test this hypothesis, hierarchical regression was used as follows:

Dependent variable	Independent	First step			Second step		
(Frequent verbal self- talk)	And mediator variables	В	T calculat- ed	Sig t	В	T calculat- ed	Sig T
	Creativity	1.042	39.551	0.000*	1.169	15.124	0.000*
	Emotional Intelli-				0.079	1.737	0.091*
	gence						
	R ²	0.976	0.978				
	ΔR^2	0.976	0.002				
	F	1564.262	825.162				
	Sig F	0.000*	0.000*				
*Chatiatically significant at a lar	$ral = f(r_1 < 0.05)$						

*Statistically significant at a level of ($\alpha \le 0.05$)

Table 3: Results of hierarchical regression of the mediating role of emotional intelligence.

Table 3 shows the results of the hierarchical regression which is based on two models, where the results of the first model, which is based on the first step, reflected a statistically significant impact of (Creativity) on the (Frequent verbal self-talk), where (F=1564.2) with a level of significance of (Sig F = 0.000), which is less than 0.05. The value of the coefficient of determination (R2 = 0.976), indicates that (Creativity) explains (97.6%) of the variance in the (Frequent verbal self-talk). In the second step, the variable (Emotional intelligence) was introduced to the regression model, as the value of R2 increased by (0.2%) to (0.978), and this ratio is statistically significant, where the value of (F = 825.162) and the level of significance (Sig F = 0.000), which is less than 0.05. This confirms a little difference in the significant impact of Creativity on Frequent verbal self-talk according to the differences in Emotional intelligence. Thus, the third hypothesis was accepted, which states that: "The relationship between frequent verbal self-talk and creativity is mediated by emotional intelligence".

Discussion

It is observed that frequent verbal self-talk is positively associated with higher emotional intelligence. This suggests that individuals who engage in more frequent verbal self-dialogue tend to exhibit greater command in recognizing, understanding, and managing their own emotions, as well as those of others. Their ongoing audible monologue allows these individuals to reflect on their feelings, identify patterns in their emotional responses, and develop strategies for effectively managing emotions in various situations. Additionally, verbal self-talk can serve as a means of cognitive reappraisal, enabling individuals to reinterpret challenging situations in more constructive ways, thereby reducing emotional distress and promoting resilience. This result is consistent with the findings of the study which indicated that self-talk is a significant predictor of emotional intelligence and is positively associated with it [8].

Furthermore, it is observed that higher emotional intelligence is positively associated with higher levels of creativity. This implies that individuals with higher emotional intelligence can effectively channel emotional insights gained from self-talk into creative endeavors like artistic expression and problem-solving. Emotional intelligence also enables individuals to manage emotional barriers to creativity, such as self-doubt and fear of failure, thereby fostering a greater willingness to take creative risks. This result is consistent with the findings of the study which indicated a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity for employees in SMEs [9]. On the other hand, this result contradicts the findings that there is no direct relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity is mediatively emotional intelligence.

This research has two significant limitations that should be considered. Firstly, the relatively small sample size may limit the generalizability of the findings. The recruitment of only 40 participants via convenience sampling from a specific demographic may not adequately represent the broader population. Secondly, the study's reliance on self-reported measures introduces the potential for social desirability effects. Addressing these limitations in future research could involve employing larger and more diverse samples to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Also, utilizing a mixed-methods approach may reduce social desirability effects and increase the credibility of the findings.

Conclusion

The study reveals the complex relationship between frequent verbal self-talk, emotional intelligence, and creativity. It demonstrates how frequent verbal self-talk correlates with higher emotional intelligence levels, which in turn promote creativity. The ability to convert self-talk into creative thinking and problem-solving skills is mediated by emotional intelligence. Ultimately, the study provides information for interventions targeted at enhancing productivity and well-being in individuals. Encouraging individuals to regularly articulate their thoughts and emotions audibly can enhance their emotional self-awareness and facilitate the development of effective emotion regulation strategies. Organizations can foster a supportive environment that values emotional intelligence and encourages open communication and self-reflection, thereby effectively harnessing their creative potential and navigating challenges with greater adaptability.

References

- 1. Depape AM., et al. "Self-talk and emotional intelligence in university students". Can. J. Behav. Sci 38.3 (2006): 250-260.
- Brinthaupt TM. "Individual Differences in Self-Talk Frequency: Social Isolation and Cognitive Disruption". Front. Psychol 10 (2019): 1088.
- 3. Ebrahimi MR, Heydarnejad T and Najjari H. "The Interplay among Emotions, Creativity and Emotional Intelligence: A Case of Iranian EFL Teachers". Int. J. Engl. Lang. Transl. Stud 6 (2018).
- 4. Fritsch J., et al. "Self-talk and emotions in tennis players during competitive matches". J. Appl. Sport Psychol 34 (2020).
- 5. Haeffel GJ., et al. "Explicit and implicit cognition: a preliminary test of a dual-process theory of cognitive vulnerability to depression". Behav. Res. Ther 45.6 (2007): 1155-1167.
- 6. Kim J., et al. "The effects of positive or negative self-talk on the alteration of brain functional connectivity by per-forming cognitive tasks". Sci. Rep 11 (2021): 14873.
- 7. McCarthy-Jones S and Fernyhough C. "Varieties of Inner Speech Questionnaire [Database record]". PsycTESTS (2011).
- 8. Pekaar KA., et al. "Rotterdam Emotional Intelligence Scale [Database record]". PsycTESTS (2018).
- 9. Smith CA and Kirby LD. "Affect and cognitive appraisal processes". In: Forgas, J.P. (ed.) Handbook of affect and social cognition. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, Mahwah (2001): 75-92.
- 10. Sternberg RJ, Kaufman JC and Roberts AM. "The relation of creativity to intelligence and wisdom". In: Kaufman, J.C., Sternberg, R.J. (eds.) The Cambridge handbook of creativity. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (2019): 337-352.
- 11. Subramaniam R, Nakkeeran S and Mohapatra S. "Evolution of Creativity". In: Team Work Quality. Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley (2021): 13-15.

- 07
- 12. Theodorakis Y, Hatzigeorgiadis A and Chroni S. "Functions of Self-Talk Questionnaire [Database record]". PsycTESTS (2008).
- 13. Whedon M., et al. "Private Speech and the Development of Self-Regulation: The Importance of Temperamental Anger". Early Child. Res. Q 56 (2021): 213-224.