



CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR 2014 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s) Cherie E. Abramovitz	Project Number 34451
Project Title Being Inkquisitive: Tatoos, Self-Esteem, and Social-Anxiety	
Objectives/Goals The existing literature regarding social anxiety and self-esteem among those with tattoos is limited and conflicting. Some findings suggest that those considering getting a tattoo need to question their motivation behind getting that tattoo, and even consult a psychologist before doing so, because of possible anxiety and self-esteem problems. The objective of this study was to determine whether there is a difference between individuals with- and without- tatoos, with respect to social anxiety and self-esteem. Abstract Methods/Materials Fifty two participants, with- and without-tatoos, aged 18 and higher were recruited into this study. After giving their informed consent, the participants completed a survey that asked a series of questions related to demographic characteristics, social anxiety and self-esteem. The Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation-II was used to evaluate social anxiety and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) was used to evaluate self-esteem. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, means and medians were used to describe the sample, and Chi-Square and Mann-Whitney U tests were used to test for statistical differences between those with- and without-tatoos. Results Of the 52 participants, 58% were females and the average age was 39 years old. On average, those without a tattoo were a couple of years older than those with a tattoo (40 vs. 38 years old). The average number of years of education completed was 17 for both groups. A significant difference was found between those with- and without tatoos with respect to the social anxiety score, with those with tattoos scoring significantly lower on the social anxiety scale than those without tatoos (mean score 21.9 vs. 26.5). Also, even though not statistically significant, the self-esteem score was higher among those with tatoos (mean score 36.3 vs. 34.3). Conclusions/Discussion Even though existing literature indicates that people with tattoos may have higher anxiety and lower self-esteem than those without tatoos, our findings indicate otherwise. More specifically, we found that those who get tatoos have significantly lower social anxiety than those without tatoos. Our findings also suggest that those with tatoos may have higher self-esteem than those without tatoos; however, this later finding was not statistically significant and a larger study may be needed in order to determine its significance.	
Summary Statement This project examined the differences with respect to social anxiety and self-esteem between a group of participants with and a group without any tatoos.	
Help Received My mother, a statistician, has taught me how to create a program for data entry using Questionnaire Design Systems (QDS) software. She also helped me with the statistical testing and interpretation of results.	