Maintenance of Self-Image and its Impact on Students' Academic Performance: A Qualitative Analysis That Primarily Focus on Self-Image Maintenance in the Students Relating to Their Self-Esteem and its Impact on Their Academic Performance

Muhammad Azhar Ali[1], Hasan Raza[2], Dr. Syed Shahid Zaheer Zaidi[3], Dr. Syed Yasir Zaheer[4].

[1] Ph.D Scholar, University of Karachi
[2, 3] Asst. Professor, University of Karachi
[4] Ph.D Scholar, University of Karachi

Abstract

Self-esteem has been under discussion of many research studies since many decades. Either its impact on professionals or as well on students has been well studied through the inclusion of various emotional factors of mankind. Many of the studies suggested positive correlation but some suggested modest and null. It might be due to regional values and settings factor that could have limited those studies. In this qualitative study, self-esteem development in a personality is considered as self-image development and its impact on student's academic performance is discussed through analysis from various research studies conducted domestic and globally. This study is also regionally limited and due to its qualitative nature depend on secondary literature. The study found the conclusion that under our setting self-image has no impact on academic performance of the student and therefore, alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Keywords: Self-Image, Academic Performance, Qualitative Analysis, Self-Esteem, Academic Performance

Introduction

Self-esteem and its effect on a person's academic and personal life had been under discussion from many decades and thousands of studies has been conducted on this phenomenon. The outcome of most of the studies shows a positive relationship both with the variables tested and some shows the adverse relationship due to intervention of sub factors of self-esteem. Most importantly self-esteem has been given much importance in the personal life of a person but very few studies has been conducted on its impact on the academic performance of a student. However, many of the studies discussed the impact of self-esteem on students' academic performance under one shadow but not attempted in the context of impact of its sub factors or their importance in establishment of feeling that leads to good academic performance. Self-image is purely a perspective that relates to one's own perception and maintenance of self-worthiness or self-worthlessness. This belief is the starting point in a personality for his future endeavors, but it also indicates the development of positive or negative self-esteem in a personality. Therefore, self-image is discussed in many forms or elements of a personality that relates to his own perception. There are many dimensions to define self-image such as self-concept, selfhood etc. Historically self-esteem was first originated with the conceptualization of self-estimation, measuring based on psychological measures. The self was described as *"Spirit"*. Psyche or Soul. Historically, the origin of self are considered as Greek philosophers (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle). Whereas self was defined by them as 'soul' i.e. spiritual entity. (Pajares, Schunk, & Anonson, 2002). Thus, aforementioned concept of self-revealed the conceptualization of personality and its development in the field of psychology.

(Morris Rosenberg, 1965) in his book viewed self-esteem as worthiness i.e. a feeling about one's own worth or value. Ranging from high to low and its affect as negative or positive according to situation. (Rosenberg, Society and Adolescent Self Image, 2015). (William James, 1890) opined his insights in defining self-esteem in the field of psychology that "*it is the ratio of our actualities to our supposed potentialities*". i.e.

$$Self-esteem = \frac{Successes}{Pretensions}$$ (Rosenberg, Society and the Adolescent Self Image, 1965).

(Maslow, 1943) conceptualized self-esteem as people desire to have a stable and realistically positive evaluation of themselves. He also conceptualized esteem needs as a factor to motivation. This consist of two sets of behavior: (Maslow, 1981)

i. **Goal Oriented** (a feeling of accomplishments, competencies etc.)
ii. **Self-Image Oriented** (a feeling of admiration, recognition and worthiness)

He also emphasized that fulfilment of desires is reflected in feelings of efficacy and confidence whereas failure reflects discouragement and inferiority. (S.I & M.A, 2017).

Thus, establishment of self-image in a personality directly reflect his / her expectancy towards his goal. Moreover, at the student's level in graduate or undergraduate level of studies, his self-conceptualization or self-respect directly concern to his / her academic performance.

Findings

From the literature mentioned and being the qualitative nature of this research paper, mentioned below findings are concluded:

i. Self-image may be a good mediator to other sentimental forces but not suitable to conclude positive correlation with academic performance of the students.
ii. Academic performance is not wholly dependent on maintenance of self-image, where other factors such like competitive supervision, schooling environment etc. also play a vital role in the development of self-image in the student. Therefore, good academic performance mediators should be the sub factors of emotional side of the students.
iii. Regional values also hold a significant place in determining the overall position of self-image building in a personality and thus, consider as vital in development of self-image in a personality behavior. Therefore, self-image varies on various emotional and social factors of life to come into existence.
iv. Change of technique of deliverance in an academic environment may also have a great impact on the students' academic performance.
v. As per scripture, self-image is due to the development of high / low self-esteem in personality emotions. Therefore, self-awareness is essential for high academic performance of the students.
vi. From various research studies findings, it has been concluded that self-image imply modest impact on academic performance of the students.
vii. Alternative hypothesis are accepted for this study which suggested that self-image have no influence on academic performance of the student.

Suggestions

From the above findings, it has been suggested that the study is regional limited and there is a chance of implementation of research technique on regional values. Therefore, the findings may vary from region to region. But it can be concluded that self-image building somehow correlate with the academic performance of the students. However, a change of technique in research is suggested to determine overall impact of self-image on academic performance. Self-image should not merely be counted for academic performance but for other walks of life also.

Research Methods

Objective(s)

(A Qualitative analysis that primarily focus on self-image maintenance in the students relating to their self-esteem and its impact on their academic performance)

Hypothesis

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the hypothesis is limited to include the investigation of two variables i.e. self-image and academic performance of the students. Therefore, it must consist of:

H0: Maintenance of self-image in academic career directly influence the academic performance of a student.

HA: Maintenance of self-image in academic career indirectly influence academic performance of a student.

Data Collection Technique

- Secondary data (Internet, books, journals and articles), close encounters of historical perspectives and published material to come to any point of inference.
- References of past studies for investigation of hypothesis keeping in view the regional impact on human behavior.

Literature Review

Traditional & Modern Theories of Self Development

After the emergence of self-concept, which was primarily focused on personality and its traits. Several theories had emerged on self. Traditional theories were only focused on the social structure of life such as careers, marriages, families and ages. (Erikson,1968; Levinson, 1978). Therefore, the focus of traditional theories were on social norms and very little has been done in contrast to other factors affecting the self-esteem of a personality. While modern theories are focused on cognitive factors and motivation strategies. (Balter, 1997; Heckhausen, 1997). This concept implies that self-esteem measuring approaches is focused on behavioral and attitudinal factors of a personality. Further, (McRae & Costa, 1999) proposed a *five-factor* model based on personality traits as specialized unit in personality theories. (Mroczek & Little, 2006).

Allama Iqbal View of Self-Concept

Allama Iqbal, the poet of the east and the great philosopher, recognized the need in terms of spiritual feeling of a personality i.e. selfhood. Iqbal's selfhood concept retrieve to self-actualization stage, and he topped the view in contrast to Maslow in following disciplines: Iqbal's self-conceptuality was divided in three distinctive levels ranging from self-assessment to self-actualization. (Aurangzeb & Qasim, June 2015)

i) **I am Ness** (This initiated view of Iqbal's personality deals with oneself i.e. assessing self-worth, an intrapersonal approach just like Maslow's view in his need hierarchy. The view also topped with psychological concern of a personality knowing about one's own worth for his attainment of objectives)

ii) **The Self and Others** (This second level of self-recognition and self-worthiness is related with Maslow's first three needs in his hierarchy i.e. physiological and social needs. Iqbal topped the view with self-assessment and its connection to others in contrast to belongingness and recognition – an interpersonal view of personality measurement responding to the worthiness of oneself for others.)

iii) **The Self and The God** (in contrast to Maslow's view on self-actualization need of a personality, Iqbal topped and distinguished his view in connection to arising of spirituality and recognition of oneself worthiness for God's will as the best creation. i.e. piety and its blessings. His extraordinary view open the window of transpersonal communication (Mysticism) in the field of spirituality.

Self-Esteem and Students Academic Performance

Some psychologist opined and viewed self-esteem as collaboration of cognitive factors, verbal components and reasoning as the basis for assessing academic performance. (Moyano, Quilez, & Pascual, 2020). Furthermore, beside cognitive factors, self-esteem and motivation stand out. Whereas motivation directed towards achievement of goals. (Schneider & Mc-Grew) cross referred self-esteem as *"Someone perception about how the proposed goals should be achieved"*. With this viewpoint, self-esteem and motivation are considered as essential in the teaching learning process. With Students' performance perspective, (Montero & Alonso) had been in a perception of following types of motivation i.e. *Motivation for Learning and Results (with positive feelings) whereas, de-motivation with a fear of failure (with negative feelings).* (Moyano, Quilez, & Pascual, 2020)*. With this viewpoint, self-esteem is considered as relating to students' performance in contrast of success or failure feelings. i.e. *Success = High Self-esteem and Failure = Low Self-esteem.* high self-esteem was verified with greater importance in improvement of personality image and as well the academic performance of the students. Various studies has been conducted on this ground and showed that there is a positive relation between self-esteem and academic performance factors. (Andrew Mecca, 1989).

Self-Esteem and Schooling System

(Hoge, Sunit & Hanson, 1990) were in a belief that the factors (climate) at school, social relation intelligence appears to be an essential ingredient in increasing students' self-esteem during academic progress. (Cynthia G. Scott, 1996). Whereas (Beane Lipka & Ludewig, 1980) proposed two categories of school climate i.e. *Custodial (Autocratic) – low self-esteem and demotivation and Humanitarian (Democratic) best for high self-actualization and motivation.* (Dubert & Hoy, 1990).

Relation Between Self-Esteem & Academic Performance

From students' point of view, various research studies were conducted in past decades to calculate the intensity of association between self-esteem with student's performance. Undoubtedly, the relationship discovered was modestly weak in this context. (M. Arshad, 2015). However, various studies in this contrast showed adverse results such that (Lane & Kyprianou, 2004) suggested that self-esteem & self-efficacy are significantly correlated to each other. At the other hand (Mohammad, 2010) suggested that there is a significant correlation between Academic Self-esteem and Family Self-esteem and Self-esteem and Academic Achievement. (M. Arshad, 2015). Thus, in connection to various results of the studies conducted, it must be estimated that the degree of association of self-esteem varies from factor to factor. (M. Aryana, 2010) suggested positive strong correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement. He also suggested that higher self-esteem in students develop a higher sense of achievement and maturity in academic endeavors. However, significant difference in self-esteem level in male and females in an academic environment is due to difference of gender or any other reason. Whereas several studies suggested that the relation between two Variables was modest (Pullmann & Allikk, 2008). An early research study by (Valentine, 2004) suggested a +0.08 level overall regardless of gender difference between self-esteem and academic performance.

_____
Volume: 2, No: 2   **October-December, 2024**

2075

Significance of Self-Esteem

In the opinion of many psychologists' self-esteem holds greater importance in the development of personality values and accomplishments. Thus, from many scholarly papers its importance is as under: (Mizuho Hosogi, 2012)
I. High self-esteem assist in psychological stability and positive social activity and essential element in child psychological development.
II. Due to low self-esteem various social and psychological problem arise in a personality from time to time as when it is continuously victimized at its lowest level.
III. Lower self-esteem results in skipping assigned responsibility, feeling of boredom and sometimes, self-anger on self for failures.
IV. High self-esteem assist in transforming a personality with characteristics such like contented in all walk of life, goal oriented and appreciative behavior and self-confidence. (Roy F. Baumeister, 2018)

Empirical Research on Self-Esteem

Empirically in psychology, the impact of high or low self-esteem has been given prior importance to counter the amount of problems or positivity exists in a personality which might be useful in treating for future accomplishments. In views of (Burke, 1980) components of self are knowledge and evaluative factors are state of mind / traits of a personality who react with his / her feelings on certain situations, roles and events. Thus, it has been concluded from various research studies that the relation of self-esteem is positively correlated with average self-reported confidence level in a personality reaction. However, the reaction time varies from self-descriptive tasks and subjective confidence level in a personality. (Baumeister, 2013). It is also reported that people with low self-esteem are vague and uncertain in their life situations i.e. lack confidence in describing their own attributes. To the other side of the view (Taylor & Brown, 1988) expressed that people with high self-esteem exhibit optimist state of mind i.e. positive reactions. While people with low self-esteem exhibit negative behavior like anger, anxiety and even self-delusion behavior. These signs are among all the degree to which extent a person's self-esteem is affected by either having positive or negative views for own self.

References

Andrew Mecca, N. J. (1989). *The Social Importance of Self-esteem .* University of California Press .

Aurangzeb, & Qasim, K. (June 2015). The Concept of Khudi (The Self) in Iqbal's, The Secret of the Self. *Advance in Language and Literary Studies, 6*(3).

Baumeister, R. F. (2013). *Self-esteem: The Puzzle of Low Self-regard.* Springer Science & Business Media.

Cynthia G. Scott, G. c. (1996). Student Self-esteem and the School System: Perceptions & Implications. *Journal of University of North Florida, 89*(5).

M. Arshad, S. I. (2015). Self-esteem and Academic Performance among University Students. *Journal of Education & Practices, 6*(1).

Maslow, A. (1981). *Motivation and Personality.* Prabhat Prakashan.

Mizuho Hosogi, A. O. (2012). Importance & Usefulness of Evaluating Self-esteem in Children. *Bio Psycho Social Medicine, 6*(9). doi:10.1186

_____

Moyano, N., Quilez, A., & Pascual, R. &. (2020). Self-esteem & Motivation for Learning in Academic Achievement: The Mediating Role of Reasoning and Verbal Fluidity. *Sustainability - MDPI*. doi:10.3390

Mroczek, D. K., & Little, T. D. (2006). *Handbook of Personality Development.* New York & London: Psychology Press .

Pajares, F., Schunk, D. H., & Anonson, J. (2002). *Self and Self-Belief in Psychology and Education; An Historical Perspective.* New York : Academia Press .

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the Adolescent Self Image.* Princeton Legacy Library.

Rosenberg, M. (2015). *Society and Adolescent Self Image.* Princeton University Press.

Roy F. Baumeister, K. D. (2018). REvisiting our Appraisal of the (Surprisingly Few) Benefits of High Self-esteem. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 13*(2), 137-140. doi:10.1177

S.I, D. D., & M.A, F. (2017). *Esteem Needs, Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences.* Springer Cham. doi:10.1007