

The impact of self-worth on student academic performance



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

The Impact of Self-Worth on Student Academic Performance

The conventional symbol of proficient university graduates career has been the acquisition of a 'good' degree, underlying by specialist knowledge, transferable and marketable skills with successful outcomes measured in quantifiable terms. However, academic growth is paralleled by emotional and personal development (Knightley & Whitelock, 2007). At the personal level, better academic accomplishments are attached with higher self-esteem, and this is especially the case for non-traditional students. At the university level, understanding and willing to help the dispositional and emotional needs of students is important, not least because student mental health is linked to success and retention rates. For this reason, university students' whether graduation level or post graduation level are subjective interpretations of their education experiences and how this impose on very personal aspects of their lives and themselves is receiving increasing attention. For many students, embarking on higher education (HE) can pose particular threats and challenges not only to academic identity, but also to fundamental, personal aspects of the self (Knightley & Whitelock, 2007).

The construct of self-esteem is crucial in this debate, because it is an integral part of the self, of personal well-being and a prerequisite for educational achievement. Self-esteem is one of the important factors which help for learning outcomes. The question is how this a vital notion would be measured and analyze in university level students? The purpose of this thesis is to report the relationship of students' academic performance and their level of self esteem, the study adopted a self-worth measuring

instrument, about 90 students of bachelors and masters level from different the department of Iqra University.

The thesis begins with a review of the concept of self-esteem, its introduction, definition and how this has been viewed by many researchers; it will also discuss about the contingencies of self-worth, a concept which was majorly define and describe by Jennifer Crocker. Results from all the students who fill up the CSWS (Contingencies of self-worth Scale) along with Rosenberg Self-esteem scale will be taken their GPA or CGPA from examination department and will see that those students who have higher GPA like 3 or more, where these students mostly invested their self esteem.

Contingencies of self-worth also shape long-term and short term goals. People want to prove that they are a success, not a failure, in domains of contingent self-worth, because that would mean they are worthy and valuable; in other words, they have self-validation goals in these domains (Crocker & Park, 2004). People not only need to be recognized by others but it is also an inner satisfaction through which people want to have a feeling of self acceptance about their worth & value.

The main research question addressed was: Is there any relationship of students self-esteem with their academic performance, does high self esteem or low self esteem of a student have any impact on his/her academic performance? One of the main objectives of this paper is to check where university students mostly place their self-esteem in the domains of contingencies of self-worth. the research will conclude whether the high or significantly good level of self esteem of student have any positive or

negative impact on his/her academic performance or there is no link in between these variables.

Based on above arguments the following hypotheses were developed.

H1. The relationship of students' academic performance is depended on student's self-esteem.

H2. Students invest their self-esteem in the domain of family support in the contingencies of self-worth.

H3. Students invest their self-esteem in the domain of God's Love in the contingencies of self-worth.

H4. Students invest their self-esteem in the domain of Academic Performance in the contingencies of self-worth.

H5. Students invest their self-esteem in the domain of Appearance in the contingencies of self-worth.

H6. Students invest their self-esteem in the domain of Virtue in the contingencies of self-worth.

H7. Students invest their self-esteem in the domain of Competence in the contingencies of self-worth.

H8. Students invest their self-esteem in the domain of Approval from others in the contingencies of self-worth.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

THE CONCEPT OF SELF-ESTEEM

Self esteem is the most highlighted concept that is discusses not only psychological clinical situations but also one of the most research concepts in psychology. Self-esteem is one of the most popular constructs of psychology (Brown, Dutton, & Cook, 2001). According to statistical research on Wikipedia, Self esteem is one of the most frequent themes in psychological literature which had been used for the research in psychology. Self esteem is continue to be one of the most commonly research concept in social psychology (Baumeister, 1993; Murk, 1995; Wells & Marwell, 1976; Wylie, 1979).

Fortunately, in recent years, a growing number of researchers have begun to incorporate additional aspects of self-esteem into their research and theories. These aspects include implicit self-esteem (Bosson, Brown, Zeigler-Hill, & Swann, 2003; Jordan, Spencer, & Zanna, 2002), contingent self-esteem (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001) and stability of self-esteem (Kernis & Goldman, 2002; Kernis & Waschull, 1995). In this research, we had discussed the concept of self esteem and the contingencies of self worth of students in the university sample. Students are future of any nation; there natural development is very vital and effective while it comes to their studies and development of these skills. Our study examines the joint implications of level and stability of self-esteem for various aspects of psychological and interpersonal functioning. This thesis has begun by discussing some definitional and measurement issues concerning these two self-esteem components.

A recent and extensive review concluded that high self-esteem produces pleasant feelings and enhanced initiative, but does not cause high academic achievement, good job performance, or leadership, or does low self-esteem cause violence, smoking, drinking, taking drugs, or becoming sexually active at an early age (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). In clarification of the optimistic emotions and favorable beliefs are associated to the self with high self-esteem, it seems reasonable to think that people who have high self esteem fare better in terms of the objective outcomes they experience in life— that they would not only be happier but also richer, more successful, better loved, and perhaps even more attractive than low self-esteem people. Although researchers have long speculated that high self-esteem also has objective benefits, these hypothesized benefits are typically small or nonexistent (Kernis, 2006).

As (Wells & Marwell, 1976) pointed out in their important monograph, three difficulties arise out of the ubiquity of the term. First, the reliance upon common-sense definitions gives the misleading impression that different writers are referring to the same thing when they discuss self-esteem. Secondly, the assumption that everyone has an intuitive understanding of its nature hides the fact that individual theorists hold different views as to what comprises a healthy component of personality, it is a natural phenomena for general people to think differently and have a concept of complex description and understanding as the phenomenon sound complex and un-unique with general speaking and term for daily life. For self-concept & self-esteem: for example, high measures might be regarded as adaptive and desirable by one school, but rigid and defensive by another (Harter, 1986).

Finally, because we all think we know about self-esteem, we tend to take its existence as a separate and independent entity for granted, when this is by no means established. Even when central to a major theory, the concept is often defined rather hazily. For example (Brown, 1986) consider that vulnerability factors (e. g. early separation from parents) act through the common denominator of low self esteem, yet this term was chosen at least in part because it was used spontaneously by subjects. The psychological terms are most of the times are imagining as difficult and confusing.

According to identity theory, the self is composed of multiple identities that reflect the various social positions that an individual occupies in the larger social structure. Meanings in an identity reflect an individual's conception of himself or herself as an occupant of that particular position or " self-in-role" (Stryker, 1980). Self-verification occurs when meanings in the social situation match or confirm meanings in an identity. Thus, when individuals enact and verify an identity, they simultaneously produce and reproduce the social structural arrangements that are the original source of those meanings. In adopting such a position in our investigation, we maintain the central focus on the individual within the social structure that has traditionally characterized the structural symbolic interactions position (Stryker, 1980).

Understanding of self-esteem is one issue which still needs to be clear and require much work to be understandable for everyone. On the other hand talking about self esteem there is also an issue which is very much enlighten about its level. There are no. of researches been done for measuring the levels of self esteem and debating on LSE or HSE have any/what impacts and benefits. Getting high self-esteem also require some cost as nothing is free
<https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

or for granted. Some recent evidence suggests that high self-esteem has costs, especially under conditions of ego threat. For example, high self-esteem people are more likely to persist in the face of failure, but this creates problems when failure is unavoidable and persistence does not pay (Baumeister, et al., 2003). High self-esteem people under ego threat become overconfident and take risks, sometimes losing money as a result (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1993). Ego threat does not only losing of money but sometimes losing of relationships as well. How students can cope up with ego threat on the negative aspects shows their over-confident leads to lack of exam preparations or class presentation cause reduction in their marks and failure.

For positive aspects having high self-esteem has strong emotional benefits for the self, it may have costs for other people. For example, the positive and certain self-concepts of high self-esteem people often lead them to become hostile, defensive, and blaming when things go badly (Blaine & Crocker, 1993). High self-esteem people become less likeable, whereas low self-esteem people become more likeable under ego threat (Heatherton & Vohs, 2000; Vohs & Heatherton, 2001).

While research in each of the directions is extensive (Baumeister, 1998; Gecas, 1982; Murk, 1995; Wells & Marwell, 1976; and Wylie, 1979 for reviews), little has been done to synthesize the three research streams into an overall integrated model. The theory of self-esteem was integrated with the three conceptualizations within the context of structural symbolic interaction, or identity theory (Stryker, 1980). (Ervin & Stryker, 2001) began the process by discussing the links between self-esteem, identity salience, <https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

and identity commitment (embeddedness of individuals within the social structure). The connections between the different conceptualizations of self-esteem, however, remain unclear. Our paper connecting the self esteem with the contingencies of self worth and measuring with GPA scores of student's academic performance.

In popular culture like today when people have life which not only very fast but also facing pressure from different dimensions, over 2000 self-help books, audiotapes, and childrearing manuals have been developed to enhance people's self-esteem, with the assumption that high self-esteem (HSE) leads to a more successful, satisfying life (Branden, 1994). Having high self-esteem create difficulty is a different story but this is for sure that people having low self-esteem will definitely create problem for that person, nevertheless for him/her family too. People who find that have low value in their life, or they think like they haven't achieve much their life and they have not much to get or work to get are having somewhere around having low self-esteem, self-concept and self-worth.

Measuring or assessment of self esteem is not that easy, it is a very difficult concept to evaluate for research. Self-esteem is a complex psychological concept, difficult to define and challenging to assess and to research (Rosenberg, 1979; Pals, 1999). The row form of self esteem, it is define as "the value or worth a person think he have about his self" it is the reflection of person's value and appraisal about his self worth and value. Self esteem is overall evaluation of persons trait about his emotions believe and perception, for example "I am a good student in general" "I have an ability to make tasty food" or "I am proud on my academic performance".
<https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

Much self-esteem research in the 20th century focused on global self-esteem. According to (Rosenberg, 1965), the social learning theorist define self esteem as; an individual's global judgments about him- or herself, including levels of self-worth, self-acceptance and self-respect.

Some psychologists (Harter, 1999; Wagner & Valtin, 2004) anticipated that self-esteem was a global concept of one self, which was firm by some precise self-concepts. Self-Esteem establishes most frequently to an individual's on the whole positive valuation of the self (Gecas, 1982; Rosenberg 1990; Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach, & Rosenberg, 1995). Self-esteem is the inside feeling of a person about one self whatsoever the domain of that self-esteem. Some researchers said, It is collected of two diverse magnitudes, competence and worth (Gecas, 1982; Gecas & Schwalbe, 1983). The competence measurement (efficacy-based self-esteem) submits to the degree though which an individual can see himself as competent and efficacious. The worth measurement (worth-based self-esteem) refers to the degree though which an individual's feel that they have some value and they are basically a persons of worth & value.

In this world of today where everybody is fighting for survival and succession in the life, people are developing their self to be more competent and successful they need to have high level of self confident and self esteem i. e. they must believe on their own ability that they can do whatever the environment & society is depending. During the 1990s, some psychologists claimed that self-esteem was not a global uni-dimensional construct; accordingly, studies on the structure of self-esteem have become

increasingly popular. Until recently, researchers believed that self-esteem
<https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

was a hierarchically organized and multifaceted construct, but they did not agree on how to define the different domains. (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). But now some of the researches have demonstrate different aspects with different domains, through which people can increase their self-esteem, and eventually could decrease their self-esteem, when those domains been effected by any mean these different domains are used by For example, (Coopersmith, 1967) proposed that global self-esteem was based on four domains: significance, competence, virtue and power.

According to the hierarchical and multifaceted model (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976), self-esteem has different levels, the highest being global self-esteem, the lowest being evaluation of specific, concrete behaviors in context and with domain self-esteem, such as academic self-esteem and nonacademic self-esteem, being somewhere in the middle. Researchers have explored the structure of self-esteem extensively using this hierarchical model (Harter, 1986; Mboya, 1995; Watkins & Dong, 1994). Other then these hierarchical levels there are also domains through which one can find where he/she is mostly lacking or prospering their self-esteem.

In the year 2001, (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001) proposed that self-esteem is contingent on different domains like appearance, competition, family support, perception of God's love, approval from others, school competence and behavior, and they claimed that both global self-esteem and domain self-esteem could be classified as both a trait and a state. Trait self-esteem is relatively more of stable over time, at the same time as state self-esteem fluctuates according to the immediate circumstances or any situation which can affect the persons.

<https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

According to the perspective of Crocker and Wolfe, self-esteem is usually assessed with items that refer to how one generally evaluates the entire self trait (Crocker, Karpinski, Quinn, & Chase, 2003), an example of item from her instrument such as, “ All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure,” while in global state self-esteem is going to be assessed with analogous items with the intention of refer to how one feels at the moment, such as, “ Right now, I feel like a failure.” Likewise, domain-specific self-evaluations also could be both typical, average, and trait level – that is, domain trait self-esteem – and momentary or state level – that is, domain state self-esteem (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001).

In this study the paper is going to deploy the instrument of Contingencies of self-worth scale which have 7 factors of domain self-esteem. A contingency of domain self-esteem is the degree to which a person stakes his/her self-esteem on a particular domain or category, such that the person values himself/herself more if s/he meets his/her personal standards of success in these domains (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). It depends in what domain people based their self-esteem; those different domains have different contingencies for their self-esteem.

People differ in the contingencies of self-esteem because it all depends where they based their self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967; Harter, 1986; James, 1890), and a person may value multiple contingencies to varying degrees (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). Many researchers like (Crocker, et al., 2003; Crocker, Sommers, & Luthanen, 2002) have done a lot of research on domain based self-esteem, they previously demonstrated that contingency

of academic self-esteem moderates the effect of success and failure events on academic state self-esteem.

The domains on which self-esteem is highly contingent, enduring events or dramatically and permanently changed circumstances would influence the level of trait self-esteem claimed by (Crocker & Park, 2004). However, these contingencies are the sort of effect which would not be replicated for trait self-esteem, and the social approval contingency does not moderate the effect of social approval from others on trait self-esteem demonstrated by (Lemay & Ashmore, 2006). High level of self-esteem is often regarded as the holy grail of psychological health— the major keys of self a person can have are like happiness, self-value, self confidence, success, and popularity. In contract to high self-esteem, low self-esteem is blamed for societal problems ranging from poor educational attainment to drug and alcohol abuse.

Nevertheless, this glowing view of high self-esteem has detractors who argue that the purpose benefits of high self-esteem are small and limited (Crocker, 2006). Even though pleasant feelings, high self-worth and enhanced initiative are the producer of high self-esteem, it does not cause high academic achievement, good job performance, or leadership, nor does low self-esteem cause violence, smoking, drinking, taking drugs, or becoming sexually active at an early age . Many parents, educators, and policymakers are confused, with some holding steadfastly to the idea that low self-esteem is the root of much, if not all, evil, and others concluding that self-esteem are, at best, irrelevant (Baumeister, et al., 2003). Although high self-esteem does little to cause positive outcomes in life, and low self-esteem is not to blame for most social and personal problems, but some of the researcher are <https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

disagree that self-esteem is inappropriate (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). There is always a detriment & benefit of high or low self esteems one can get.

People want to believe that they are worthy and valuable human beings, and this desire drives their behavior (Pyszczynski, Greeberg, Solomon, Arndl, & Schimel, 2004). Here the paper suggest that self-esteem has great significance lies less in whether it is high or low, but fact of the matter is that, in what manner people judge that, they are in need of to be or do to have value and person of worth (Crocker, 2002). What we call is the contingencies of self-worth.

SELF-ESTEEM AND CONTINGENT SELF-WORTH

About a century ago, William James (James, 1890) recommended that self-esteem is both a stable trait as well as an unstable state; transitory feelings of self-esteem fluctuates a person's distinctive or trait level in response to good and bad events around him. James also noted and highlighted in his research that people are selective about what kinds of events affect their self-esteem.

Self-esteem is a belief of one person he/she hold about themselves. High self esteem people believe they are intelligent, attractive, and popular (Baumeister, et al., 2003). Nevertheless high self-esteem people acknowledge that they had flaws or made mistakes in the distant past, they see their present or recent past selves in a particularly positive light, believing they have changed for the better even when concurrent evaluations suggest they have not (Ross, 2002; Wilson & Ross, 2001). High self-esteem people believe they are superior to others in many domains, and

they expect their futures to be rosy relative to others (Taylor & Brown, 1988). As a result, people having high self-esteem have more self-confidence as compare to those people who have low self esteem, especially following an initial failure.

(Crocker & Wolfe, 2001) proposed that good and bad events in domains of contingent self-worth raise or lower momentary feelings of self-esteem around a person's typical or trait level of self-esteem, and these fluctuations in state self-esteem have motivational consequences. When level of self-esteem is on higher site people feel good, and self-esteem is on lower site then people feel bad. Consequently, apart from that whether people typically have high or low self-esteem, they search for the emotional high linked with success in domains of contingent self-worth and struggle to avoid the emotional lows that accompany failure in these domains. Consequently, contingencies of self-worth regulate behavior.

Many research studies have verified that people those have high self esteem gets the benefits of having high trait self esteem. The clearest benefits are the positive emotions, and the positive and certain self-concepts that accompany high self-esteem (Kernis, 2006). The strongest predictor of life satisfaction in the United States was found to be Self-esteem (Kernis, 2006), outstripping other predictors such as income, education, physical health, age, marital status, and all other psychological variables. Although high self-esteem is strongly correlated with positive emotions, evidence that it causes them is less clear (Baumeister, et al., 2003). Self-esteem is strongly related to the sentimental character of daily life, with high self esteem people

reporting happier events, feeling of successes, positive effect, less
<https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

hopelessness, more life satisfaction, less anxiety, and fewer depressive symptoms as compare to people who are low in self-esteem.

In June 20, 2006, a 16-year old boy in Tokyo set fire to his house, killing his stepmother, brother, and sister. The reason for this act was? The boy was ashamed of his poor academic test performance and wanted to avoid being scolded by his “ results-obsessed” parents (Lewis, 2006). Although an extreme case, this example illustrates how profoundly failure can affect self-esteem, emotion, motivation, and behavior. When people fail, they may be devastated emotionally; link failure to the self, thinking “ I am a failure” rather than “ I failed”; and pursue goals and behaviors to alleviate the pain of failure (Park, Crocker, & Kiefer, 2007). This is not the case in everyone’s situation, however, reacts to failure in the same way. Research has reveals that people react on failure conditions according to their level of self esteem; more particularly, people those have low self-esteem (LSE) are more sensitively hurt and discouraged by failure as compare to people those have high self-esteem (HSE). People who have moderate or good level of self worth like students, are they also performing good on academic mode, whether the students does not invest their self esteem in the domain of academic competences.

However focusing on one’s strengths and minimizing one’s weaknesses often foster positive mood, optimism, and perseverance, when one’s weaknesses interfere with accomplishing important goals and can be addressed, the exaggeratedly positive and highly certain self-views of high self-esteem may be an obstacle to recognizing and addressing their weaknesses and

accomplishing their goals. Although research has documented self-esteem
<https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

differences in response to failure, much of this work has focused on trait self-esteem effects (Baumeister & Tice, 1985; Brockner, Derr, & Laing, 1987; Brown & Dutton, 1995; Dodgson & Wood, 1998; Heatherton & Vohs, 2000; (Shrauger & Rosenberg, 1970). When people have successes particularly students when performing well and having good GPA are also having higher score on self worth scale.

(Kernis, 2006) In general, it seems likely that both low and high self-esteem are helpful or adaptive in some situations, and not adaptive in others. Because low self-esteem people doubt their abilities and worry about whether others will accept them, they tend to integrate feedback from others (Brockner, 1984), yet lack the self confidence to act on their goals, or drive others away through their need for reassurance (Joiner, Alfano, & Metalsky, 1992). Because high self-esteem people tend to think well of themselves, and overestimate their intelligence, attractiveness, and likability, they may be less realistic about their strengths and weaknesses than people who score lower on measures of self-esteem (Taylor & Brown, 1988). These positive illusions can be helpful or unhelpful, depending on the state of affairs. the positive self-views associated with high self-esteem may be helpful for asking the boss for a raise, but interfere with understanding his feedback about areas in which one needs to improve before a raise is about to happen.

On the bases of previous research and theories, we hypothesized that people more specifically students based there self esteem in the domain of academic competence when they have lower level of GPA must be having a lower score on the scale of CSWS, In the present studies, we examined the <https://assignbuster.com/the-impact-of-self-worth-on-student-academic-performance/>

overall self-worth of University level students and we also examined their results in GPA form and link with the domain of academic competence, a domain of importance and relevance to many college students (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003). and found the relationship of Academic performance have any impact on students level of self esteem or not.

Contingencies of self-worth represent the domains in which people invest self-esteem; success in these domains boosts self-esteem, whereas failure diminishes it (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). A daily report study of university seniors applying to graduate school showed that academic contingency predicts an increase in self-esteem on days they were accepted to graduate programs and a decrease in self-esteem on days they were rejected (Crocker, Sommers, & Luthanen, 2002). Because success and failure in domains of contingencies affect self-worth, people who have contingent self-worth seek success and avoid failure in these domains to maintain or boost their sense of self-worth.

Among the seven domains of contingencies commonly identified in university students (Crocker, Luthanen, Cooper, & Bourvrette, 2003), the paper focused on all the domains of self worth and hypothesized that the significantly high level of self esteem of those students also have higher GPA score when performance academically, this paper also see that university student where mostly invest their self-worth in these domains of contingencies. When students are not sure that success is possible or failure can be avoided, they will disengage from the task, deciding it doesn't

matter, rather than suffer the loss of self-esteem that accompanies failure in these domains (Crocker, et al., 2002).

The Contingencies of self-worth approach extends or challenges existing models of self esteem in several ways. Crocker & Wolfe argument that the importance of self-esteem lies in what it is contingent upon stands in contrast to decades of research focused on whether trait self-esteem is high or low (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). Furthermore, they did not basically broken up the focus to whether people have low or high self-esteem in specific domains such as academics or competence, but rather symptomatic of that regardless of people's level of domain-specific self-esteem, contingent self-worth in these domains has predictable consequences.

Although the Kernis study complementary to research that focuses on the stability of self-esteem over time (Kernis, 2006), their research also extended that work by showing that instability of self-esteem results from experiencing positive and negative events in those domains in which self-esteem is contingent. Other scholars have argued that people vary as to whether their self-esteem is contingent or not (Deci & Ryan, 1995; Kernis, 2003). We argue that nearly everyone has contingencies of self-worth but that people differ as to what their self-esteem is contingent on.

Students who base their self-esteem on their academic accomplishments typically have self-validation goals in this domain, viewing their schoolwork as an opportunity to demonstrate their intelligence. Because failure in domains of contingency threatens self-esteem, people try to avoid failure by increasing effort; if they are still uncertain of success, they may abandon

their self-validation goal and become unmotivated, or prepare excuses that will soften the blow to self-esteem in case they fail. Basing self-esteem on external factors such as appearance, others' approval, or academic achievement has more negative consequences than basing it on internal factors such as virtue or God's love. And in contrast to most researchers who argue that self-esteem is a fundamental human need that people need to pursue (Pyszczynski, et al., 2004; Sheldon, 2004), Pursuing for self-esteem by attempting to prove that one is a success in domains of contingency is costly were argued by (Crocker & Park, 2004). There is always a cost for getting to improve self esteem & those domains which can boost your level require different events or elements according to your domain.

When failure in domains of contingency cannot be dismissed with defensive responses, self-esteem decreases. Consequently, contingencies of self-worth are both a