

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONFORMISM AND SELF-ESTEEM

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between conformity and self-esteem within the context of contemporary society, aiming to elucidate the mechanisms through which social dynamics form individual perceptions of self-esteem. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as social identity theory, self-determination theory, and symbolic interactionism, the study uses quantitative methods to examine the correlation between conformity and self-esteem among a sample of 83 participants. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation between conformity and self-esteem, highlighting the role of validity and social acceptance in shaping individuals' sense of identity and belonging. Contrary to expectations, no significant differences in conformity and self-esteem based on gender, residence, or age were observed, underscoring the universality of the human need for social connection and validation. Regression analyses further show that conformity significantly predicts self-esteem, highlighting the importance of social conformity in enhancing individuals' sense of self-worth. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between conformity and self-esteem, informing interventions aimed at promoting authentic self-expression and psychological well-being in various social contexts. Further research is warranted to explore the nuances of this relationship and its implications for individual and societal flourishing.

Keywords: Conformity, Self-esteem, Social identity, Relations.

Introduction

In contemporary society, the complex interplay between conformity and self-esteem remains a critical focus of psychological research, profoundly influencing individual development and well-being. As individuals navigate the complex terrain of social interactions and cultural expectations, understanding the dynamics between conformity—the tendency to align one's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors with those of others—and one's subjective self-assessment of one's worth is of profound importance. This study attempts to delve deeper into the relationship between conformity and self-esteem, shedding light on their mutual influence and implications within our society. The research problem at the heart of this investigation lies in uncovering the complex connection between conformity and self-esteem. How do individuals' tendencies to conform to social norms and pressures intertwine with their perceptions of self-worth and confidence? This question has particular resonance within our cultural context, where social expectations and group dynamics shape individual identity and psychological well-being. By elucidating the nuanced interplay between conformity and self-esteem, this study aims to contribute not only to the advancement of psychological science, but also to the broader understanding of social dynamics and the promotion of environments conducive to authentic self-expression and psychological resilience. Guided by theoretical frameworks such as social identity theory, self-determination theory, and symbolic interactionism, this research aims to unravel the underlying mechanisms that govern the relationship between conformity and self-esteem. Through a combination of quantitative methodologies and statistical analyses, we attempt to explore the correlation between conformity and self-esteem, examine potential differences among demographic variables such as gender, residence, and age, and elucidate the predictive power of conformity on self-esteem. Drawing on a sample of 83 participants, this study uses rigorous measurement instruments to assess conformity and self-esteem, using

Likert-scale questionnaires to capture participants' perceptions and attitudes. Descriptive statistics provide insights into the distribution and central tendencies of conformity and self-esteem within the sample, while correlation analyses illuminate the strength and significance of the relationship between these variables. Furthermore, multiple regression analyses provide a comprehensive understanding of the predictors of self-esteem, including the role of conformity, age, and gender. Through this systematic research, we aim to advance our understanding of the complex interplay between conformity and self-esteem, providing valuable insights into the mechanisms that shape individual identity and psychological well-being. By illuminating the dynamics of conformity and self-esteem within our society, this research attempts to inform interventions and policies that aim to foster environments that promote authentic self-expression, resilience, and flourishing among individuals.

Conformity

Conformity occurs when the subject demonstrates the same behavior or attitude as the object. The subject is the individual who conforms. The object(s) can be individuals, groups, organizations, policies, rules and regulations, or the subject's natural experience or instinct. Conformity is divided into 2 categories: irrational conformism (herd behavior) and rational conformism (obedience, compliance) (Song, Ma, & Wu, 2024).

Conformity, the process by which people change their beliefs, attitudes, actions, or perceptions to more closely match those held by groups to which they belong or want to belong or by groups whose approval they desire. Conformity has important social implications and continues to be actively researched. If conformism is defined as movement toward a group norm, then conformity refers to an overt change in behavior toward that norm, while acceptance refers to a covert change in attitude or perception. For example, if an individual initially refused to sign a petition supporting abortion rights, learned that a group supported those rights, and then signed a petition supporting those rights, the person would be showing compliance. Conversely, if an individual believes that abortion should be illegal, after hearing that a group supported abortion rights and then changing his or her private opinion about those rights, he or she would be accepting the opinion of others (the majority) on that issue. (M. Levine, 2024).

Factors and aspects that affecting conformity

According to Ulfa (2017), there are five aspects of conformity, namely (a) imitation, such as the desire of individuals to be the same with others either openly or under pressure (real or imagined) to cause conformity; (b) adjustment, namely the desire of the individual to be accepted by others causing the individual to conform to others. Individuals usually make adjustments to existing norms in the group; (c) trust, namely the greater the individual's belief in the correct information from others, the greater the accuracy of information that chooses to conform to others; (d) agreement, which is something that has become a collective decision to make social forces capable of causing conformity and (e) obedience, namely a response that arises as a result of individual loyalty or submission to certain authorities, so that authority can make people conform to things (Roswiyani, 2021)

Self-esteem

Self-esteem refers to a person's overall sense of his or her worth. It can be thought of as a measure of how much a person "values, approves of, or likes themselves" (Adler & Stewart, 2004).

It is the ongoing process of determining personal growth and progress, which can be increased or decreased by the behavior of others. Abraham Tesser created the self-esteem maintenance theory in 1988. The self-esteem maintenance model assumes two things: that a person will strive to maintain or increase their self-esteem, and that self-esteem is influenced by relationships with

others. A person's self-esteem can be boosted when another close person performs well. Self-esteem has been a hot topic in psychology for decades, going as far back as Freud, who is considered by many to be the founder of psychology (although he is a bit of a distant father figure on this point), who had theories about self-esteem at the heart of his work.

What self-esteem is, how it develops (or fails to develop), and what influences it have been keeping psychologists busy for a long time, and there is no sign that we will understand it all anytime soon! While there is still much to learn about self-esteem, at least we have a definition of what self-esteem is and how it differs from other, similar constructs. The theory assumes that an individual will maintain and increase their self-esteem through social comparison with another individual. Self-esteem refers to the self-perceived social ranking that one has of oneself. It is the ongoing process of determining personal growth and progress, which can be increased or decreased by the behavior of others. Abraham Tesser created the self-esteem maintenance theory in 1988. The self-esteem maintenance model assumes two things: that a person will strive to maintain or increase their self-esteem, and that self-esteem is influenced by relationships with others. A person's self-esteem can increase when another close person performs well. (Ackerman, 2024)

Self-esteem plays a significant role in your life and has a profound impact on the choices that you make. Self-esteem determines what you consider yourself to be capable and worthy of doing.

When you have low self-esteem, you are at a higher risk of not fulfilling your real potential. Numerous factors can influence your self-esteem. These four factors can either build up your self-esteem or pull it down.

1. Your Childhood

Your childhood is one of the leading contributing factors to your self-esteem. During your childhood, as your personality and everything else is developing, everyone you encounter has the potential to influence who you become, this includes your self-esteem. For example, children that grow up in unstable households tend to have lower self-confidence and self-esteem and often end up carrying that burden with them throughout their entire lives.

2. The Media

Our complete obsession with the media, whether it's social media, television or print ads, contributes to the widespread self-esteem issues that our society faces. The instant access to social media is especially damaging to young minds with the constant pressure to look and act like public figures, celebrities, and their peers.

3. Friends and Family

The people that you spend time around have a considerable influence on your self-esteem. Your friends can help you build your self-confidence, your self-image, and self-respect, or they can bring it down. Unfortunately, there are those in our lives that will purposely try to harm our self-esteem to build themselves up.

Your family can also positively or negatively affect your self-esteem. Feelings of inadequacy when it comes to providing for your family can contribute to low self-esteem while working together as a family and building one another up, can contribute to a healthy self-esteem.

4. Work Environment

The majority of your time is spent at school or at work. The environment tends to influence every aspect of your life, including your self-esteem. If you have a stressful and overly demanding position, it can often contribute to low self-esteem. Working in an encouraging and productive environment can have a positive influence on your self-esteem and can help you grow stronger.

Every part of your life can affect your self-esteem, but the person that has the most control over this is you. Start giving yourself good messages about who you are and stop beating yourself up.

Key Elements of self-esteem Humility comes in two flavors: constructive humility and destructive humility. One of the main characteristics of self-defeating humility is a complete loss of self-respect or the conviction that one is inadequate, spineless, or despicable. Some people choose to ruminate excessively from time to time, and it can lead to a sense of self-defeating humility. Focusing on painful memories from the past or unfavorable aspects of oneself rarely leads to any improvement. This has to do with our ability to value what we already have, such as our connections, accomplishments, and unique qualities.

It's important to remember that having a healthy feeling of self-worth is directly related to appreciating someone or something appropriately.

- **Self-acceptance:** The capacity to accept oneself exactly as one is.
- **Self-compassion:** Your capacity to be compassionate to yourself, as well as to extend yourself mercy and grace when things go tough.
- **Self-respect** is the conviction that one is deserving of respect and dignity.
- **Self-worth:** Your appreciation of your worth (synonymous with self-esteem)
- **Self-image:** Your view of your physical self and your sense of who you are as a whole.
- **Self-confidence:** Your capacity to act and behave in ways that are consistent with your sense of who you are. Figure 1 represents the key elements of self-esteem

When we idealize someone or something, we give it erroneously favorable traits that it does not actually possess. On the other side, when we undervalue someone or something, we erroneously attribute it with negative traits that it does not actually possess. By encouraging us to assume the position of the observer, mindfulness training can help us perceive things more clearly. Figure 2 shows the characteristic of self-esteem (Anithalakshmi, 2022).

Research methodology

The research problem in this paper is the question: what is the relationship between conformity and self-esteem? Understanding the relationship between conformity and self-actualization is of great importance in contemporary society and especially in our country. As individuals interact in the complexity of social interactions and cultural expectations, the balance between conformity and self-esteem is a factor that profoundly influences personal development and psychological well-being. The study of how the relationship between conformity and self-esteem is sheds light on the mechanisms through which social norms and group dynamics shape individual identity and autonomy. Furthermore, the knowledge derived from this research has broad implications, providing valuable results for fostering environments that stimulate authentic self-expression and promote mental health and psychological resilience. By delving into the nuances of this relationship, this study will contribute not only to the development of a point in the field of psychological science, but also to increasing social understanding and cultivating environments that support individuals in their pursuit of fulfillment and self-actualization.

The overall aim of the paper is to study the relationship between conformity and self-esteem. In pursuit of understanding the relationship between conformity and self-esteem, this paper attempts to present theoretical definitions and non-experimental methodology with a quantitative approach, to provide an answer to its problem. Drawing on psychological theories such as social identity theory, self-determination theory, and symbolic interactionism, this paper aims to clarify the fundamental mechanisms of the relationship between conformity and self-esteem.

At first, I decided to investigate the issue of the positive or negative impact of social communication on the construction of the individual, then I formulated the research problem by focusing on two important elements of the mutual relationship between individuals, namely, conformism and self-esteem in our society, then the research structure was planned, starting from the theoretical approach to the measurement instruments. After compiling the questionnaire, it was implemented through the Google forms platform and was carried out by distributing it on social networks. Data collection was done through the Google forms platform, which were then processed in SPSS by processing the results. Finally, the research report was drafted.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between conformity and self-esteem, shedding light on the mechanisms through which social dynamics and individual perceptions intertwine to shape psychological well-being. Guided by theoretical frameworks such as social identity theory, self-determination theory, and symbolic interactionism, our investigation has provided a nuanced understanding of how conformity and self-esteem intertwine within our cultural context. One of the main findings of our study is the strong correlation between conformity and self-esteem. Consistent with theoretical propositions, our data reveal that individuals who exhibit higher levels of conformity also tend to report higher levels of self-esteem. This finding underscores the importance of social validation and acceptance in shaping individuals' perceptions of self-esteem, as conformity serves as a means of aligning oneself with societal norms and expectations to strengthen a sense of identity and belonging. Furthermore, our analysis highlighted the role of demographic variables in shaping the relationship between conformity and self-esteem. Contrary to expectations, we did not find significant differences in conformity and self-esteem based on gender, residence (urban versus rural), or age. These findings suggest that while social context and life experiences may influence individual expressions of conformity and self-esteem, the underlying mechanisms that drive these constructs remain relatively stable across demographic groups. The lack of significant differences based on demographic variables underscores the universality of the human need for social connection and validation, as well as the pervasive influence of social norms in the formation of individual identity. Despite differences in life experiences and cultural background, our data suggest that the fundamental processes underlying conformity and self-esteem operate similarly across populations. Furthermore, our regression analyses provide valuable insights into predictors of self-esteem, with conformity emerging as a significant predictor of self-esteem. This finding is consistent with the tenets of social identity theory, which posits that individuals derive a sense of self-esteem and identity from their affiliation with social groups and adherence to group norms. By conforming to social expectations and norms, individuals strengthen their self-esteem and sense of belonging within their social environment. Overall, the findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between conformity and self-esteem, providing valuable insights into the mechanisms that shape individual identity and psychological well-being. By elucidating the dynamics of conformity and self-esteem within our society, this research informs interventions

and policies aimed at promoting authentic self-expression, resilience, and flourishing among individuals. Moving forward, further research is warranted to explore the nuances of this relationship and its implications for individual and societal well-being.

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