

An Assignment Submitted by

Name of Student

Name of Establishment

Class, Section, Date

In psychology, self-esteem is regarded as an essential part of success. When there are low levels of self-esteem, an individual is likely to face defeat or depression. It can further lead to

bad decisions and failure. On the other hand, when self-esteem is excessively high, one can end up being destructive to others, which can impact their relationships. As such, self-esteem on the extreme ends can cause problems, and thus, the best way is to strike a balance in the middle.

Self-esteem can, therefore, be described as an individual's overall sense of personal value or self-worth. Whereas high self-esteem is a good thing that can make people feel powerful or even act as a source of admiration, there is always a dark side which many people fail to appreciate. The dark side is usually revealed when individuals show excessive confidence levels, which can lead them to risky and antisocial behavior that have significant implications on their relationships.

High Self-Esteem

Understanding the dark side of self-esteem requires the appreciation of some attributes or characteristics held by people with the trait. First, these individuals are not perfectionists. Finding perfection is about seeking approval and avoiding getting hurt. However, these people do not need to get approval from anyone and are ready to get hurt in the process. They also possess a strong sense of self-meaning: they believe that they are worth other people's attention, time, and respect. They also show good skills remaining aware of their motives and intentions. Trzesniewski et al. (2013) asserted that they show an immense sense of self-love both physically and emotionally and take full responsibility for their lives. Ultra positive perception about the self has been associated with several problems related to the psychological health. For instance, research has shown that high self-esteem can be a cause of the violent or aggressive behavior. Before assessing some of the dark sides of high self-esteem, it is critical to analyze one of its most significant characteristics that is excessive confidence.

Excessive Confidence

Individuals with high confidence or elevated self-esteem risks engaging in reckless and risk-taking activities expose themselves to accidents, drug abuse, excessive eating, and smoking amongst other hazardous types of behavior. An overconfident person is also likely to suffer from antisocial behavior such as showing self-centeredness, bullying less confident people, and thinking that they are always right. It can also lead a person to becoming a narcissistic individual being glorified due to their confidence, but in the real sense, they are incompetent deep within. Such individuals often rise to the top at the expense of others, who might be less confident but competent. As such, this has led to the birth of a particular culture in the Western world where people tend to promote higher levels of self-belief rather than awareness, which is an alarming trend. An important note is that when a world becomes full of individuals who pretend to be better than they are, more con-artists and charlatans emerge. However, one should remain cognizant of Mark Twain's assertions that "to succeed in life, you need two things: ignorance and confidence" (Trzesniewski et al., 2013). Confidence is, therefore, a double-edged sword that explains the human condition. When it is present in low amounts, the human beings are almost handicapped. However, when they are excessively high, individuals are likely to ignore certain shortcomings that can act as hurdles towards the achievement of a goal.

The Fragility of High Self-Esteem

One of the downsides of high self-esteem is the fact that one is likely to depict fragile behavior. Michael Kernis, a researcher in psychology, intimated that "people with fragile high self-esteem compensate for their self-doubts by engaging in exaggerated tendencies to defend, protect, and enhance their feelings of self-worth" (Borton et al., 2012). Therefore, a person with high self-esteem can depict instability in behavior leading them to fluctuate from one tendency to

the other within a single day. Such attributes have been associated with the tendency of an individual to be overly defensive. Most researchers have also intimated that having fragile high self-esteem is similar to having low self-esteem. Fragile self-esteem is usually compared to secure self-esteem which involves an individual showing stable behavior. Fragility in self-esteem is associated with verbal defensiveness because they are prone to potential threats which they find difficult to counteract. Borton et al. (2012) illustrated that fragility in high self-esteem can also be a strategy that one utilizes to compensate for their self-doubt by involving themselves in exaggerated tendencies which will ultimately cause them to protect, defend, or enhance their sense of self-worth. Initially, it was thought that having high self-esteem was a strength, but researchers in psychology have gone ahead to reveal that such individuals are fragile and this causes them to show aggressive behavior that might be unlikable to others. The reason for this unwanted behavior is in their threatened egos which they are determined to defend at all costs.

High Self-Esteem and Violent Behavior

Ulla Lovenkrands, a criminal psychologist, intimated that "violent people are violent because their self-esteem and self-confidence are unrealistically high. Many violent criminals describe themselves as powerful, special, and elite people who deserve special treatment" (Zeigler-Hill, 2013). Further research has shown that members of the street gangs and bullies have high opinions about themselves and also demand respect from others. Most victims of violence, on the other hand, are individuals who show a diminished sense of self-esteem and confidence. It is critical to understand that most people who demonstrate high levels of self-esteem also depict reduced sensitivity to the needs of others. Egotism, which is a principle trait among people having self-esteem, can cause people to have a sense of superiority, which makes them have a feeling of entitlement towards the use of other people's resources because they feel they are less-superior.

Just as people kill insects without remorse, people with high-self-esteem might tend to show aggressive behavior towards the perceived lesser beings without any sentimentality attached. Egoism can also give an individual a false sense of confidence that will drive them towards a fight that presumably they will win. As such, they cannot hesitate to start one because according to them, confidence is an indisputable asset.

Favorable views of the individuals with high self-esteem can also face challenges, contradiction, mockery, or jeopardy. According to Trzesniewski et al. (2013), such people tend to express aggression because of the firm belief of their position. Aggression, therefore, emanates from the fact that these people receive feedback that appears contradictory to their held beliefs or assertions. Since most of them are not ready to compromise their self-appraisal or stance, they are likely to resort to violence as a means of protection. In a broader perspective, violence is a function of a threatened ego where the individuals in questions are not ready to revise their confidence in a downward direction. Zeigler-Hill (2013) pointed out that research has also intimated that when the esteem of overconfident people is threatened, they are likely to react in the ways that are not only erratic but also irrational. Thus, this shows that people with high self-confidence are reluctant to lose their sense of esteem. Scholars have also agreed that such people rarely think that they can lose their esteem and as such turn out to be extremely defensive to protect their egos. A theory known as the self-verification theory can be used to explain the onset of violent or aggressive behavior among people with high-self esteem. The concept is based on the principle that people tend to resist changes directed towards their self-concepts. People who think wrongly about themselves might tend to resist favorable feedback.

High Self-Esteem and Narcissism

People tend to show concerns about their self-esteem mainly as a culture, and researchers have lauded this as a good thing. How people feel about themselves dictates how they treat those around them. For instance, in 1890, William James, a psychologist, asserted that self-esteem is a fundamental need required for survival and equated it to other feelings such as anger and fear (Falkenbach, Howe, & Falki, 2013). However, a terror management theorist called Sheldon Solomon challenges these assertions claiming that self-esteem can be problematic mainly due to its connection to social insensitivities. One of the traits closely associated with high self-esteem and confidence is narcissism. Whereas high-self esteem can be used to encourage positive behavior such as success, well-being, and health by pointing out how an individual is extraordinary and unique, it can also lead to narcissist behavior. Dal Bó and Terviö (2013) intimated that narcissists often feel a sense of superiority in relation to others and believe that they are entitled not only to privileges but also admiration. In their mind, the world would be a better place if it could revolve around them. However, realizing that it is always not about them, they have a potential of showing aggressive behavior towards others.

In contrast, people with adequate self-esteem have a sense of self-satisfaction with their personality and do not see themselves as being better than others. Morris Rosenberg, one of the first researchers of self-esteem, asserted that “when we deal with self-esteem, we are asking whether the individual considers himself adequate - a person of worth - not whether he considers himself superior to others” (Baumeister, 2013). Therefore, there is a thin line between high self-esteem and narcissistic behavior, and people having the former are more likely to develop the latter. Narcissism can further be viewed as unhealthy feelings that one possesses while proper self-esteem involves strong feelings about an individual's worth. In children, it mainly comes as a result of parental overvaluation. Some parents have a wrong perception of their children, which

leads to a heightened sense of uniqueness and false superiority on the child as they grow. Over-estimating, over-praising, and over-claiming the abilities of an individual raise the self-esteem to the level of narcissism. Narcissism tendencies, which is secondary to excessive self-confidence, have also been accused of promoting mediocrity. Fanti and Henrich (2015) asserted that self-confident and egoistic individuals could climb to the top influential position not because they are competent, but due to their immense self-belief. The downside is that this could be at the expense of some qualified individuals who do not possess similar levels of confidence or self-esteem.

High Self-Esteem and Attitude

As previously intimated, self-esteem and confidence are essential attributes under most circumstances. A strong sense of confidence and esteem gives people an impetus to achieve their goals. Albert Bandura, a psychologist, asserted that confidence, more than any other trait, causes positive outcomes when pursuing a goal. However, when self-esteem and confidence increase to unprecedented levels, one might suffer from attitude problems that are likely to impact their work and relationship with others. The dark side of self-esteem can be found in an individual's social, professional, and personal life. Steinem (2012) pointed out that one of the ways in which excessive self-esteem and confidence affect attitude is through undermining tasks and projects that could ultimately lead to missed opportunities. When a person views work as excessively easy or something beneath their abilities, they are likely to lose on the opportunities, which would have otherwise led to their professional or personal advancements. Overconfidence can also be a significant problem on an individual's attitude especially if they take on tasks or jobs that are beyond their abilities. High self-esteem might lead one to accept challenges in which they lack the necessary skills, which can thus lead to failure.

The poor attitudes created by self-confidence can potentially impact an individual's social life especially when they are alienated by friends who might find them arrogant or creators of unnecessary insecurities. Steinem (2012) intimated that excessive self-esteem could potentially cause an individual to center every discussion around them which could appear boastful and inappropriate to others. Marriage relationships have also been destroyed by high self-esteem especially when neither of the partners is ready to relent their hard stance. Also, some partners, due to their high self-esteem, tend to concentrate more on themselves and their capacities while paying little attention to their counterpart. As such, this could ultimately lead to conflicts between the partners and potential divorces. Additionally, the research has shown that high self-esteem and confidence can cause one party in the relationship to continually blame the others and fail to own up to mistakes, which is potentially detrimental to the well-being of the relationship.

High-Self Esteem and Risk Taking

The self-determination theory of self-esteem illustrates that "man is born with an intrinsic motivation to explore, absorb, and master his surroundings" (Orth, Robins, & Widaman, 2012). However, the motivation can go overboard and cause an individual to engage in potentially risky and life-threatening endeavors. The self-determination theory only envisages self-esteem as motivation towards achieving personal growth, basic needs, and vitality amongst other positive needs. The research has shown that children with high self-esteem are prone to engaging in risky behavior because of a false belief in their abilities. Chung et al. (2014) noted that high self-esteem and confidence could also result in an assumption that an individual is exempted from failure, which is critically detrimental, especially for people in business and sports industries. It can

also result in laxity causing one to skip training or practice session, which in the end sets a platform for failure.

In conclusion, many theories have accepted that self-esteem and confidence are vital tenets required for success. They give an individual a sense of self-worth and belief providing them with an extra push necessary to succeed. Psychologists have also agreed that the opposite of high self-esteem which is low self-esteem can potentially isolate an individual and serve as a recipe for failure. However, what remains apparent is that high self-esteem has its dark side that can ultimately lead to the same effects seen in a person with low self-confidence. High-self confidence can cause fragility in behavior causing an individual to show self-defense whenever their positions are threatened. Also, such people can potentially engage in violent acts because they feel superior and entitled to the resources of other people whom they view as lesser beings. According to Zeigler-Hill (2013), psychologists also associate high confidence with narcissistic behavior, which comes as a result of the glorification of mediocrity. One's attitude can also suffer from high self-confidence, which leads to unwarranted behavior that ends up destroying relationships. Lastly, high self-esteem and resultant confidence potentially lead to risk-taking behavior.

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