

Self-concept

PH1.2: Distinguish between self-esteem, self-image, and self-efficacy



1) Write down 5 words or phrases that describe you or represent who you are:

2) Rank the 5 words or phrases you wrote above by placing the numbers 1 through 5 next to each one. The number 1 represents the word or phrase that is most important to your identity, while 5 is the least important, relatively.

3) Did this quick exercise reveal anything interesting or surprising to you?

DISCUSS

With a partner, share your responses. How is the way you each approached this task similar or different?

NEW
INFO

Review: Think about the concept of mental health:

Mental health (MH): The WHO defines this as “a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

Mental health researchers have determined that **self-concept** is a major component of a person’s mental health. Self-concept (also known as self-identity) can be thought of as a collection of beliefs about oneself. To simplify this big concept, we can think of it as the answer to the simple question of, “Who am I?” The complex answers to this question can tie in to any aspect of oneself, including one’s physical, mental, social, and emotional self. It can include academic performance, gender roles and sexuality, and racial identity, and so much more. Self-concept includes our past, present, and future selves and encompasses our hopes, goals, standards, fears, and threats. It is associated with our behavioral and mental health outcomes, academic performance, and even our levels of happiness, anxiety, and life satisfaction.

Self-concept can sometimes be too broad of a term, so when people talk about mental health they often refer to the following three more specific terms:

1)Self-esteem: general feelings of one's worth or value

The answer to: "How do you feel about yourself?"

Example: "I feel good about the fact that I am a fast swimmer."

2)Self-image (also known as *self-schema*): mental picture of oneself (includes observable characteristics as well as ideas about oneself resulting from personal experience or internalizing judgement from others)

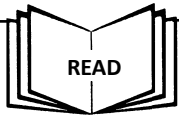
The answer to: "What do you think people think about you?"

Example: "They all must think I look great in this swimsuit."

3)Self-efficacy: belief in one's capacity to succeed at tasks

The answer to: "How do you think you will do?"

Example: "I am confident that I will place in the top three at this swim meet because I worked so hard."



Read the following summary of a research study examining how Facebook profiles relate to self-esteem and behavior.

Facebook Profiles Raise Users' Self-Esteem and Affect Behavior

May 31, 2013 — A Facebook profile is an ideal version of self, full of photos and posts curated for the eyes of family, friends and acquaintances. A new study shows that this version of self can provide beneficial psychological effects and influence behavior.

Catalina Toma, a UW-Madison assistant professor of communication arts, used the Implicit Association Test to measure Facebook users' self-esteem after they spent time looking at their profiles, the first time the social psychology research tool has been used to examine the effects of Facebook. The test showed that after participants spent just five minutes examining their own Facebook profiles, they experienced a significant boost in self-esteem. The test measures how quickly participants associate positive or negative adjectives with words such as me, my, I and myself.

"If you have high self-esteem, then you can very quickly associate words related to yourself with positive evaluations but have a difficult time associating words related to yourself with negative evaluations," Toma says. "But if you have low self-esteem, the opposite is true."

Toma opted to use the Implicit Association Test because it cannot be faked, unlike more traditional self-reporting tools.

"Our culture places great value on having high self-esteem. For this reason, people typically inflate their level of self-esteem in self-report questionnaires," she says. "The Implicit Association Test removes this bias."

Additionally, Toma investigated whether exposure to one's own Facebook profile affects behavior.

"We wanted to know if there are any additional psychological effects that stem from viewing your own self-enhancing profile," says Toma, whose work will be published in the June issue of *Media Psychology*. "Does engaging with your own Facebook profile affect behavior?"

The behavior examined in the study was performance in a serial subtraction task, assessing how quickly and accurately participants could count down from a large number by intervals of seven. Toma found that self-esteem boost that came

from looking at their profiles ultimately diminished participants' performance in the follow-up task by decreasing their motivation to perform well.

After people spent time on their own profile they attempted fewer answers during the allotted time than people in a control group, but their error rate was not any worse. Toma says the results are consistent with self-affirmation theory, which claims that people constantly try to manage their feelings of self-worth.

"Performing well in a task can boost feelings of self-worth," Toma says. "However, if you already feel good about yourself because you looked at your Facebook profile, there is no psychological need to increase your self-worth by doing well in a laboratory task."

But Toma cautions against drawing broad conclusions about Facebook's impact on motivation and performance based on this particular study, as it examines just one facet of Facebook use.

"This study shows that exposure to your own Facebook profile reduces motivation to perform well in a simple, hypothetical task," she says. "It does not show that Facebook use negatively affects college students' grades, for example. Future work is necessary to investigate the psychological effects of other Facebook activities, such as examining others' profiles or reading the newsfeed."

University of Wisconsin-Madison. "Facebook profiles raise users' self-esteem and affect behavior." ScienceDaily, 31 May 2013.


DISCUSS

- 1) How does spending time looking at one's own Facebook profile impact self-esteem, according to this study?
- 2) Do you use social media? If so, how do you feel while spending time on Facebook or other social media websites?
- 3) Do you think spending time on Facebook might influence one's **self-image** and **self-efficacy**? Why or why not?



Label each of the following statements with Self-esteem, Self-image, Self-efficacy, or None of these.

- _____ 1. I'll probably end up repeating freshmen year.
- _____ 2. I have such a great sense of humor.
- _____ 3. I can't stand my hair. It looks so frizzy.
- _____ 4. I never gossip because I know it makes me a better friend.
- _____ 5. I am able to make lots of friends this year.
- _____ 6. My score on the science test was 82%.
- _____ 7. I love wearing my new t-shirt—people think I look really great.
- _____ 8. People are always staring at my pointy nose, I can't stand it!
- _____ 9. I won't make the basketball team, I'm just not that skilled.
- _____ 10. I have four brothers and two sisters.



Now review your responses to the Do Now question. Categorize each statement you wrote down as Self-esteem, -image, -efficacy, or none of these. Add a few more statements so you have at least one that represents each term.

Take turns reading your statements to a partner one-by-one. Have your partner answer with the term (Self-esteem, -image, -efficacy, or none) they believe to be most fitting. Use this as practice and a chance to get to know someone better!



Label each of the following statements with Self-esteem, Self-image, Self-efficacy, or None of these.

- _____ 1. I sound great to others when I sing in Music.
- _____ 2. I'm a great musician with a beautiful voice.
- _____ 3. I will get an A in music because I work hard.
- _____ 4. I don't have any previous music experience.



Reflect on your own self-concept. Write 3-5 statements about yourself that fit each concept below. Then write a paragraph reflection analyzing how this went for you. What was easy? What was difficult? What did you learn about yourself?

SELF-ESTEEM

SELF-IMAGE

SELF-EFFICACY