

## Psychological Perception of the Self Concept

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### Abstract:

Our research aims to address the concept of the self from the psychological perspective as it is a dynamic unit that lies in the idea that the individual holds about himself in terms of physical, psychological, cognitive and social aspects through his interaction with the environment and the medium in which he lives and through the social relationships that he forms and the experiences he lives in addition to his interpretation of his behavior, which It affects the construction of his character.

Our interest in the subject of self and self-esteem is one of the dimensions of great importance in enhancing the individual's self-confidence and his abilities to reach a positive self-esteem.

### Keywords:

The self, the self system, the personality

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**Introduction:**

The self-concept is one of the complex concepts that are related to the personality of the individual as it affects his cognitive, mental, psychological and social behavior as well as his behavior in all areas of his life. It is his idea of himself and the extent of his awareness of it. If this idea is good and tainted with satisfaction, then this pushes him to work and agree with the members of society, and if his idea of himself is tainted with dissatisfaction, then he is often exposed to frustrating situations that make him feel helpless and failure, and thus his social adjustment becomes bad and this leads him to introversion or aggression to attract the attention of others.

According to Ames and Felker, self-concept controls the way individuals interpret situations in life and how they categorize the information they obtain.

Many scholars and researchers in the field of psychology have been interested in the subject of psychology in its various disciplines and fields. Definitions have varied and branched according to the reference of the theoretical frameworks to which they belong, as the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) indicated the concept of self is mentioned in 2040 titles.

The self is used in psychology in two senses. On the one hand, it represents a person's attitudes and feelings about himself (the self as an actor), and on the other hand, it expresses the set of behavioral processes that controls the behavior and conformity (the self as a subject). (Ibrahim, 1996).

Bandura confirms that the self-system is the most important psychological factor in controlling and directing human behavior, because the individual can exercise control over his thoughts, feelings and actions through his self-system, and produces the individual's behavior through the interaction between his self-system and the sources of the external environment that he is affected by (Pajares, 1996).

The self-concept plays a key role in shaping the behavior of the individual and highlighting his temperamental traits. Each of us tends to behave in a way that is consistent with his concept of himself. And if my self-concept is that I am sick with a weak structure, then most likely I will not participate in activities that require physical competence or physical effort. It means that our self-concept clearly controls our behavior, whether this concept is right or wrong. (Suhair Kamel Ahmed, 2002).

According to Rick Daniels Self-concept, the individual's perception of self, affects relationships, functional abilities, and health. Self-concept is unique to the individual; can be positive or negative; has emotional, intellectual, and functional dimensions; changes with the environmental context; changes over time; and has a powerful influence on one's life. (Rick Daniels, 2010).

Carl Rogers made considerable advancements in this field by stating that an individual is a creative and active being who lives in the present scenario and responds subjectively to his existing encounters and relationships based on personal perceptions.

“The human being reacts to the change in his phenomenal field as per his beliefs. The change is because of internal thoughts, emotions, and external factors.

An individual interacts with his environment and with others and forms a structure of self-concept.

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This idea of self-concept or self is defined as a conceptual pattern of values and concepts related to oneself.”(<https://www.marketing91.com/carl-rogers-theory>).

“Rogers described the self as a social product, developing out of interpersonal relationships and striving for consistency. He maintained that there is a basic human need for positive regard both from others and from oneself. He also believed that in every person there is a tendency towards self-actualization and development so long as this is permitted and encouraged by an inviting environment”. (Purkey.w.1988).

### **1 .Definition of Self-Concept**

The self-concept plays a key role in shaping the behavior of the individual and highlighting his temperamental traits. Each of us tends to behave in a way that is consistent with his concept of himself. And if my self-concept is that I am sick with a weak structure, then most likely I will not participate in activities that require physical competence or physical effort. It means that our self-concept clearly controls our behavior, whether this concept is right or wrong.(Suhair Kamel Ahmed, 2002).

The concept of the self, according to Jung, is defined in that it “attempts to achieve integration with the aim of reaching realism and effectiveness, and this happens in middle age.

This means that the self is the most important part of the human personality and represents unity and homogeneity in the personality, and it is also one of the old patterns and its meaning is the integration of personality, and it is the point of balance in the middle of the road between the opposites, conscious and unconscious.” (Muhammad Shehata Rabie, 2013).

In the opinion of Muhammad Imad Eddin Ismail (1982), the concept of the self is determined based on a person’s awareness of a general characteristic that can be attributed to him as a force interacting with other forces in the surrounding environment, or in clearer terms, as a source of behavior in the environment in which he lives.

“The concept of the self-arises from the interaction of the individual with his environment, and it can only be imagined with respect to this environment, and with regard to the reactions that come to the individual from this environment”. (Muhammad Imad Eddin Ismail, 1986, p. 133).

According to Ames and Felker, the self-concept controls the way individuals interpret situations they encounter in life and how they classify the information they obtain.

In Mustafa Fahmy's opinion, the concept of the self is evaluated as one of the factors that affect the behavior of the individual, which is his idea of himself and the extent of his awareness of it. If this idea is good and tainted with complacency, then this motivates him to work and harmonize with the members of society.

And if his idea of himself is tainted by dissatisfaction, he is often exposed to frustrating situations that make him feel helpless and failure, and thus his social adjustment becomes bad and this pushes him to introversion or aggression to attract the attention of others.

English and English mention that the term self is used in psychological studies according to the connotations they refer to in two distinct uses: The self as an object is the set of the individual's attitudes, feelings, perceptions and division towards himself, i.e. the person's idea of himself, and that the self is the individual's view of himself as the source of action. And the self as a process in the sense that the self as an actor or a specific aspect of the individual in the sense of the self consists of an active set of processes such as thinking, remembering and

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cognition that control the conformity of the individual and aspects of his behaviour, meaning that the self consists of a set of functions that control behaviour and adaptation.

Badawi Hussein mentions that Rogers defined the self as the individual's awareness of his existence and his activity, or in other words, the self as a subject is the sum of experiences that are all attributed to one thing, which is "I" or the pronoun of the speaker. It views the self-concept in terms of an organized formation of emotional perceptions of the self. And he defined it as an organized and learned cognitive formation of emotional perceptions, conceptions and special evaluations of the self that the individual crystallizes and considers as a psychological definition of himself. The self-concept consists of the individual's coordinated self-ideas with specific dimensions about the different elements of his inner and outer being. (Hassan Shehata, 2008).

The self-concept is nothing more than a conscious, coordinated goal resulting from the past and the present. Self-observation is what the individual believes in himself is the map to which each individual returns to understand, especially during moments of decisiveness or choice.

Sayed Ghoneim mentions that the self-concept in general is the idea that the individual formed about himself, including the physical, social, moral and emotional aspects that the individual forms about himself through his relations with others and his interaction with them.

Abdel Moneim Al-Hafni defines it in the Encyclopedia of Psychology as the individual's experience of himself or a holistic perception of himself, or it is the dynamic unit that composes the individual. (Abdul Moneim Al-Hafni, 1994).

As for Ahmed Zahran, he sees it as an organized and learned cognitive formation of emotional perceptions, conceptions and evaluations of the self that the individual crystallizes and considers as a psychological definition of himself. (Abdul Moneim Ahmed Al-Dardir, 2004).

Pagares believes that some researchers describe the self-concept as a generalized form of self-efficacy concerned with evaluating what the self deserves to be appreciated. It depends on how the prevailing culture in society evaluates the characteristics that an individual possesses and its judgment on the appropriateness of this individual's behavior to the permissible behavioral rules.

Burns defines the self as the individual's awareness of himself, in particular his attitude, feelings, and information about his abilities, skills, appearance and social acceptance. (Mohamed El-Shinawy, 2001)

As for Rogers, it is the total sum of the characteristics that the individual attributes to himself and the social values that are related to these characteristics, that is, it is the sum of the qualities and values that the individual carries about himself. (Samih Abu Moghli, 2002).

Amal Al-Ahmad defines the self as a complex concept that includes many psychological, cognitive, emotional, social and moral components... that work in harmony and complement each other. Maturity, experience, learning and socialization." (Amal Al-Ahmad, 2004).

As for Omar Ahmed Hamshari, he defines the self-concept as the individual's awareness of himself in its physical, emotional, mental and social dimensions. It includes our idea of ourselves and our various aspects of our experience, as well as our appreciation of the shortcomings in our personality. It is a person's evaluation of himself as a whole in terms of

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his appearance, background, origins, abilities, means, attitudes, and feelings. Where the concept of self is a guiding force for his behavior. (Omar Ahmed Hamshari, 2003).

As defined by the Framework, it is a set of feelings and meditative processes that are inferred by an observed behavior or phenomenon. And it is considered the ideal way to understand behavior through the internal frame of reference for the individual himself. (Youssef Qatami and Abdel Rahman Adas, 2005).

”The self-concept is a knowledge representation that contains knowledge about us, including our beliefs about our personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles, as well as the knowledge that we exist as individuals. Throughout childhood and adolescence, the self-concept becomes more abstract and complex and is organized into a variety of different cognitive aspects of the self, known as self-schemas.”( Jhangiani, R., Tarry, H., & Stangor, C. 2022 :127).

According to Rogers, everyone strives for an "ideal self." He believed that a man can flourish when he proves that he is capable of achieving his goals and desires, but to reach his full potential, the person must have been brought up in a healthy environment which consists of " authenticity, acceptance", and empathy", however, the lack of relationships with people who have a healthy personality will prevent the person from growing "like a tree without sun or water" and will affect the process of the individual to flourish.

Rogers also hypothesized that psychologically healthy people actively move away from roles created by the expectations of others and instead seek validation within themselves.(Ahmad,Nik;Ismail,Hisham,2015).

Many researchers agree with this point of view, which considers the self-concept as that undefined component or perceptual organization that stands behind the unity of our thoughts and feelings, and which serves as the immediate background for our behavior or as the organizing, guiding and unifying mechanism of behavior. In this sense, the concept of The self is the driving force of the individual in all his behaviour.

## **2. The Development of Self-concept**

From the point of view of psychologists, the individual usually follows a human group with which he shares its behavioral characteristics. He is born in a certain cultural environment through which he develops some tribes, trends, values and beliefs that help him in the provisions of his connection with that environment and belonging to it. The concept of self begins to form from the first moment that the child begins to explore the parts of his body. It is built through his thoughts, feelings, actions and experiences. Erikson has stated that the American individual is like many individuals in other environments who go through several obstacles or adversity in the way of self-assertion. (Youssef Qatami and Abdel Rahman Adas, 2005).

“Throughout childhood and adolescence, self-concept becomes more abstract and complex and organizes into a variety of different cognitive aspects, called self-schemas. Children have self-schemes about their progress in school, their appearance, their skills in sports and other activities, and many other aspects, and these self-schemes guide and inform their processing of relevant information” (Harter Susan, 1999).

## **3. The Contents of the Self-Concept**

Al-Ashwal believes that the self-concept has three components:

- **Cognitive content:** It is the content of the self and its connotation, which shows there are ideas such as I am intelligent, loyal, long ambition ... etc.

- **Emotional content:** presents the individual's sensibility and feelings about himself, and it is usually difficult to explain them because the individual's feelings about himself are usually not expressed in words, as it includes general feelings and feelings about self-worth in addition to his assessment of specific cognitive aspects or other aspects of the self.
- **Behavioral content:** It is the tendency of the individual to behave towards himself in multiple ways. A person may be have in a way that degrades himself, indulges himself, or becomes overly sensitive to some of his traits. (Al-Ashwal, 1999).

#### 4. Characteristics of the Self

Carl Rogers defines the characteristics of the self in the following:

- It grows from the interaction of the individual with his environment
- You represent and perceive the values of others in a distorted way-
- Trying to reach consistency
- Experiences that are inconsistent with the self you perceive as threats
- The self may change under the influence of maturity, learning, and environmental experiences

#### 5. The Self Dimensions:

William James was the first to introduce the concept of self-dimensions, and defined it in the following

- The real self is the self as seen by the individual and the individual believes its existence in reality.
  - The ideal self is what a person would like to be
  - The social self is the image that an individual thinks others perceive of him
- The extended self, which is everything that the individual shares with others, such as work, the family, and the homeland. (Ibrahim Abu Zaid, 1987).

Rogers also defined the dimensions of the self by adding the perceived self, which consists of self-centred perceptual and emotional experiences as a source of experience and behavior.

And there are also those who divided it into :The bodily self: the individual's idea of his body, health, external appearance, and sexual state.

- **Personal self:** It is the individual's sense of his personal value and appreciation of his own advantages and skills.
- **Family Self:** It is the individual's idea of himself as a member of the family, and the extent of his adaptation to it, and his commitment to it.
- **The moral self:** the individual's idea of his morals, his commitment to moral values, and his satisfaction with his belief in his beliefs and actions.
- **Social Self:** It is the individual's idea of himself through his relationship with others, his position among them, and his role in interacting with them.

The researcher believes that the cognitive dimension is included in the first dimension, which is the physical self. The cognitive mental development is one of the aspects of integrated growth, so how can the personal self grow, for example, without the development of the individual's awareness of what he has and what happens in the environment around him, as his social relations develop with the development of his awareness of himself and others.

## 6.Types of the Self-Concept

### 6.1Positive Concept of the Self

Knowing oneself well, accepting this self, coexisting with it, and understanding it plays an important role in ensuring that the individual enjoys psychological health and psychological adjustment. It is also a key factor in personal compatibility, and our acceptance of ourselves depends fundamentally on others' acceptance of us and their view of us as well. (Ahmed Zahran, 1997).

It is the state in which the individual realizes that he is worthy of the trust of others and that he is always at the good thought of others in his abilities and skills. He has positive thinking and action and he expresses it with expressions:

- I can do what is assigned to me
- I Feel the ability and the competence to do difficult things
- I know how to treat ambiguous matters
- I feel the power that others do not have.(Youssef Qatami and AbdelRahman Adas 2005).

Carl Rogers believed that self-concept is made up of three different parts:

- **-Ideal self:** The ideal self is the person you want to be. This person has the attributes or qualities you are either working toward or want to possess. It's who you envision yourself to be if you were exactly as you wanted.
- **-Self-image:** Self-image refers to how you see yourself at this moment in time. Attributes like physical characteristics, personality traits, and social roles all play a role in your self-image.
- **-Self-esteem:** How much you like, accept, and value yourself all contribute to your self-concept. Self-esteem can be affected by a number of factors including how others see you, how you think you compare to others, and your role in society.(Argyle M,2017).

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### 6.2 Negative Concept of the Self:

The individual's behavior and ways of life, which are considered a departure from decency and social intelligence, and the individual's expression of himself or others in a negative way, resulting from the formation of the individual for a negative concept of himself, depends on the negative view of others for one reason or another, which is considered a negative concept of the self or non appreciation. (Ahmad Zahra, 1997).

The individual who develops a negative self-concept can also be described as lacking confidence in his abilities, and he is miserable because he cannot find a solution to his problem and believes that his attempts will meet with failure and his performance will be unsuccessful, and is expressed by the following feelings.

- I feel submitted and humiliated
- I expect failure in everything I do
- I can't find anything to enjoy It bothers me to see other successful people
- I avoid trying in any situation for fear of failure. (Youssef Qatami and Abdel Rahman Adas, 2005).

## 7. Self-Awareness Methods

- The self is a tool and a means of action
- Seeing oneself as a continuous thread of experiences and memories
- Seeing oneself as a Product of experiences and interactions with others
- The self is a set of values and goals. (Youssef Qatami and Abdel Rahman Adas, 2005).

## 8. The Self Theory

The theory of the self has received the attention of psychologists as it attempts to integrate the different parts of the personality structure into a meaningful unit. This theory considers that the most important motive for man is self-realization and self-affirmation. This theory also emphasized the importance of self-acceptance. The individual's self-acceptance and confidence in himself and his abilities drive him to achieve the appropriate level of achievement. Whereas, if the individual looks at himself and his abilities in a different way, this will push him to retreat and slacken in his work. (Mahmoud Salman Al-Amyan, 2001).

And if we look at the literature of Rogers concerned with the individual and his personality and himself, we understand that this humanist world sees that the nature of the human individual is positive and tends towards self-realization. This is why it is necessary to focus and reveal the positive aspects of the human being and pay attention to feelings and sensations, self-realization and the process of change.

There is a basic concept in Rogers' theory is the self, and the self-concept represents a pattern of cognitions characterized by organization and integration, and although the self changes, it remains organized and integrated. The self is what represents a coordinated set of perceptions, and it is a model of experiences and perceptions present in consciousness, so that it is subconsciously Rogers believed that such a definition was appropriate for the purpose of scientific research. As for the self containing unconscious materials, it cannot be studied objectively, and the ideal self is the self-concept that the individual wishes to have, and it includes the perceptions and meanings that the individual highly appreciates (Mohamed Shehata, 2013).

## 9. Self-Realization

The concept of self-affirmation or self-realization is a very abstract concept and has not been subject to objective measurement in the sense that a living being tends to prove its existence and motivate its life. The concept of self-realization includes the individual's tendency to develop from a small being to a large being, and from a being with the help of others to a self-sufficient being and a being that moves from inertia to flexibility and freedom of expression. The concept of self-realization also includes the transformation from a simple entity to a complex entity, which includes the individual's tendency to reduce the tensions of daily life, and also emphasizes the importance of satisfaction and pleasure resulting from the activities practiced by the living organism. (Mohamed Shehata, 2013).

## 10. Harmony and Self-compatibility

Rogers emphasized the importance of harmony between the self and daily life experience in order for the individual to reach cohesion, which is freedom from conflict. Most of the behaviors that a living being brings must be in harmony with the self and with experience.

Lucky, who is another scientist has expanded adding the concept of self-coherence. Of course, the living being does not seek pleasure or avoid pain, but he is looking for a goal that is to build pleasure, here the individual is a system valuable and self-centered system.

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He believes that people are only true to themselves, that is, they do not lie to themselves and do not deceive them, and individuals act in a manner consistent with their idea of themselves according to the concept of self, even if this does not lead to their reward, and thus if a person or an individual considers himself weak in spelling, he will act according to his realization. For example, a person who is weak in spelling, i.e., who cannot write the language easily, makes mistakes in grammar, rhetoric and dictation. If he has these errors, he avoids being placed in a situation where he needs to use the language. If he is weak in arithmetic skills, then he is afraid of situations in which he is forced to solve arithmetic problems. (Mohammed Shehata, 2013.).

### **11. The Need For Positive Appreciation**

Studies show that experiences that are inconsistent with self-concept are ignored or neglected, and the need for positive esteem means, for Rogers, the need for warmth, love, respect, empathy, and acceptance. The child has needs such as love and affection, and if this child is given this unconditional positive appreciation, there is no need to deny the experiences.

We explain this and say that Rogers believes, as we explained earlier, that the main driving force in man is self-realization, although this motive towards self-realization is a congenital motive, but the learning and experiences that the individual is exposed to affect the motive. In Rogers' view, the relationship of the child with his mother is very important because this relationship would affect the sense of self. When the mother satisfies the child's need for love, which Rogers calls positive attention, the child often grows up with a normal personality. When the mother makes making love and understanding conditional on his proper behavior, the child will interfere in the direction of the mother and become what Rogers called merit conditions.

In this situation, the child feels under certain conditions or conditions and tries not to do those behaviors that lead to the mother's anger or dissatisfaction, and as a result of all this, Rogers believes that the self is not allowed to fully develop because it is not allowed to express all its aspects.

Thus, the basic requirement for normal mental health is that the child receive positive attention in a non-conditional manner so that the mother shows her love and acceptance of the child regardless of his behavior and in this case The child will not be the conditions of merit. Thus, he does not have to suppress or keep any aspect of his developing self, and in this case the child may be able to reach self-realization.

The goal of self-actualization in Rogers' view is to reach the highest level of mental health, a state Rogers's calls job perfection. The fully functional individual is characterized by openness to all qualifications and experiences and tends to live in every moment of his existence, as well as his sense of freedom in thought and action, along with a great deal of innovation. (Mohammed Shehata, 2013.).

**Conclusion**

The self-concept remains one of the important concepts and one of the basic functions in achieving the compatibility of the individual and striving for the consistency of his personality to achieve balance and stability in the environment in which he lives. It is also characterized by instability as it differs from one individual to another, as it is affected by circumstances, situations and environmental stimuli, and its importance comes through what the individual makes for himself, and it clearly affects the definition of his goals, directions and responses towards others and towards himself, which made many theorists in The field of mental health stress the importance of achieving compatibility for the individual, and that the person seeks to achieve himself by satisfying his various needs without conflicting with the requirements and conditions of the surrounding environment, and with the extent of the individual's success in achieving this balance, his positive self-esteem grows to a high degree.

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