Role of Self Criticism and Social Comparison in Self Concept Among University Students

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ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

2021

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A ResearchReport

Submitted in the Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Masters in Psychology

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2021

CERTIFICATE

It is certified that M.Sc. Research Report on **Role of Self Criticism and Social Comparison in Self Concept Among University Students** by Affaf Ahmed has been approved for submission to Quaid-i-Azam University,Islamabad.

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Supervisor

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Acknowledgement

First, I am very thankful to Allah Almighty, who bestows his blessings on me for the completion of this research work. The most merciful and beneficial, who has given me with courage to compile the thesis, all the success that paves its way towards me is through Hisblessings.

I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor Ms. AroojMujeeb for their guidance. I am sincerely thankful for her support that made it possible for me to study an area that represents one of my main interests in psychology.

I would like to thank the participants of the study for dedicating their time for completing the questionnaires and for their genuine interest towards the research topic.

Moreover, my gratefulness goes to my friends who never failed to show encouragement, offer inspiring ideas and constructive critique. This close-knit family always provided motivation and inspiration with their pure openness and curiosity.

Finally, I wish to thank to my family back home who always encouraged me to do what I love. They sacrificed their dreams to live with my dreams and gave me trust and courage to fulfill my goals. Their prayers were and will be always with me, who always supported me through all thick and thins of life. This would not have been possible without your support. May each life endeavor of everyone who contributed to this research be blessed byAlmighty.

Affaf Ahmed

Abstract

The present study was aimed to examine the role of self criticism and social comparison in self concept among university students. Moreover, it also focused to determine the role of demographics (gender, age, type of institute, education of participants, parental marital status, family system and parental education) across the study variables. Sample ($N = 300$) consisted of boys and girls from universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad with the age range of 19 to 25 years. The major constructs of the study were assessed with a Social Comparison Scale (Rosenberg, 1965),McGill Self Criticism Scale (McGill, 1997) and Six Factor Self-Concept Scale (Stake, 1994).Findings indicated that self-criticism was negatively associated with social comparison andself-concept. Results showed that social comparison was positively associated with self-concept. Significant group differences were also found on gender, family system, education of participants, parental marital status, and parental education. Results showed that male expressed more self-criticism, low social comparison, and self-concept as compared to females. Participants with higher education level expressed more social comparison and self-concept, and low self-criticism than those who had low education level. It was also found that students enrolled in government institutes reflect lesser social comparison and self-concept and high self-criticism as compared to the students enrolled in private institutes. Study also showed that respondents whose parents were living together had more social comparison and self-concept and less self-criticism as compared to those who were living with single parents. Results showed that the respondents living in nuclear family setup showed lesser social comparison and self-concept and had high inclination of self-criticism as compared to those who were living in joint family system. It was found that participants whose parents were highly educated reflected more social comparison and self-concept and less self-criticism. Practical implications of the study were discussed and suggestions for further research weremade.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

Introduction

As proven by the research that students with equivalent skills in differentenvironments (low-ability versus high-ability schools) have varied levels ofeducational self-concept, the way pupils feel about their skills is not entirely driven bytheir talents. This is known as the big-fish-small-pond effect (Marsh 1991), which hasbeen linked to social comparisons (Huguet et al. 2009). The connection betweensocial comparison and self-concept has been proven in a variety of educational andintellectual settings. Perceived standing among students and inside the institution, forexample, has been linked to confidence in mathematics competence (Trautwein et al.2009). Müller-Kalthoff et al. (2017) explored the combined impacts of social,temporal, and dimensional comparisons on academic self-concept in three researches,concluding that they have independent and cumulative impacts on educational self-concept. Social comparison, not temporal or dimensional comparison, had the greatestimpact on the children's stated mathematical self-concept in their third study, whichlooked at high-school students. Social comparisons can influence self-concept as wellas academic performance, at least in youngsters, by enhancing self-perceptions ofcompetence by making downward social comparisons (Guay et al.,2003).

Braithwaite and Corr (2016) evaluated the factors that increased self-efficiency and self-confidence in connection to academic accomplishment in highereducation students in a meta-analysis. They concluded that individual differencesmattered in instructional design. Individual variations, particularly confidence, havebeen demonstrated to be a powerful predictor of students' success in disciplines likeEnglish and Mathematics (Stankov et al., 2012).

Social Comparison

Individual's tendency to limit the amount of time they spend evaluating their own abilities and beliefs, they compare themselves to others in social and personal areas, and to learn how to define self (Festinger, 1954) is referred to as social comparison. The social comparison process is followed by a great deal of research

that primarily observed the self-evaluation process, for example, how people assess their present state relative to others (Beach and Tesser, 2000).

Social comparison, according to Kruglanski and Mayseless (1990), is characterized as comparable judgments of social stimuli with one's current state. Social comparison, according to Wood (1996), is the procedure of opinion about knowledge about one or more persons in reference to oneself. The term "in reference to the self" in this definition means that people look for comparisons and contrasts between themselves and the comparison target. As a result, the individual obtains knowledge that may be used to assess, enhance, and improve oneself (Taylor &Lobel, 2001).

Social comparisons of oneself with others are a basic psychological mechanism that influences people's judgments, experiences, and behaviors. People are always comparing themselves to others. In the social relationships between people and groups, social comparison is omnipresent (Wood, 1989). Social comparison, as process, is essential in our interactions and make us known of our comparative standing and in turn potentially stimulating our behavior (Gong &Sanfey, 2017). Estimates of relative social rank, such as inferior-superior, weaker-stronger, and upward-downward, can be used to make social comparisons (Furnham&Brewin, 1988; Gilbert, 1992). Comparisons dealing with the sense of otherness and outsider, there is evidence now that is based on how both the rank (up-down, inferior-superior) and the similarity of the self to others (similar or dissimilar) basic roots of the social comparison are and usually all are used together (Buunk&Hoorens,1992).

Festinger (1954), who postulated that we are unable to effectively appraise our own thoughts and talents and must instead rely on comparing ourselves to other people to generate an appraisal, coined the phrase social comparison. Social comparisons are the judgments that are made by comparing yourself to other people. Festinger (1954) suggested that we are compelled to evaluate our abilities and opinions to establish whether we are good enough (abilities) or correct (opinions) and to set a goal forourselves.

There is a great likelihood for an individual to compare him with others, to value others, and then to later categorize them according to the importance that is

considered to as social status, that concerns how worthwhile we perceive ourselves in comparison to another person. Those we consider being very valuable, such as politicians, celebrities, sportsmen, film stars and so on, are at the highest of our social rankings, and while those we normally considered low value are at the bottom or lowest of our social hierarchy (Kumaran, Melo, &Duzel, 2012).

Literature proposed that over the course of a person's life, their proclivity for social comparison changes and decrease from middle age to older age. Continuous life span model of social comparison process indicates that old adults report a weaker tendency to socially compare than younger adults but evidence considering the age-related differences in the processing of socially comparison is limited (Suls& Mullen, 1982). Arrowood (1986) proposed the concept of social comparison stating that a genuine social comparison is one in which the individual's self-evaluation changes. As a result, social comparison is defined as a process that is used to achieve goals such as self-assessment, self-enhancement, and self-improvement (Suls, Martin, & Wheeler,2002).

Types of Social Comparison

There are two types of social comparisons that is upward and downward. When we evaluate ourselves to someone who is (considered to be or performing) better than we are, we are engaging in upward social comparison. When we participate in downward social comparison, on the other hand, we compare ourselves to someone who is (considered to be or doing) worse than ourselves. The comparison's direction does not guarantee the outcome's direction. Both sorts of social comparison can have both beneficial and adverseconsequences.

Upward comparison.   It is when we compare with others who are better than us, is also common and these comparisons typically produce negative consequences (Vrgut&Koenis, 2002). Upward comparison may serve the purpose of evaluation more readily than a downward one. This style of comparison is very prevalent and promotes feelings of helplessness, jealousy and inferiority that can endanger our identity (Rodriguez & Bravo, 2006). Women are more likely to make upward comparisons in terms of appearance (comparisons to someone more attractive) than

they are to make lateral appearance comparisons that are comparisons to someone equally attractive (Ridolifi et al., 2011).

Downward comparison. Individuals prefer to compare with those who are worse or less competent to increase their own well-being (Bravo et al, 2006). Downward comparison may deteriorate and produce negative consequences. Literature has greatly simplified the concept of social downward comparison, although in fact it has many dimensions and perspectives (Wayment& Bauer,2008).

Negative and positive effects might result from upward and downward social comparisons. However, the distinction is more complex than simply positive and bad results. Contrastive and assimilative comparisons are two types of comparisons.

Contrastive comparisons. Contrastive comparisons stress the differences between the compared persons and the individual. We are perceived as more inferior to the comparison person in upward comparisons and we are seen as more superior in downward comparisons.

Assimilative comparisons. Assimilative comparisons are those in which the compared person's situation is like our own. We are motivated by upward assimilative comparisons because we believe we can achieve the same degree of accomplishment, whereas downward assimilative comparisons remind us that we could do far worse. The link between contrastive and assimilative comparisons might be thought of as follows that is contrast widens the gap between the comparison person and us, while assimilation narrows it.

Theoretical Perspective of Social Comparison

Following are the theories of social comparison:

Social comparison theory. This theory originally proposed in 1954 by social psychologist Festinger, the theory focuses on the conviction that there is an impulse in the individual to receive positive self-assessments. The idea explains how people estimate their own opinions and potential by comparing themselves to others to eliminate uncertainty in areas of inferiority-superiority, weakness, and strength, upward or downward in relation to others in which they lack, and finally learn to

define the self. Self-assessment is one of the roles of social comparisons. This is a procedure that triggers the social behavior of an individual. The specific goals of each individual influence how they engage in social comparison. They are most interested in choosing a target that shares a property or characteristics with themselves (Thorton&Arrowood, 1966).

Social identity theory. Social identity concerns how we identify our similarities and difference with other familiar groups of individuals. Social identification is a continuous cooperation between how we identify our social identity and how others identify with us. These internal comparisons focus on how individuals distinguish themselves from others in both the similarities they share and the differences they recognize. Social comparison is a universal and fundamental aspect of group life. People compare themselves to members of other groups, as well as their own group to members of other groups. The substructures for group-based social comparisons are formed by group norms, structure, and intergroup comparisons. Any explanation of the social group that does not deal with social comparison procedures is therefore rare (Hogg.2000).

Relationship of Social Comparison with Demographic Variables

Social comparisons have been a good source for learning about one's standing in comparison to his peers and assessing and comparing self-worth according to this social standing (Jones, 2001). Men do make comparisons but don't compare themselves much with high standards and research report that women make comparisons more and compare themselves to unrealistically high standards presented in the media (Haferkamp et al, 2012). When women are displayed as perfect, powerful, successful in media images, other women perceive these images as 'ideal' for attractiveness. Most women in everyday life engage themselves to make an upward comparison by measuring in contrast to some form of social standards. Social comparisons have become relevant mechanisms for knowing peer-based social expectations and evaluation of self-based on those ideals (Jones,2001).

There is an age difference regarding this social tendency to compare. Considering in general; older adults are reported to make more downward comparisons as compared to young people, which also a reason that they have a

higher sense of self-worth (Helgeson& Mickelson, 2000). When compared to young adults, older adults use social comparisons to deal with regret, and these comparisons are often more helpful for them (Bauer, Wrosch&Jobin, 2008). Individuals who score higher on a social comparison measure are more positive after using downward comparisons and more negative after using upward comparisons in a similar way (Buunk et al.,2005).

Consequences of Social Comparison

The process of social comparison has been linked to a slew of negative outcomes. For one thing, social comparison can have a negative impact on self-esteem (Tesser, 1988), especially when one is performing well in relation to others. Social comparison can have a variety of behavioral implications. If you notice a performance gap between yourself and another individual, you may become more competitive to close the gap (Garcia, Tor, & Schiff, 2013). For example, if one is in the top 10% of one's class halfway through the semester, one may feel competitive with the other top students. Although competition might improve performance, it can also take more harmful forms, such as committing actual injury or making a remark about another person. When the situation after the social comparison does not allow for self-repair, such as another chance to compete in a race or retake a test, these kinds of actions are more likely to occur (Johnson, 2012). When additional possibilities for self-improvement become available, a more positive sort of competitive motivation emerges, whether it's a desire to run faster in a race or an exam score improvement.

Self-Criticism

The ability to identify one's own perceived defects is referred to as self-criticism (Panayotova, 2016). It is a broader concept that influences mood, anxiety, and other disorders. Self-criticism is component of feeling degraded, shame, feeling worthless, shrink, self-cheapening and self-dangerous (Tangney et al., 2007). Researchers have revealed that individuals with self-critical problems may also experience various problems such as anxiety, eating disorders, substance abuse, personality disorders and suicide. When individuals subjected to stress any undergo failure, self-criticizing, and loneliness (Kannan& Levitt, 2013). Hence, it is

commonly understandable that those who are more self-critical are more prone to induce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Harman & Lee, 2010). Regarding low self-esteem, results revealed that eating disorders have relationship with presence of depressive symptoms.

The ability to identify one's own perceived defects is referred to as self-criticism (Panayotova, 2016). Shame, worthlessness, dishonor, shrinkage, self-devaluation, and self-blaming are all indicators of self-criticism (Tangney et al., 2007). According to Starrs et al. (2015), gloomy self-thoughts are mostly responsible for mood, anxiety, eating, and other illnesses. Due to parental practices such as a restricted setting of home lack of warmth, and superfluous regulations, children are more likely to acquire a sense of self-criticism (Sachs-Erricson et al., 2006). Stress and unpleasant life experiences are linked to feelings of self-blame and inadequacy in mental patients (Kannan& Levitt, 2013). Self-critical psychiatric patients also have psychological issues like anxiety, substance misuse, personality disorders, and suicide (Kannan& Levitt, 2013). As a result, those who are self-critical and have had a traumatic event are more prone to acquire post-traumatic stress disorder (Harman & Lee,2010).

Shery et al., (2016) concluded in their research that both self-compassion and self-criticism are highly related to one another, but they show different pattern and relation with other variables that is stress, anxiety, depression, gender, age, and healthiness (Fritzsche, 2016). Another research suggests that mothers with self-critical nature and with postpartum depression are less effective to social support and are more prone to depression (Priel&Besser, 2000). Patients with panic disorder score higher on self-criticism than healthy people although panic disorder patients score lower than in depressive people (Bagby et al., 1992). Finding also revealed that individuals with traits of self-criticism showed hostile behavior and powerful self-images, while traits of self-reassurance caused positive and supportive images of self. However, inability to produce warm and supportive self-images may cause depression (Gilbertet al.,2006).

Sibley, Zuroff, Hankin, and Abela (2015) investigated the role of events connected to an individual's self-definition and relatedness in the establishment of personality traits (self-criticism and reliance) and their relationship to the progression

of depression and anxiety symptoms were explored. They discovered a strong link between self-definitional events and self-criticism, which was linked to an increase in depression symptoms. However, there was a significant relation between dependency and depressive symptoms.

Types of Self-Criticism

Generally, literature reports following types of self-criticism:

Public self-criticism. An individual who is used to utter sentences in which he underestimates and devalue himself like: 'Gosh, I must be stupid; I can't comprehend the topic you are discussing' (Bright, 2013).

Fatigued self-criticism. Due to fatigue, unstructured and unwanted self-criticism is occurred which is known as fatigued self-criticism. Even though individual has positive views about self but due to fatigue, negative thoughts prevail and diminish positive thoughts (Bright,2013).

Hindsight self-criticism. According to Bright (2013) hindsight self-criticism is a type of self-criticism in which individual criticizes himself for being unable to predict his future (foresight) by understanding failure of any present event(hindsight).

Pre-event self-criticism. The pre-event criticizer is opposite to hindsight criticizer. The event does not occur, but pre-event criticizer criticizes himself. For example, athlete starts a competitive match and suddenly he experiences negative thoughts (Bright, 2013).

On-the-spot self-criticism. According to Bright (2013) on-the-spot self-criticizer is a type of self-criticism in which individual loses confidence in front of other people and criticizes himself.

The two types of self-criticismthatis inadequate-self and hated-self are as follow (Gibert et al., 2004). Inadequate self refers to the behavior of sensing personal inadequacy. For example, I am dissatisfied with myself that I want to hurt myself.

Causes of Self-Criticism

Self-criticism can be considered a habit. Four of the most common psychological reasons for self-criticism are behavioral modeling at an early age, using self-criticism as motivation, fear of appearing arrogant, believing self-compassion is self-indulgent. Self-criticism is the punishment or denigration that people inflict on themselves when they believe they have failed to meet internal standards. As a result, it is a broad pattern of self-conceptualization that arises in response to any perceived failure. As a result, it is a global self-cognition that, like self-esteem, should potentially establish a negative schema that is the foundation of depressivethinking.

Self-criticism can have a negative impact on our lives. According to a large-scale study, ruminating and blaming oneself for terrible experiences is linked to an elevated risk of mental health conditions. Concentrating on negative thoughts might cause a loss of motivation and a feeling of helplessness. This type of critical internal dialogue has been linked to depression, so it's something to think about.

Negative self-talk can make it difficult to perceive opportunities as well as to be willing to take advantage of them. This means that both the perception and the consequent changes in behavior contribute to the greater experience of stress. Negative self-talk may have furtherconsequences.

Limited thinking. You feel you can't accomplish anything the more you convince yourself you can't (Berking, 2015).

Perfectionism. You begin to believe that great isn't quite as good as perfect, and that perfection may be attained. Simply high achievers, on the other hand, tend to perform better than perfectionists since they are less concerned and content with a job well done. They don't dissect it and try to figure out what could have been done better (Brewin, 2010).

Feelings of depression. Negative self-talk has been linked to an increase in depressive symptoms in several studies. If left unchecked, this might have serious consequences (Hawley, 2017).

Relationship challenges. A lack of communication, even a light amount of criticism, can have a detrimental impact; whether it makes you appear needy and insecure, or it causes you to translate your negative self-talk into more general negative actions that harm others (Ganellen, 2011).

The fact that negative self-talk isn't positive is one of the most evident disadvantages. Although it may appear straightforward, positive self-talk has been proved to be a strong predictor of success in studies (Joormann, 2009).

One study on athletes, for example, looked at four different forms of self-talk (instructional, motivational, positive, and negative) and discovered that positive self-talk was the most effective predictor of performance. People didn't need to be reminded how to accomplish something as much as they need to be told that they were doing a good job and others noticedit.

The Effects of Self-Criticism on Mental Health

It can be beneficial when self-criticism allows for the acknowledgment and evaluation of flaws and failures, as well as the development of humility and constructive transformation. However, any benefits of self-criticism may be offset by the potential of mental harm if one's self-critical impulses interfere with one's ability to thrive. Although self-doubt is a natural part of life at times, prolonged or severe self-criticism can lead to mental health issues such as depression, social anxiety, body image disorders, and feelings of worthlessness (Clark,2007).

A tendency to blame one when things go wrong can lead to feelings of failure, lowness, or despair. Those who are highly critical of themselves may feel guilty or ashamed when something goes wrong, believing that they are to blame. Self- critical tendencies are linked to perfectionism, self-harm, and eating and food issues (Santor, 2003).

A predisposition for self-criticism can lead to the projection of negative beliefs onto others, which can lead to the expectation of negative feedback from others in particular situations. When negativity and criticism are expected, interpersonal relationships may be affected. As a result, both internal and outward criticism can contribute to feelings of isolation and loneliness, as well as a person's estrangement

from others. Self-critical persons may struggle to articulate their wants and desires, and they are more likely to be subservient in interpersonal interactions because they are fearful of being judged if they speak up (Blatt, 2001).

Effects of Self-Criticism

Several people, particularly highly skilled professionals such as doctors and lawyers, believe that they will not be successful if they do not criticize themselves. It's critical to shatter that belief (Kelly, 2016). When self-criticism allows for the admission of faults and failings, as well as the cultivation of humility and constructive transformation, it is beneficial. However, when self-criticism interferes with one's ability to thrive, the benefits are outweighed by the negative effects on mental health (Zuroff, 2014).

Self-criticism and depression. Unrelenting self-criticism promotes depression and anxiety and may even predict depression to some extent. According to a study published in the Wall Street Journal, people who are the most critical of themselves are also more likely to be depressed and have interpersonal problems (Dunkely, 2015).

The tendency to blame oneself when things go wrong can lead to feelings of failure and sadness. If something goes wrong, highly self-critical people may feel guilty or ashamed, believing it is their fault. Eating disorders, self-mutilation, and body dysmorphic disorder, which is concern with one's perceived physical faults, have all been connected to self-criticism (Moroz, 2015).

Relationship with others. Another common occurrence among self-critical individuals is projection. Self-criticism leads to projection of negative beliefs onto others, which leads to the expectation of negative feedback or criticism from others (Toth, 2007).

As a result, this expectation may wreak havoc on interpersonal relationships. Internal criticism, as well as the expectation of outward criticism, can provide to feelings of isolation and separation. As a result, the person may withdraw from others (Mongrain, 2006).

Defending your views. Self-critical people have a hard time asserting their own wants and objectives, and they may be submissive in relationships. This is due to a fear of being criticized if one expresses one's own opinion. This type of connection emotionally drains the individual over time, affecting the partnership (Carver,2013).

Theoretical Background of Self-Criticism

Self-criticism can be explained in the light of theoretical perspectives in a followingway.

Psychoanalytic perspective. Sigmund Freud (1923) gave the concept of three types of human psyche, id, ego, and the Super ego. According to him id becomes active after the birth of an individual which is based on pleasure principle (requires fulfillment/gratification of all needs and wishes). However super-ego is based on ideal principle (follows societal norms and differentiating right or wrong). Ego is a part of human psyche which work on realistic principle (conflict between id and superego is resolved). Super-ego is critical and self-observant and always prefers the self towards ideal. These strong desires become reason to cause aggression towards ego. Self-critical super-ego may increase the vulnerability of stress and anxiety. Freud proposed that super-ego is internalized self-criticism. Likewise, self-criticism can lead to generalized depression (Lear, 2015)

According to Blatt (1974), self-criticism is rooted from the growing events which weaken the capability of independency owing to controlling physically, expecting higher output, and criticizing excessively. In children, this is identified as strict standards and fearing of losing and fear of rejection, these events collectively give birth to self-critical personality and lack of self-worth. This leads to confirmation of acceptance, restoring status and importance in others life.

In childhood, severe criticism may cause internalized tendencies to blame one-self and to surrender one's own self –critical attacks (Gilbert et al., 2004). In 1917, Freud suggested depression is linked with self-blaming and self-devaluation which increases due to attack of superego on the ego and works to protect individual from anger. Self-criticism is childhood is a good forecaster of later adjustment (Zuroff et al., 1994). and related with depression and poor relationships (Zuroff et al., 1999). Additionally, Hartlage, Harduino and Alloy (1998), proposed the self-criticism in personality canbe

predicted as a depression marker. Another study found that the link between childhood verbal abuse from parents and depression is mediated by late adolescent self-criticism (Compas et al., 2010). It is obvious from the previous content that depression and self-criticism have a direct relationship; on the other hand, self-silencing has also been shown to play an essential part in depression and self-criticism, which harms an individual's self-esteem and identity (Rajabi et al.,2015).

Self-Concept

Self-concept and self-identity are an individual's comprehension and perseverance regarding his or her own life. The set of characteristics, talents, actions, feelings, and beliefs that people think distinguishes them from others is referred to as their self-concept. A person's self-concept extends beyond the basicobject defined by their skin. It's a psychological structure that establishes the distinction between "me" and "not me." From early development to maturity, these disparities emerge gradually and evolve over time. As a result, as youngsters get older, their perceptions of themselves become more diverse and sophisticated (Kostelink, Whiren, Soduman, Stern, & Gregory, 2002).

The phrase self-concept suggests to one's thoughts and perspectives on oneself. The most basic definition is all the conceivable responses to the inquiry, "Who am I?" According to Hamachek (1992), self-concept refers to a collection of beliefs about the kind of person we are, as well as a collection of thoughts and attitudes regarding one's own mentalimage.

According to Mead (2014), self-concept emerges directly from others' conduct toward the individual and indirectly from the individual's physical and mental characteristics. Rosenberg (1965) defines self-concept as a person's entire combination of attitudes, views, and cognitions about himself.Rogers (1961) describes self-concept as a structured configuration of self-perceptions pertaining to one's awareness, qualities, and skills, as well as the self's percepts and concepts in connection to others and the atmosphere. Rogers was optimistic about human potential and believed that the quest for one's own identity is a lifelong endeavor. Jung (1959) defined self as an action that strives for oneness, harmony, and depends on the precision of one's abilityawareness.

Components of Self-Concept

According to Carl Rogers, self-concept consists of three elements: self-image, self-esteem, and the ideal self. The self-concept is active, dynamic, and adaptable. Social events, as well as a personal desire to understand more about oneself, may have an impact. Carl Rogers, one of the founders of humanistic psychology, claimed that the self-concept contains three parts.

Self-image. Self-image refers to how we perceive ourselves. Our self-image is influenced by our physical characteristics (e.g., brown hair, blue eyes, tall), our social roles (e.g., wife, brother, gardener), and our personality attributes (e.g., wife, brother, gardener) (e.g., outgoing, serious, kind). Self-perception may not always correlate to reality. Some persons have a distorted perception of one or more of their traits. These inflated perceptions can be favorable or negative, and a person may project a more positive image of certain aspects of himself while projecting a negative image of others (Hawley, 2010).

Self-esteem. Self-esteem refers to the value we place on ourselves. Our individual levels of self-esteem are determined by how we assess ourselves. These evaluations consider both our own personal comparisons to others and how others react to us (Gilbert, 2010).

When we compare ourselves to others and learn that we are better at something than they are and/or that others enjoy what we do, our self-esteem grows in that area. Our self-esteem plummets when we compare ourselves to others and learn that we aren't as successful in each area, and/or when people react negatively to what we do. We can have high self-esteem in certain areas ("I am a great student") while having poor self-esteem in others ("I am a terrible student"), ("I am notwell-liked").

Ideal self. The version of ourselves that we aspire to be is our ideal self.   It's usual to have a misalignment between one's self-image and one's ideal self. This disparity can be detrimental to one's self-esteem (Ganellen,2009).

According to Rogers, self-image and ideal self might be congruent or incongruent (2016). When the self-image and ideal self are in sync, there is a significant level of overlap. While perfect congruence is difficult, if not impossible,

gaining congruence will allow you to reach your full potential. Inconsistency between one's ideal self and one's self-image shows a gap between oneself and one's experiences, leading to mental confusion (or cognitive dissonance) that obstructs self-actualization.

Theoretical Background of Self-Concept

A theoretical explication of the nature and development of self-concept has taken a variety of forms. When the study of self was explored via introspection, James (1980) accorded this issue a prominent place early in the history of American psychology (Atkinson, 1930).

Most psychological viewpoints define self-concept in terms of self, as self remains the central concern in psychological paradigm. The importance of self-concept was documented in almost all the theories. Self is defined as the element of a person that performs psychic, mental, or psychological acts; and as the structure of human behavior focused on a complex object known as "the me." Self-as-subject, or how the individual sees himself, self-as-object, or how others view the person, and self-as-person, or doing: manipulating, seeing, and thinking are all possible activities.

Self-concept may or may not be a close representation of reality, and self-concepts are always changing, especially throughout childhood, when they are undergoing the most change. Identity is developed by interaction with others, according to self-concept theories. The social process of interacting within a community is emphasized in pragmatic theories. A dramatist's view of self-shows how a person's relational perspective of self develops as they engage in diverse relationalcommunities.

Psychoanalytic view. Freud (1926) saw personality as a combination of mental and instinctive dynamics. In the early 1930s, he presented structural theories. The conscious, preconscious, and unconscious mental systems were proposed in his early hypothesis. According to Freud's structural hypothesis, mental processes are arranged according to their functions. He investigated the inner relationships between the origin id, the ego, and the super ego. The id is described as a "dark, inaccessible portionofone'spersonality."Theselfasdynamicagencyoregoisthe'coreofthe

being.' Self-perception is the most important role of the ego, and one that the id overlooks.

According to Adler (1930), everyone is a unique individual who thinks, feels, speaks, and acts in their own way. Even if two people do the identical things, their 'creative selves' will be different. Environment and heredity were other major factors for Adler. The creative power is a movement that combines intrinsic potentialities and contextual stimuli to overcome hurdles. The child is born with a creative ego that is unrestricted. It's a subjective, dynamic, united, personal, and one-of-a-kind way of living. Furthermore, because it makes use of the individual's heredity and environment, the creative self is the most important predictor of personality.

Jung (1933) was also one of the first to formulate the concept of a "self" that actively seeks oneness. According to Jung (1959), the ego functions as a motivational force that is hidden from origin but emerges in middle stage. One seeks to realize oneself, which is contingent on one's ability to accurately perceive one's skills. Self-concept is defined by Erikson (1958) as a person's conscious, cognitive, and judgement of their personal opinions and beliefs about themselves. It's been dubbed the "self-hypothesized identity" of an individual. He suggests to it as the person's 'ego identity,' or their self-perceived, constant individuality. It starts with an understanding of one's originality, that each person is special and distinct from others (Erikson, 1959).

Sociological perspective. Cooley (1961) was one of the first social theorists to address the social paradigm's concept of "self." The social milieu in which a person grows up, according to Cooley, has a considerable impact on how that person views himself. Depending on one's point of view, Cooley's theory argues the self is primarily concerned with how the self grows because of interpersonal engagement. The concept of 'the looking glass self' was proposedhere.

Relationship Among Self-Criticism, Social Comparison and Self Concept

Numerous studies provide indirect evidence of possible relationship among study constructs. Details of relative literature are given below.

Self-criticism and social comparison. Given the growing body of research demonstrating the distinction between self-criticism and social comparison, the two processes interact, with one reducing the other's link with mental health outcomes. According to Heine, Lehman, Markus, and Kitayama, self-criticism is not a psychological problem for people who live in interdependent and collectivist cultures (1999). While some persons have a larger amount of self-criticism than others, they do not necessarily have a lesser level ofself-compassion.

Individuals in Japan's East Asian culture, according to Kitayama and Karasawa (1997), tend to express good thoughts about oneself while being self-critical. Studies employing Western samples have yielded similar findings (Brenner et al., 2017; López et al., 2015). Self-criticism is not a psychological problem for people who live in interdependent and collectivist cultures, according to Heine, Lehman, Markus, and Kitayama (1999). While some people have more self- criticism than others, this does not necessarily mean they have less self-compassion. (Heath, Brenner, Lannin, & Vogel, 2018). The effect of self-reassurance in modulating the link between self-criticism and psychopathology symptoms, on the other hand, has never beeninvestigated.

This belief is shared by compassion-focused treatments including compassion-focused therapy. Compassion-focused therapies are designed specifically to assist clients who struggle with self-criticism (Gilbert, 2014; Kirby & Gilbert, 2017). According to Gilbert's theory of social mentality and compassion, positive mental health characteristics (such as affiliative, compassion-oriented connections with we and others, and soothing positive affect) are important (Gilbert, 2017), defend against negative mental health factors (both outwardly – traumatic events and poor relationships with others – and inwardly – self-criticism) by serving as resilience resources. We hypothesized that self-criticism would be linked to depressive symptoms, but that this link would be less, or even non-existent as self-reassurance abilities increased, therefore we looked at the moderating effect of self-reassurance in this study.

Self-criticism and self-concept. Given that self-criticism and self-concept are distinct constructs (e.g., Brenner et al., 2017), it would be beneficial to investigate the relative contributions of these variables to perceived health. It's also vital to see if the

effects of self-criticism and self-concept on perceived health vary by cultural group. According to empirical evidence, most people have exorbitantly positive ideas of them and attempt to maintain these beliefs through various self-improvement tactics (Taylor & Brown, 1988). Not all cultures, however, foster self-improvement (Heine &Hamamura, 2007; Kitayama et al., 1997).

East Asians were less expected than Westerners to self-improve or engage in self-fulfilling bias, according to a meta-analysis (Heine &Hamamura, 2007). Self-improvement and self-criticism are valued more than self-enhancement in East Asian societies (e.g., Hamamura& Heine, 2008; Heine &Hamamura, 2007; Kitayama et al., 1997). While in Western cultures, self-criticism is seen as a symptom of low self-esteem or self-deprecation, it fulfils adaptive roles (e.g., self-improvement) for Asian Americans and is not viewed negatively in East Asian cultures (see Kitayama et al., 1997). East Asians, according to Heine and Hamamura (2007), believe that their flaws may be improved, hence they do not feel intimidated when they recognize them. As a result, the meaning of self-criticism as well as its health implications may differ betweencultures.

Furthermore, because of Given the contradictory and dialectical nature of the East Asian self-concept (Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2004; Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, et al., 2010), self-criticism (self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification) may give rise to self-compassion (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) and thus mitigate the effects of self-criticism (self-judgment, isolation, and as a result, it's probable that while self-criticism isn't linked to It is linked to poor health among Asian Americans, European Americans, and Hispanic/Latinx people. As a result, more research into the role of culture in detecting these psychological aspects is required.

Social-comparison and self-concept. Social comparison can have several emotional consequences depending on our self-concept. Whether they use upward or downward comparison, people with a high and stable self-concept typically experience positive feelings because of social comparison (Buunk, Collins, Taylor, Van Yperen, &Dakof, 1990). In persons with a low and unstable self-concept, upward comparison, on the other hand, may elicit negative sensations and further erode self-esteem (Buunk& Gibbons, 2006; Marsh & Parker, 1984; Morse &Gergen,

1970; Wheeler & Miyake, 1992). As a result, people with low self-esteem frequently participate in downward comparison, which improves their mood while simultaneously increasing their self-esteem and success expectations (Aspinwall&Taylor, 1993).

According to social comparison theory, we compare ourselves to others to satisfy a basic human drive for self-evaluation (Festinger, 1954). According to prior study, the three main motivations for engaging in social comparison are self-evaluation, self-improvement, and self-enhancement (e.g., Taylor, Wayment, & Carrillo, 1996; Wood, 1989). The reason for engaging in social comparison determines the comparison goal, to gain a self-evaluation, we compare ourselves to people who are like us in terms of abilities and opinions (similar comparison). For self-improvement, we compare ourselves to those who are more successful than us (upward comparison), and for self-enhancement, we compare ourselves to people who are less successful than us (downward comparison)(downward comparison; Wills,1981; Wood,1989).

Rationale

In Pakistan there is deficit for study in the context of self-criticism, social comparison, and self-concept. There are many researches on self-criticism but lack of studies to determine role of social comparison in self-concept. The persistence of the current study is to find out the character of self-criticism and social comparison in self-concept among university students. The study intends to provide deeper understanding in reference to the role of self-concept to explain social comparison that support one accomplish well in the family role and to copeself-criticism.

There are good theoretic and pragmatic grounds to investigate the influence of individual conflicts factors on social comparison behavior, such as self-criticism. Self-critical people have thoughts of inadequacy, weakness, and severe self-criticism. They are thought to have a long-term dread of rejection and criticism from others, as well as a worry of missing the approval or acknowledgement of important people in their lives (Blatt et al., 1982, Blatt and Schichman, 1983). Self-criticism is one of a group of temperament traits that have been associated to depressed cognitions (Blatt et al., 1982,NietzelandHarris,1990,ZuroffandMongrain,1987).(AhrensandAlloy 1997, Alloy et al., 1987, Swallow and Kuiper, 1993, Weary et al., 1987). Swallow and Kuiper (1992) found that mildly depressed people were more likely than non- depressed people to participate in social comparison, but only when they thought they had performed poorly. The importance of person and circumstance characteristics in monitoring social comparison behavior has been proven in much of the existing work on social comparison research. However, there are a few difficulties that haven't been addressed in this research and that the current experiment was created to address.

Self-comparison, unlike self-concept, is not based on self-worth appraisals (Neff, 2003), and, unlike self-esteem, does not have short- or long-term negative costs or repercussions, but has consistently been related with favorable psychological health results (e.g., MacBeth&Gumley, 2012; Neff et al., 2018). Self-compassion was found to be adversely connected with fear of unfavorable assessment, a crucial cognitive element in SAD, in studies of people with social anxiety disorders.(Werneret al.,2012).

Sample of university students taken as they face a lot of difficulties due to social comparison when they get exposure at expanded level in university while, having different socio-economic status and backgrounds. Based on social comparison, every individual builds up its own self-concept which leads to self-critici

METHOD

Chapter 2

Method

Present research was aimed to explore role of self-criticism and social comparison on self-concept among university students. There were some of the objectives of the study which are as follows.

Objectives

1. To study the association among self-criticism, social comparison, and self-concept among universitystudents.

2. To determine the role of various demographics (gender, age, education, family system, parental marital status) in relative to studyvariables.

Hypotheses

To justify the objectives of the present research following hypotheses were expressed:

1. Self-Criticism will be negatively correlated to social comparison among universitystudents.

2. Self-Criticism will be negatively correlated to self-concept among university students.

3. Social Comparison will be positively correlated to self-concept among universitystudents.

4. Female students will be inclined to express more social comparison and superior self-concept as compared to malestudents.

5. Post-graduate students will exhibit more social comparison and superior self-concept as compared to the graduatestudents.

6. Students enrolled in private institutes will experience more social comparison and superior self-concept and less self-criticism as compared to the students enrolled in governmentinstitutes.

7. Students enrolled in private institutes will experience less self-criticism as compared to the students enrolled in governmentinstitutes.

8. Respondents whose parents are living together tend to reflect more social comparison and self-concept and less self-criticism as compared to the respondents who living alone or with singleparent.

Operational Definition of Variables

Following are the operational and conceptual definitions of study variables.

Social comparison. The concept of social comparison is that people learn about their own attitudes, beliefs, and talents by comparing themselves to others (Aronson, Wilson, &Akert, 2010). In the present study, social comparison was operational with Social Comparison Scale (Allan &Gillbert, 1995) and high score attained on this scale indicate higher level of feelings of superiority.

Self-criticism. According to Naragon-Gainey and Watson (2012), when expectations are not reached, self-criticism is characterized as the inclination to engage in negative self-evaluation, resulting in emotions of worthlessness, failure, and guilt. It was once thought to be especially important in the genesis of depression. In the present study, self-criticism was operationalized with McGill Self-Criticism Scale (Santor, Zuroff& Fielding, 1997) where high score indicates high level of self-criticism and viceversa.

Self-concept. Baumiester (1992) defines self-concept as the belief one has about himself. It also includes the personal attributes and abilities and their perception and evaluation. In the present study, self-concept was assessed by Six Factor Self-Concept Scale (Stake, 1994) and high score indicate higher level of self-concept.

Sample

For main study, sample included300 university students, including male ($n =$ 150) and female ($n =$ 150) students. The age range of the sample was from 19-24 years. The data was collected from the different public and private universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Convenient sampling technique was used. For demographic variables, frequencies and percentages are given in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Details of the sample (N=300)

Demographic Variables	*F*	*%*
Gender		
Male	153	51.0%
Female	147	49.0%
Education		
Graduate	225	75.0%
Post-Graduate	75	25.0%
Type of Institute		
Government	215	71.6%
Private	85	28.4%
Type of Family System		
Nuclear	129	43.0%
Joint	171	57.0%
Parental Education		
Graduation	225	75.0%
Post-Graduation	75	13%
Parental Status		
Deceased	250	83.3%
Alive	50	16.7%

Table 1 embodies the distribution of the sample based on gender, education, type of school, type of family, grade, and parental education as of its demographic representation.

Instruments

Following instruments were used.

Social Comparison Scale. Social Comparison Scale was developed by Allan and Gillbert (1995). It has 10 items and there were no subscales. Responses were to be rated on 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *Superior* (5) to *Inferior* (1). Possible score range on Social Comparison Scale was 10-50. High scores on the scale indicate higher level of feelings of superiority, whereas low scores indicate high level of feelings of inferiority. The Cronbach alpha for the total scale was reported as .88 (Allan &Gillbert,1995).

McGill Self-criticism Scale. This scale is short form of McGill version of the Depressive Experience Questionnaire (McGill DEQ) (Santor, Zuroff, Fielding, 1997). The original scale of McGill DEQ consists of 48 items that has two subscales including Self-criticism and Dependency (Desmet et al., 2007). However, in current research, interest was only in measuring self-criticism only. Therefore, short form of the scale consisting of 30 items was used. These elements are rated on seven Likert type scale ranging from 1(Strongly Disagree) to 7(Strongly agree). Item no 1, 2, 10, 11, 15, 22, 26, and 27 are reverse coded items. The author reported that the reliability of the scale is .71 (Santor et al., 1997).

Six Factor Self-Concept Scale (SFSCS). The Self-Concept Scale (SFSCS; Stake, 1994) is used to assess self-concept. The scale has 36 items that are both positively and negatively worded. Response set is 7-point Likert-type format with 1 Never or almost never true of you) to 7 Always or almost always true of you. Likeability, Morality, Task Accomplishment, Giftedness, Power, and Vulnerability are the subscales of SFSCS.In terms of scoring guidelines, Stake (1994) proposed calculatingacompositeself-conceptscorebyaddingthescoresfromallfivepositive

subscales and subtracting the score from the Vulnerability subscale. The total of item ratings is used to calculate the subscales scores.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administrated to the university students who are under the age of 24. Participants' informed consent was obtained before to the presentation of the informed questionnaires. After obtaining authorization from the concerned authors, they were approached individually. Students were asked to answer the questionnaires after being fully instructed on the study's goal and nature. The members were given guidelines, both verbally and in writing, for them to react appropriately. The researcher responded to the questions and concerns. Participants were further informed that their information would be kept strictly confidential and utilized solely for the purposes of the study. The students were requested to respond each item honestly and not to skip any item. Participants were assured that they can withdraw from the study anytime and at any stage. At the end participants were thanked for the cooperation. Data was collected in their spare time, and this time was chosen as per the feasibility of subjects to get genuine. Later, they were thanked for their time and the cooperation that they had showed towards the study. After the data collection procedure, analysis was performed with different statisticalprocedures.

RESULTS

Chapter 3

Results

This section covers the outcomes of the study on the role of social comparison due to self-concept and self-criticism among university students. This study is based on empirical data, so the results have been presented in the form of tables given below. The statistical analysis consists of descriptive and inferential statistics while in descriptive statistics includes means, standard deviation, skewness, range, and Cronbach's α whereas in inferential statistics Pearson product moment correlation, regression, *t* test was included. Furthermore, t-test is computed to calculate the mean differences among gender, grades, family system, type of institute, and parental education.

Reliability Estimates and Descriptive Statistics of Measures

To see the descriptive and psychometric properties of alpha reliability coefficients, mean standard deviation, range, skewness and kurtosis of social comparison, self-concept, and self-criticism.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Coefficients of Scales (N = 300)

Scales	k	α	M	SD	Skew	Kurt	Range	
							Potential	Actual
SC	10	.90	22.18	5.16	.25	.04	10-50	12-38
SM	30	.74	144.59	6.24	.27	-.50	30-210	132-161
SF	36	.52	71.53	12.98	.18	-1.20	36-252	50-98
like	6	.90	11.47	2.55	.15	-.79	6-42	7-17
mor	6	.90	13.47	2.88	.25	-.76	6-42	8-19
task	6	.90	11.62	2.45	.24	-.71	6-42	7-17
gift	6	.90	11.73	2.56	.35	-.78	6-42	7-17
pow	6	.90	11.38	2.34	.09	-.79	6-42	7-16
vul	6	.90	11.74	2.80	.05	-1.04	6-42	6-17

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism;SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

The Table 2 shows descriptive statistics of the scales. Results showed that alpha measures of internal consistency that is alpha co-efficient of all scales fall in the range of .80 to .85. All the values were above .70. The values of skewness and kurtosis fall in range.

Table 3

Correlation Matrix for all Study Variables (N = 300)

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	**SC**	-	-.10	.54**	.38**	.36**	.47**	.44**	.41**	.52**	-.00	.19*	.01	.00	-.03	-.02	-.00	.03	.03
2	**SM**		-	-.25**	-.32**	-.12*	-.12	-.19**	-.12*	-.15*	.01	-.03	-.03	.09	-.01	.00	-.06	-.04	.07
3	**SF**			-	.84**	.86**	.78**	.83**	.79**	.78**	.02	.03	-.02	-.11	.01	-.09	.00	.02	-.01
4	Like				-	.71**	.52**	.59**	.65**	.59**	-.00	.03	-.04	-.14*	.01	-.00	-.00	.03	-.04
5	Mor					-	.59**	.67**	.66**	.58**	.05	.01	-.06	-.05	.00	-.14*	-.03	.05	-.01
6	Task						-	.68**	.54**	.47**	.07	.07	-.03	-.09	.05	-.08	.02	.04	.01
7	Gift							-	.58**	.60**	.06	.01	.02	-.13*	.01	-.07	.01	-.00	-.05
8	Pow								-	.58**	.04	.02	-.07	-.04	.00	.00	-.01	.00	.02
9	Vul									-	-.05	.00	.07	-.12*	-.03	-.12*	.04	-.01	-.01
10	Gender										-	.06	.10	.16**	-.09	-.00	.06	.13*	-.08
11	Edu											-	-.01	.27**	.04	.14*	.09	.06	.15*
12	Univ												-	-.03	.00	-.00	-.04	-.10	-.02
13	FS													-	-.01	.05	.04	.11	.04
14	PM														-	.06	.18**	-.11	.04
15	PF															-	.29**	.14*	.18**
16	PMS																-	-.03	.19**
17	PE																	-	-.16**
18	FE																		-

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism; SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

Table 3 shows results of Pearson Product Moment correlation implying the direction and strength of relationship. It has been noticed that social comparison is positively associated with self-criticism and self-concept among the students at university. In addition, results also shows that self-criticism is negatively associated with self-concept. Findings presented in Table 3 also provide evidence of self-concept is negatively associated to self-criticism.

Table 4

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of Predictors of Positive and Negative Coping Styles (N = 300)

| | | | Self-Concept | |
| | | | Model 2 95%CI | |
	Model 1 β	Model 2 β	LL	UL
Constant			-7.73	76.48
Age	.14**	.14**	.29	2.07
Education	.06	-.02	-4.24	2.92
Family System	-.15**	-.13**	-6.14	-.55
SM		.54**	1.09	1.61
SC		-.04	-.29	.14
R^2	.03	.32		
ΔR^2		.29		
F	3.32**	25.49***		
ΔF				

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism; SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

Table 4 indicates Multiple Linear Regression. Results indicate that all the independent variables self-criticism predict self-concept which is dependent variable. It reveals that self-criticism and by combining the influence of social comparison, it will have an impact on self-concept among university students.

Table 5

Gender Differences across Study Variables (N = 300)

Variables	Male (*n*=153)		Female (*n*=147)		*T*	*p*	95%CI		*Cohen' d*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			*LL*	*UL*	
SC	22.36	4.82	25.94	5.57	.66	.51	-.83	1.66	-
SM	174.48	6.55	170.73	5.83	.32	.75	-1.75	1.26	-
SF	71.50	12.77	76.57	13.29	.03	.97	-3.19	3.07	-
Like	11.56	2.58	11.36	2.51	.664	.50	-.40	.82	-
Mor	13.26	2.79	13.75	2.98	-1.40	.16	-1.18	.19	-
Task	11.58	2.45	11.67	2,46	-.28	.78	-.67	.50	-
Gift	11.69	2.54	11.78	2.60	-.26	.79	-.70	.53	-
Pow	11.33	2.54	11.44	2.39	-.39	.79	-.67	.45	-
Vul	11.88	2.68	11.57	2.95	.90	.36	-.36	.98	-

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism; SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

Table 5 shows mean scores, deviation, and *t*-scores of male and female on social comparison, self-criticism, and self-concept. Results indicate that there are no significant differences between genders on study variables.

Table 6

Differences on Degree Program Along Study Variables (N = 300)

Variable	Graduate (*n*=225)		Post-graduate (*n*=75)		*t*	*p*	95%CI		*Cohen' d*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			*LL*	*UL*	
SC	21.85	5.01	23.74	5.61	2.2	.22	-3.50	-.27	-
SM	174.54	6.35	168.87	5.66	.56	.73	-2.31	1.63	-
SF	71.34	12.85	75.51	13.72	.33	.57	-5.28	2.92	-
Like	11.44	2.49	11.65	2.84	.53	.59	-1.02	.58	-
Mor	13.45	2.88	13.57	2.93	.25	.80	-1.03	.79	-
Task	11.54	2.39	12.00	2.73	1.15	.25	-1.22	.32	-
Gift	11.72	2.55	11.80	2.64	.21	.83	-.90	.72	-
Pow	11.36	2.29	11.48	2.58	.34	.73	-.87	.61	-
Vul	11.74	2.81	11.76	2.79	.05	.95	-.91	.86	-

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism; SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

Table 6 illustrates mean differences based on grade differences. There are no significant differences between degrees along study variables.

Table 7

Differences on Type of Family System Across Study Variables (N=300)

Variable	Joint (*n*=171) M	SD	Nuclear (*n*=129) M	SD	T	p	95%CI LL	UL	Cohen' d
SC	26.17	5.10	22.19	5.28	.03	.97	-1.29	1.25	-
SM	170.20	6.33	175.24	6.04	1.33	.18	-2.58	.49	-
SF	74.65	13.09	69.64	12.62	1.85	.06	-.18	6.20	-
Like	11.75	2.48	11.00	2.60	2.34	.02	.11	1.37	.07
Mor	13.60	2.90	13.26	2.86	.924	.35	-.37	1.04	-
Task	11.74	2.52	11.42	2.32	1.02	.30	-.28	.92	-
Gift	12.00	2.58	11.28	2.47	2.22	.02	.08	1.34	.11
Pow	11.46	2.38	11.23	2.27	.78	.43	-.34	.80	-
Vul	12.01	2.84	11.29	2.69	2.04	.04	.02	1.40	.01

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism; SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

Table 7 illustrates mean differences on family system of respondents. Results exhibits that significant differences exhibited between nuclear and joint system in relation to study variables. Findings suggested that students living in joint family system reflected higher inclinations of social comparison, and likeability, giftedness, and vulnerability subscales of self-concept than those living in nuclear family systems.

Table 8

Differences on Parental Status of the Respondents (N = 300)

Var.	Alive (n= 253) M	SD	Deceased (n = 77) M	SD	T	p	95% CI LL	UL	Cohen's d
SC	25.22	5.12	21.68	5.73	.43	.56	-1.88	2.85	.00
SM	140.93	5.49	145.00	4.84	.04	.96	-2.61	2.49	.16
SF	73.85	13.1	67.26	10.52	1.49	.13	-1.47	10.6	.23
Like	11.48	2.59	11.42	2.00	.10	.92	-1.13	1.26	.07
Mor	13.59	2.92	11.94	1.89	2.41	.01	.30	2.98	.01
Task	11.67	2.45	10.89	2.44	1.34	.17	-.36	1.93	.02
Gift	11.79	2.58	11.00	2.30	1.29	.19	-.41	1.99	.11
Pow	11.37	2.36	11.42	2.00	.07	.94	-1.14	1.66	.01
Vul	11.84	2.83	10.47	2.11	2.06	.04	.06	2.87	.01

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism; SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

Table 8 illustrates mean differences on parental status of respondents. Results showed that significant differences exhibited in relation to study variables. Findings suggested that students living with both of parents reflected higher inclinations of social comparison and self-concept than those living with single parents or without parents. On the other hand, students living with single parent or without parents expressed more self-criticism.

Table 9

Differences on Types of Institutes on Study Variables (N=300)

Variable	Govt. (n = 215)		Private (n = 85)		T	p	95%CI		Cohen' d
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*T*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*	*d*
SC	29.85	5.01	23.74	5.61	2.2	.22	-3.50	-.27	-
SM	167.54	6.35	158.87	5.66	.56	.73	-2.31	1.63	-
SF	79.34	12.85	75.51	13.72	.33	.57	-5.28	2.92	-
Like	11.44	2.49	11.65	2.84	.53	.59	-1.02	.58	-
Mor	13.45	2.88	13.57	2.93	.25	.80	-1.03	.79	-
Task	11.54	2.39	12.00	2.73	1.15	.25	-1.22	.32	-
Gift	11.72	2.55	11.80	2.64	.21	.83	-.90	.72	-
Pow	11.36	2.29	11.48	2.58	.34	.73	-.87	.61	-
Vul	11.74	2.81	11.76	2.79	.05	.95	-.91	.86	-

Note. SC= Social Comparison; SM= Self Criticism; SF=Self Concept; like=likability; mor=morality; task=task; gift=giftedness; pow=power; vul=vulnerability.

Table 9 shows differences based on type of institute across study variables. Results indicates that there are no significant differences between type of institute on study variables.

DISCUSSION

Chapter 4

Discussion

The current study was conducted to analyze the role of study variables among university students. Another objective was to examine the role of demographic variables (gender, age, type of institute, education of participants, parental marital status, family system and parental education). It is also planned to control the role of various demographics and their influence (gender, education, type of school, type of family, grade, parental education etc.) in relation to the role of self-concept and self-criticism due to social comparison among university students. The sample ($N = 300$) comprised of adults taken from different universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

The first hypothesis that social comparison is positively related to self-concept among university students is supported by the results obtained (Table 2). As pervious researches show the links between middle school kids' degrees of emotional expressiveness and their self-concept, gender, and school types during the 2016-2017 academic year, it was done on seventh-grade students from five middle schools in the province of Sivas (Turkey).

According to research conducted by a Portuguese university, the more students perceived themselves as efficient at understanding others in terms of feelings and emotions, entering new groups, and forming good relationships with other members, the more they express a positive representation of their actual and social self (Elvira, 2012). Furthermore, students with higher levels of emphatic and social self-efficacy had a more positive depiction of their actual and social selves than students with lower levels, which is consistent with Self-Discrepancy Theory's claim. The study confirmed the link between self-efficacy and self-representation in psychology university students and suggested that the impact of positive self-concepts on other psychological dimensions of human development (e.g., self-esteem, self-efficacy, prosocial, social adjustment, and so on) in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, as well as in various university curriculums, should be investigated further (Falanga, Carolis&Sagone,2012).

The second hypothesis that self-criticism is negatively associated to social comparison among university students is supported by the results in Table no. 3. It washypothesizedherethatcertainsocialcognitionsandperceptionscancauseand

maintain skewed self-perceptions. Social comparison processes have been highlighted as potentially essential linkages between self-evaluation and the social environment. Social comparisons can provide a lot of important information to a person, but they can also be quite harmful in some cases. This research done in University of Western Ontario Canada (Divya, 2002). As a result, numerous aspects of the social comparison process are examined to identify possible individual variations that could indicate a proclivity for persistent negative self-evaluation. Characteristics of the self that may make social comparisons a dangerous pastime are particularly important. The types of attributes or dimensions chosen for comparison, as well as the nature of the reference others chosen, are also considered. The preliminary evidence offered after that implies that depressed people, as well as people who are regarded to be at a higher risk of acquiring miserable symptoms, may differ along these social comparison dimensions. These disparities are also examined in terms of their possible involvement in perpetuating bad self-evaluations in people who are already depressed, as well as in causing negative self-evaluations in those who are thought to be at risk.

Finally, a cognitive exposure model of depression is offered to emphasize the potential importance of social comparison procedures in the etiology and protection of depression (Kuiper, 2002). Another study explored that the cognitive processing of print advertisements displaying exceptionally attractive female models by college women (Engeln, 2006). The researchers looked at the association between counter arguing (critical processing) and social comparison in reaction to these photographs and several body image-related characteristics. A total of 202 female undergraduates took part in the study. The study was split into two parts. In one phase, participants responded to three adverts from current women's magazines by writing their comments. Women completed a variety of self–report measures concentrating on body image, as well as several distracter measures, in the second phase. According to the findings, making negative social comparisons in response to such images leads to increased internalization of the thin ideal and worse contentment with one's own appearance. Despite expectations that counter arguing would be protective, the desire to generate counterarguments in response to these images had nothing to do with dissatisfaction with appearance, internalization of the media ideal, or value of appearance (Maddoxin,2006).

Limitations and Suggestions

The current study has various limitations that should be considered in future research on the same variables, as well as recommendations for closing the existing gaps in future investigations. The study's main flaw is the lesser representation of the population and the limited responses, which are due to the quantitative study methodology and the covid-19 scenario. Only a small percentage of the population has been picked out for special attention. To have a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, the study should involve a large sample size. If the sample size is expanded, there is a better probability of getting more reliable results. Furthermore, only adults were included in this investigation. If these characteristics are explored in teenagers, we can get more interesting results. The age and educational levels of the participants were relatively similar.

Implications

The findings highlight the relevance of self-concept and its role in personality factors. Moreover these findings will raise awareness among people about negative effects of self criticism and social comparison. This study can provide exploratory data for further studies.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that self-criticism and social comparison has an impact on one's self-concept. It was discovered that self-concept and social comparison have a strong link. Finding also revealed that self-criticism and social comparison predicts self-concept which is dependent variable. Furthermore students living in joint family system reflected higher inclinations of social comparison, and likeability, giftedness, and vulnerability subscales of self-concept than those living in nuclear family systems. Finding did not show any gender differences when respondent score were compared. Finding also revealed that there are no significant differences between types of institute on study variab

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APPENDICES

Informed Consent

I am Affaf Ahmed, student of M.Sc at National Institute of Psychology, Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad. I am conducting a research to explore the role of social anxiety. As per research, I need to collect data from people in the relevant field, so I would request you to participate in it. It will take 5-10 minutes of your precious time. You are requested to read each statement carefully and answer it as genuinely as possible. Your response will help us in understanding the phenomenon and lead to betterment of the student in the future.

I assure that all the information will be kept confidential and will be used for research purpose only. You have all the right to discontinue participation at any point without penalty and prejudice.

Please sign blow if you read and agreed to the aforementioned items.

Regards   _____

AffafAhmed   Sign. OfParticipant

M.Sc (IV)

National Institute of Psychology

Quaid-I-Azam University, Islamabad

Demographic Information Form

Please provide the following information

Age:_____(ApproximateYears)

Gender: Man_____Woman _____

Education: Graduation   PostGraduation

Title ofCollege\University:_____

FamilySystem: Joint_____Nuclear _____

Number ofSiblings: _____

Birth Order (From theEldest):   _____

FamilyIncome: _____(Approximate amount)

ParentalStatus:

Mother   Alive_____Deceased _____

Father   Alive_____Deceased_____

ParentalMaritalStatus: Livingtogether   Separated\Divorced

MotherEducation: _____

FatherEducation: _____

Scale 1

Social comparison

Please comment on the following statement by putting tick mark on the appropriate option that mostly represents your expectations and perceptions. There are no right or wrong answers, so don't spend a lot of time on any one item. Be sure not to miss any items.

S.NO	Statements	Rating continuum					Statements
1.	Inferior	1	2	3	4	5	Superior
2.	Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	Most Competent
3.	Unlikeable	1	2	3	4	5	Most Likeable
4.	Left Out	1	2	3	4	5	Accepted
5.	Different	1	2	3	4	5	Same
6.	Untalented	1	2	3	4	5	Most Talented
7.	Weaker	1	2	3	4	5	Stronger
8.	Unconfident	1	2	3	4	5	Most Confident
9.	Undesirable	1	2	3	4	5	Most Desirable
10.	An Outsider	1	2	3	4	5	An Insider

Scale 2

McGill Self-criticism Scale

Instructions: listed below are a number of statements concerning personal characteristics and traits. Read each item and decide whether you agr4ee or disagree and to what extent. If you strongly agree, circle 7; if you strongly disagree, circle 1; the midpoint if you are neutral or undecided, is 4.

S.N	Statement	1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. To some extent Disagree	4. undecided	5. To some extent agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
1	I tend to be satisfied with my current plans and goals rather than striving for higher goals.							
	When I am closely involved with someone, I never feel jealous.							
	I often find that I don't live up to my own standards or ideas.							
	If I fail to live up to expectations, I feel unworthy.							
	Many times I feel helpless.							
	There is a considerable difference between how I am now and how I would like to be.							
	I enjoy sharp competition with others.							
	There are times when I feel "empty" inside.							

I tend not to be satisfied with what I have.							
I would feel like I'd be losing an important part of myself if I lost a very close friend.							
People will accept me no matter how many mistakes I have made.							
I am not very concerned with how other people respond to me.							
Often I feel I have disappointed others.							
If someone makes me angry, I let him (her) know how I feel.							
I constantly try, and very often go out of my way, to please or help people I am close to.							
I never really feel secure in a close relationship.							
The way I feel about myself frequently varies: there are times when I feel extremely good about myself and other times when I see only the bad in me and feellike a total failure.							
Even if the person is closest to me were to leave, I							

	could still 'go bit alone'.						
	One must continuously work to gain love from another person: that is, love has to be earned.						
	I often feel guilty.						
	I think of myself as a very complex person, one who has 'many sides'.						
	I can easily put my own feelings and problems aside, and devote my complete attention to the feelings and problems of someone else.						
	I have a difficult time accepting weaknesses in myself.						
	In my relationships with others, I am very concerned about what they can give to me.						
	Very frequently, my feelings toward someone close to me vary: there are times when I feel completely angry and other times when I feel all loving towards that person.						
	I grew up in an extremely close family.						

	I am very satisfied with myself and my accomplishments.						
	I tend to be very critical of myself.						
	Being alone doesn't bother me at all.						
	I very frequently compare myselfto standards orgoals.						

Scale 3

لوگوں کی خصوصیات پر مشتمل ایک فہرست نیچے دی گئی ہے۔ ہر خصوصیت انگ کے لئے اشارہ دیا کر کہ یہ خیال سے کہ سے قدر آپ کی ذیشخصیت کی وضاحت کرتا ہے۔ کسی بھی جواب کی نشاندہی کرنے سے پہلے اپنی زندگی کے ئے موجود تجربات، بشمول اپنے کام، خاندان اور اسکو۔ ور سماجی صورت حال کو مدنظر رکھیں.

نمبر شمار	بیانات	کبھی نہیں اور قریبا کبھی بھی آپ کے بارے میں درست نہیں ہے 1	عموما آپ کے بارے میں درست نہیں ہے 2	کبھی کبھار لیکن بہت کم آپ کے بارے میں درست ہے 3	بعض اوقات آپ کے بارے میں درست ہے 4	کثر آپ کے بارے میں درست ہے 5	عموما آپ کے بارے میں درست ہے 6	مکمل یا تقریبا آپ کے بارے میں درست ہے 7
1	میں اس ائنے پر لطف ہوتا ہے							
2	محنتی							
3	غالب ہونے والا							
4	آسانی سے متاثر ہوندے ہوالے والا/والی							
5	خدا داصلاحیت کا مالک							
6	وفادار							
7	مضبوط							
8	دوستی کرنے والا/والی							
9	مفید							
01	اعتماد کی کمی							
00	قانون کی پابندی کرنے والا/والی							
02	زور آور							
03	خاص صلاحیتوں کا مالک							
04	بہتے سے منصوبہ بندی کرنے والا/والی							
05	ملنسار							
06	آسانی سے کھینچ ہونے والا/والی							
07	ایک رہنما کی طرح جر ناؤ کرنے وال							
08	سچا							
09	اپنے بارے میں سوچنے والی/وال							
21	موثر طرز سے سے کام کرنے والی/وال							
20	وفادار							

								#
							جارحانہ/غصہ والا/والی	22
							جس پر آسانی سے بھروسہ کیا جا سکے	23
							ذہین اور چست	24
							گھبراہٹ میں غلطی کرنے والا/والی	25
							ایماندار	26
							کام وقت پر ختم کرنے والا/والی	27
							خوشگوار	28
							طاقتور	29
							تخلیق کار	31
							لوگوں کے دکھنے سے پریشان ہونے والا/والی	30
							قابلِ بھروسہ	32
							کام پر توجہ مرکوز کرنے والا/والی	33
							گرمجوش	34
							سخت جان	35
							پیدائشی وصالحیت کا حامل	36