

Original Research Article

The Importance of Self-esteem in Islam and Its Impact on Physical and Mental Health

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Abstract: Self-esteem and ego dignity are inner feelings, and its effects can apply specifically to individuals' external dimension. This study aims to review the importance of self-esteem in Islam and its impact on physical and mental health. The Methods were in this systematic review was done by searching in psychological and religious texts by using key words including confidence, self-esteem, and mental health in comprehensive reference databases such as Pub-med and religion databases. In Results Findings are classified and presented base on three pillars. Firstly, person's self- honor and dignity is determined by self-recognition and he finds value in both social and moral sanctities. In this context, he will just trust and rely on God, which results in more self-confidence. The second pillar is about seeking help from God, which leads to desirable effects on reducing depression and anxiety by empowering individuals' confidence. It can also decrease the consequences of depression such as suicide, addiction etc. Finally, it results in decreased occurrence and better control of physical disorders such as eating and digestive disorders, immune, intestinal, nervous, and skin diseases. In Conclusion the Self-cognition and God reliance can improve self-esteem and physical health while it decreases psychological disorders.

Keywords: Self-knowledge, Self-esteem, Mental health, Physical health

INTRODUCTION:

Self-concept and its role is the center of individuals' life. It reflects a person's sense of own value and the overall values a person meets by society. It is considered as the initial and basic human needs in all social classes concerned with various scientific and moral degrees. Self-esteem is the most effective agent in moderating psychosocial stresses, which is mostly based on factors including family relationships, social interactions, academic achievement, body image, and generally sense of self-worth. However, the importance of each factor is in accordance with individuals' difference and development. Self-esteem is a psychological phenomenon that decisively influence human cognitive and affective dimension. The power of decision-making, invention, innovation and creativity, psychological and mental health are directly in relationship with individual's self-esteem and self-worth [1-3]. Self-esteem is a positive feature of personality that obeys self-concept. Thus, positive self-concept along with successful function leads to self-esteem improvement. Self-concept is directly in relation with creativity, innovation, and mental health [4]. The

solid self-esteem involves an inner sense of self-empowerment, which leads to positive changes such as higher academic achievement and motivation, more effort for more success, self-confidence, ambition and the *sense* of permanent happiness and tendency to be healthy and in social interactions [5]. Health provision, mental calmness, as well as high self-esteem, can prevent much emotional and psychological turbulence during adolescence [6]. Self-esteem is of the principal agents in character development. Currently, many researchers, psychology, and educational scholars' have interested in self-esteem. According to Quranic teachings, the concept of confidence is consistent with relying on your natural talents, determination, abilities, as well as the care to self-potential, dignity, and independence along with trust in God and his help by cutting off hope and greed to others. This concept has is distinctively different from moral vices such as egotism, conceit, and pride. The moral virtues such as modesty and humility stemmed of our powerful self-confidence. There is a vast range of knowledge in Quranic teachings that results in people's self-esteem and its empowering [7]. Islamic point of View toward self-confidence is intensively important since Islam is the best training

and educational school to foster humans' value and noble. According to Islam, men must value themselves as they are placed upon other creatures, which carry divine trust to achieve self-esteem. According to Qur'an, self-confidence means to understand the dignity and worth of soul (the human particular feature) [8], which make them be preferred over other creatures. *The states of "khalifa of God" on earth,* "Prostrating Angels", "Education of Alasma (skies) "are just for human [9]. The discovery of this fact guide men to self-recognition, as well as boasts and trusts to him, and finally heads them to happiness and perfection. According to Quran in Surah Al-Munafiqun (the hypocrites) [11], "But the might belongs to Allah, and his messenger and the believers". These verses suggest the nature of self-esteem as a divine attribute, so those who are asset with self-esteem, represent or manifest one of divine traits. According to Quran in Surah Fatir (the angels) [11], "he who wants might, the might belongs to Allah altogether...." According to these verses, belief in God is the fundamental and basic requirements for achieving self-education, so there is no honor or esteem in non-divine affairs and programs. Self-esteem is discussed in the Hadith. According to Prophet, "You can ask others if you have any apply, but ask it with self-esteem" [12].

"The state of needless is not along with being wealthy; the needless indeed is self or soul needless" [13]. Since there is limited study in this regard, we aimed to search about the importance of self-esteem in Islam and its impacts on physical and psychological health.

METHODS:

This systematic review was done by searching in psychological and religious texts by using key words including confidence, self-esteem, dignity, sense of personal safety, mental health, factors affecting mental and physical health, anxiety and depression in comprehensive reference databases such as Pub-med and religion databases including Fatwa Islamicjurists and accountability to religious questions departments.

RESULTS:

We present our finding based on three pillars: the state of self-esteem in Islam, the effect of self-esteem on mental health, depression and anxiety, and finally, the relationship between religious attitude and physical health. Islam emphasizes human to self-cognition, and to determine their status in the universe. The purpose of this emphasize is to understand the high place they deserve. Quran also insists on self-discovering. However, "self "dose not refer to our identity (what is your name? What is your father's name? What year were you born? What country are you citizen of? Who is the person you establish your marriage with? How many children do you have?). It

refers to divine soul. Person's *self*- honor and dignity is determined by self-recognition and he finds value in both social and moral sanctities. The Quran mentions the preference of human beings over other creatures [14].

This question will arise whether self-confidence is (generally) compatible with the Quran teachings or not.

Words like Humanism, Rationalism, and Instrumental Reason has been raised in the western rationalism [15]. In above states, divine dignity of human is neglected while human desires will overweight God and his rights. The application of "self-confidence" as mentioned in western rationalism is intensively criticized in religious texts [16]. According to Tabatabai (RA) - the great interpreters of the Qur'an-in Al-Mizan: Virtue is what Allah determines. In Quran, trust in God and this honor to be his servant are as the real virtue. Quran says [17]: "Those to whom the people said: 'the people have gathered against you, therefore, fear them, ' but it increased them in belief and they said: 'Allah is sufficient for us. He is the best guardian.'" He also says [18]:« ... The power altogether belongs to Allah, and that Allah is firm in punishment". Also [19]"do not let their speech grieve you. All might belong to Allah. He is the hearing, the knowing."

In other words, "self-confidence" refers to the "trust in God" in Islam (trust into God-given ability, with no conflicts to trust in God). Human should never consider independent identity for themselves or rely on it before God, but should belong themselves to him and just trust and rely on him. That is why we have concepts including "trust in God," patience, perseverance, hope, dignity, self-determination, will, etc. or the negative teachings of religion such as humiliation and disgrace escape, inferiority, heart's desire to cruel, admission of wick, wicked, atheist etc. In this context, those who trust in God will deserve more self-confidence.

The impact of self-esteem on mental health (anxiety and depression)

Depression and anxiety can be noted as the stress related psychological symptoms or diseases. Stress, anxiety, and depression (as mental health factors) would interfere with public health and individual's role and responsibility in the future. Moreover, some of individuals' youth and educational related problems are rooted in stress and depression. However, mental health enables individuals to cope with the daily stress and cooperate with others as a part of society [21]. Meanwhile, high self-esteem (as one of main mental health determinant) was along with lower anxiety [22]. Social self-esteem (as an important component of social communication) is defined as a feeling of self-worth (positive-negative) within social groups, which represents or determines his status

in society [23]. The prevalence of social anxiety is more common among young people with low self-esteem since they underestimate themselves. Therefore, their self-perception affects their interactions with others [24]. Studies have indicated that religious attitude is negatively associated with depression, anxiety, aggression, and hypochondriasis. In fact, religion involves a comprehensive program for all human beings [25-27]. According to a study conducted in Iran, religious belief and asking for God's help can also be served as a coping mechanism that has a positive effect on reducing family depression and anxiety by empowering the self-confidence.

Reinforced beliefs can reduce the symptoms and complications of depression, such as suicide, drug addiction, delinquency, personality disorders, and sexual health [28]. In this regard, Rice also believes that having religious beliefs has a positive impact on mental health and self-worth. In addition, participating in religious and spiritual activities can lead to positive self-assessment. Thus, the spiritual characteristics can be much more effective in improving self-esteem rather than the physical properties [29]. Other studies in Australia [30] and the researches done by Adams [31] and Maxine [32] indicate the relationship between the religious values and belief in the Bible with self-esteem. According to our findings, we can state that religious beliefs play a determining role in mental health scales, which results in more health-related quality of life, reliance on God, and self-esteem [33].

The effect of self-esteem on physical health

Positive religious attitude and mental health results in decreased occurrence and better control of physical disorders such as eating and digestive disorders, immune, intestinal, nervous, and skin diseases [34]. Research shows that higher quality of life, as well as lower depression and anxiety, can increase the skills in coping with incurable physical illness [35]. Researchers have stated that psychological and physiological mechanisms are of the most important potential factors in spiritual health, which affect the prevention of diseases. Thus, spiritual leadership is an important agent in disease prevention [36]. According to a study, patients' referral to their faith community would increase their hope, which is effective in their recovery process [37]. Marks indicated the relationship between three-dimensional religious experience (religious practices, spiritual beliefs, and faith community) and the three dimensions of health (biological, psychological and social) [38].

Today, the World Health Organization's approach emphasizes the positive self-assessment process and its impact on relieving pain and mental health [39-40]. Researchers noted the positive effect of

mental imagery on depression, anxiety, and physical illness by triggering immune system. For example, in many Islamic prayers we call the God by words like "O most holy", "O most gracious and merciful" etc. by means of that we rely on a stronger supporter, so subtle difficulties can't anxious him [34].

CONCLUSION:

Islamic teachings and practical doctrines can facilitate "positive evaluation of oneself" in the context of individual, family, and community. Thus, satisfaction (as an important symbol of self-esteem) will rise too. Therefore, faith in God and faith in human dignity can help him to tolerate the difficulties and ultimately result in real bliss. The results of this attitude are effective on physical and mental health. It is recommended to design and offer an educational program suited for both graduate and even undergraduate curriculum (elementary, middle and secondary school) which emphasize on self-respect, besides the reverence to others and society as well as human resistance to environmental stress in accordance with their age.

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