



THE 12TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

New Trends in Psychology

**The Relationship between Self-Esteem and Social
Conformism at Roma People Teenagers**

Susanu Neaga¹

Abstract: Throughout this paper, I wanted to highlight that a very high or a very low self-esteem at Roma people teens may be the cause of a non-social conformism. The research sample was composed of a homogeneous group of subjects consisting of 40 teenagers, all students (boys) belonging to the same community. I have aimed to a group that comes from similar socio-economical and educational environment. The hypothesis hasn't been confirmed, which indicates that there may be other factors that could cause significant changes such as personality factors, educational level, representative models of ethnicity etc.

Keywords: self-esteem; social conformism; teenagers; Roma people; ethnicity

Self-esteem refers to one's confidence in his own ability to think and the ability to meet the challenges of human life; it's the confidence in the right and ability to be happy, to the feeling that we have the right to state our needs and wishes and to meet our values and enjoy the results of our efforts. (Albu, 2002)

Throughout time it has been established that self-esteem may vary depending on the circumstances and companions, so we can talk about several forms of self-esteem, which can have different values independent of each other.

A person may display a high self-esteem in his/her professional life and at the same time, a low self-esteem in his/her emotional life or vice versa. Self-esteem is linked with several features of the individual among which the most important are: creativity, rationality, ability to manage failures, changes and recognition of errors. Every individual chooses a personal lifestyle which would be influenced by the level of self-esteem of a certain important person of his life. According to Andre & Lelord (1999), there are three sides of an individual on which self esteem is based on and emerges from: *self-confidence, self-concept and self-love*.

- **self- confidence:** “means that one can see that he can manage daily challenges. It means to trust one's own ability to think, to learn, to choose, to decide, to adapt to changes. ... And it means that one knows that he desires to be happy. Having this basic trust is a matter of survival. Recognizing what feeds self-esteem and what damages it is one of the challenges to be faced with in order to have a lucid and conscious living. Because reality is sometimes different from what we believe in.” Nathaniel Branden (2008).

¹ Lecturer Professor Doctor

- **self-concept**: is understood as a synthesis of generalizations about oneself; the self-concept has a higher degree of generalization and abstraction, it is better organized and integrated into a coherent whole, faced with circumstances both of quality and flaws. - The self-concept aspires to integrate through special recognition of others, a difference of opinion of others towards oneself, and even tends to explain the qualities or defects, various events in different situations. Teenagers self-concept is based on perspective and future times.
- **Self- love**: loving yourself means acceptance, forgiveness and most of it, authenticity.

Social conformism has been defined by Hollander and Willis as a “behavior conducted with the intention of meeting the expectations of group norms as perceived by the individual.” Conformism is a group phenomenon encountered in daily life, very hard to put out and measured. In psycho-sociology, conformism is mainly focused on group pressures exerted on its members in order to respect the rules. Rarely, the group pressure is transmitted clearly to the individual, it exists and forces the individual to align to accepted group norms and behaviour.

The Objective and the Hypothesis of the Study

Objective: there is a relationship between self-esteem and social conformism to teenagers of Roma people.

Hypothesis: self-esteem is negatively correlated with social conformity, so that Roma teenagers bearing low or very high self-esteem, shall have a lower tendency to conformism.

The research sample: I have chosen 40 teenagers of Roma people, aged between 14-16 years, only boys, belonging to the same community. They have been informed about the study purpose and data privacy.

Research tools: Rosenberg self-esteem scale and social conformism questionnaire

The tools were applied pen/paper.

Working method: the subjects were invited into a classroom without disruptive factors; first, it was applied Rosenberg scale, then questionnaire on social conformism.

The experimental design of the study:

1. The independent variable: self-esteem at Roma people teenagers (boys);
2. Dependent variable: social conformity at Roma people teenagers.

Data interpretation:

In order to test the hypothesis that self-esteem is negatively correlated with social conformity at Roma people teenagers, so that they will have a low tendency towards social conformity, we have applied Spearman correlation test for nonparametric data.

Table 1. Spearman correlation: Self-esteem - Conformism

| Sperman's Self-esteem | rho | Corrlelation Coefficient | Self-esteem | Conformism |
|-----------------------|-----|------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| | | | 970 | - 151 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | - | .265 |
| | | N | 40 | 40 |
| | | Conformism Correlation Coefficient | -151 | 970 |
| | | Sig (2-tailed) | .265 | - |
| | | N | 40 | 40 |

Conclusion

From this study we have established that self-esteem does not correspond to the trend towards social conformism, so it isn't a direct indicator of this. There is an influence of some factors that could cause significant changes such as: personality factors, social context, family models, representative models of ethnicity, gender etc.

Having chosen an average age of 15 when subjects tend to be as nonconformist as possible and they do not agree with some rules or tend to disagree with them, and from the result of the study it was demonstrated that the hypothesis was not confirmed. The subjects are conformist, they accept majority decisions and maintain their status.

Bibliography

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***www.RJEAP.RO.

Questionnaire - Social conformism

| No | Question | Totally disagree | Partially disagree | Partially agree | Totally agree |
|------------|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | I agree with majority decision | | | | |
| 2. | I do whatever I'm being asked to | | | | |
| 3. | I generally do whatever I'm being asked to | | | | |
| 4. | I obey my parents and my family members | | | | |
| 5. | I accomplish the wishes of the group I belong to | | | | |
| 6. | If I see people in my community doing something, I'll do it as well | | | | |
| 7. | I equally break and obey rules | | | | |
| 8. | If I disagree with something and others don't, I give in for others | | | | |
| 9. | I accept the others after having exhausted all means of trying to show them my point of view | | | | |
| 10. | I'd rather avoid contradiction, even if I'm right | | | | |