**Review Article**

# DIVERSE INTERSECTIONS OF SELF-CONCEPT AND ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE: INTERCONNECTED OR DISCONNECTED SELF FROM REALITY DURING DIGITAL WORLD

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**Abstract**

The Novel COVID-19 has dramatically transformed the globe into an exponential digital world. Considering the unprecedented need for social distancing, the surge of digital communication has prevailed all around the sphere. The natures of relationships based on the dreamlike and illusory identities on digital communication apps are cultivating the diverse intersections of self-concept. The first section intends to deals with people awareness about their actual self-concept. The second section revolves around if they recognize their traits so to what extent they understand them. Furthermore, the third section states that self-concept doesn't merely represent the person's claim as me or mine but also demonstrates their self-evaluation based on their social experiences. The natures of relationships due to digital communication on social media applications are distorting the relationship-induced self-concept of adolescents. These variations in self-concept are promoting rapidly and people are finding refuge in alcohol consumption for temporary relief. Here the question arises does alcohol dependence leads to negative self-concept or negative self-concept escort to alcohol dependency. The literature depicts that alcohol dependency leads to poor self-concept among people. Hence, the current study findings contradict the literature and revealed that negative self-concept escort alcohol dependence. The America psychological association and ICD-10 must add the nature and treatment modality of cyber-disorders. The government and policymakers must formulate laws to reduce the ratio of cyber dependency. Furthermore, the researchers, psychologists and psychiatrists must practice advanced therapeutic intervention for the intervention and counselling of the patients. *ASEAN Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 24 (7) September, 2023; 1-5*

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## Introduction

The Novel COVID-19 has dramatically transformed the globe into an exponential digital world. Considering the unprecedented need for social distancing, the surge of digital communication has prevailed all around the sphere [1]. On digital platforms, people portray extraordinary lives through captivating pictures and enthralling status. The pursuits of dreamlike and illusory manifestation on the internet are increasing gradually and mounting the hallmark of antagonism among people [2]. The unfair comparison with the social media world to one's real life distorted the self-concept and led to other digital psychological disturbances [3]. In particular, the cultivation of negative self-concept is prevailing and led to alcohol dependency as people experience temporary relief from real-world stressors. According to a cross-sectional survey, the surge of alcohol consumption found to be higher during COVID-19 compared to pre-pandemic [4].

It is an acknowledged fact that alcohol consumption was pervasive all around the world before COVID-19. Mild to moderate consumption was common and used to consider least harmful for the physical as well as mental health. People used to consume alcohol for celebrations on different occasions. In contrast, people frequently devour alcohol to reduce their grief after facing failures. Literature suggests that the exceptional but consistent use of alcohol leads to alcohol dependency. However, an interesting question arsine doe's alcohol leads to mental health issues or mental health issues leads to alcohol dependency. The literature is enriched with the evidence-based studies that depicted that the life stressors and low coping skills to deals with the unfavourable situation often promote alcohol consumption behaviours [5]. Alcohol dependency further causes substantial

mental health issues. Excessive consumption found to be associated with high psychosis, delusions, hallucination, dementia and other psychological disturbance. The literature is enriched with the evidence-based studies that suggested the excessive use of alcohol consumption with severe mental health issues [6].

## Literature Review

However, according to some recent contradictory studies, negative self-concept found to be the most common predictor of alcohol dependency [7]. Previous studies have been carried out to investigate the impact of alcoholics on self-concept. While self-concept also leads to alcohol dependency is the most underrated area. Therefore the current study postulated how different section of self-concept led to alcohol dependency.

The first section intends to deals with people awareness about their actual self-concept. It is an interesting question do people identify their actual self or misinterpret their traits [8]. Furthermore, if they recognize their traits so to what extent they understand them. However, the second section elaborates do people have a persistent self-concept? Usually, people report a positive self-concept when encountering success and a negative self-concept when experiencing any negative emotions and failure [9]. In particular consistency in self-concept during COVID-19 is crucial to investigate. Furthermore, the third section states that self-concept doesn't merely represent the person's claim as me or mine but also demonstrates their social experiences. The natures of relationships due to digital communication on social media applications are distorting the relationship-induced self-concept of adolescents [10]. The detailed intersections of self-concept during COVID-19 are stated as under.

*Awareness for true self-concept and alcohol dependency*

The first section of self-concept during COVID-19 revolves around people's understanding of self. During COVID-19 the sense of self is deteriorating and people are going through identity crises. Self-concept is the mirror image of one's true characteristic [11]. How people report their attributes reflects their understanding of self. Do people know their actual self is very difficult to understand? The literature depicted that cognitive maturity is crucial to understand the true self [12]. However, people do not know

their attributes accurately. People often report unfamiliarity with how they are going to react in a particularly challenging situation. Sometimes they often state they are unaware of their true potential, either they can perform any task or not. During such weak phases, people often find refuge in alcohol consumption. Most of the time they presume their success, certainly, they either overestimate or underestimate their potential. They often believe external cues for identifying or reporting their potential. For example, if someone feels unsafe from COVID-19, so they would underestimate their potential to take precautions. In other situation, they might take it as a challenge to report high self-concept to achieve the herculean task. The lack of awareness often bounds people to adopt unhealthy ways to overcome stress. Unfortunately, the most convenient way found to be alcohol dependency [13].

*Fluctuations in self-concept*

The second section of self-concept represents the fluctuation in self-concept. The fluctuation inaccurate identification of self-concept often found to be interlinked with alcohol dependency. Self-concept is very crucial in all stages of human lives. Multiple scales have been developed and validated to investigate the nature and level of self-concept among people. The theoretical model of self-concept postulated that people either poses a positive self-concept or a negative one. However, an interesting question arises ''do people possess consistency in self-concept. It has been observed through previous studies that people manifest diverse level of self-concept at the same time. Unfortunately, they cannot depict the same level of self-concept throughout their lives. The fluctuation of self-concept observed to be based on their mood, temperaments and other environmental condition.

A person may manifest a high positive self-concept on minor successes, while a negative self-concept can be seen quite evident during trivial failures. The accessibility or inaccessibility for the true self is hard to achieve. Once individual access to one's the true self: it may lead towards a meaningful and healthy life. In multiple cross-sectional studies usually, self-concept has been measured once. It is quite unrealistic to label someone with a positive or negative self-concept based on a one-time investigation.

It is an acknowledged fact, a normal healthy human being cannot stay in the same mood for a

longer period. Rather depressive and manic phases are quite common in human's lives. Regrettably, the misbalance between self-concept phases often develops negative energy and people feel driven to consume alcohol. Diversity in human lives is very crucial, it is not only limited to the external world. Rather at the internal level, the significance of diverse mood pattern is significant. A person cannot stay happy for the entire life. Life is full of ups and downs. If a person won't experience both the dark and happy phase of life: The meaning of life would be lost for them. The pleasure on success or value of blessing would distort. Furthermore, previous researches reported that a happy mood, success and achievements are positively associated with a high self-concept.

In contrast, the negative mental states and failures motivate a person to evaluate his characteristic negatively. As a result, he might report a negative self-concept. Therefore, more longitudinal studies should be carried out to investigate the persistence in one's self-concept.

## Discussion

### *Relationship-induced self-concept*

The third side of self-concept in the digitally transformed world is relationship-induced self-concept. The relationship-induced self-concept is prevailing to an alarming extent; hence people need considerable attention from researchers and psychologists. However, the surge in relationship-induced self-concept was reported to be high before the pandemic period. Surprisingly, the ratio has increased after the pandemic as the world is transforming from a tradition to a digital one. In the era of COVID-19, the sudden change in sense of relationship-induced self can be explained in finding out the answer to three questions. What is changing (Self-concept), why it is changing (cognitive interdependence) and how to measure this change can provide what is relationship-induced self-concept in the ever-growing digital world. The literature provides a very interesting but alarming picture of the development of relationship-induced self-concept.

The first and foremost question is what is changing (self-concept). According to massive researches, when people form friendships or romantic relationships on social media, they experience a noticeable difference in their individuality. They experience new feelings, think differently, planning their future and feel a new and valuable sense of self. These new experiences and feelings cultivate the novel relationship-induced self-concept. Relationship-induced self-concept encompasses both the static and dynamic properties to evaluated personal characteristics and is cultivated on collective, personal and inter-personal levels. At the collectivistic level, self-concept refers to self-knowledge based on goals, motives and direction. Whereas, at the individual level, it signifies personality traits attributes and values. On the other hand the self-concept on an interpersonal level, an individual relates self and other social roles broadly. All three level of self-concept plays a crucial role in the development of relationship-induced self-concept. Furthermore, healthy relationships support and validate the self-concept of their partners. However, toxic relationships can alter the structure, size and diversity of self-concept as a result of self and others intertwined complexly. Surprisingly, the risk of alcohol dependency has been observed in both cases. In the moment of a healthy relationship, people celebrate their happiness and consume alcohol and gradually become dependent. Conversely, during the toxic relationship phase, people become dependent on alcoholism to avoid suffering.

Why self the concept is changing? It can be explained through cognitive interdependence theory. It postulated that in a relationship; before any commitment, individuals approach their partners with a focus on maximizing their outcomes. Surprisingly on social media they can portray their image according to their mindset and fulfil the goal of maximizing their worth. If both the partners have the same goals which are mutually potentially beneficial, as a result, it facilitates the correspondence of outcomes. Contrary, if the goals of the partners are not aligning the dilemma of non-correspondence of outcome occurs. As the digital world is counterfeit, therefore when the partner feels threaten to lose the high self-image as a result they start experiencing poor self-concept and indulge in alcohol-dependent behaviour.

The relationship induced self-concept in the digital world disconnected people from reality. People prefer to spend more time in their virtual digital world to maximizing their self-concept. The prolonged use of digital communication or dependency on cyber-relationship may distort their quality of life and mental health. In particular, high expectation from partners with digital esteemed self-concept leads to a world of technological delusions, cyber-paranoia and computer anxiety. The adjustment ratio in the

real world sounds difficult in the exponentially developed digital world. However, the rapidly transformed world is altering the structure of the mind. The reconstruction of the mind is purely based on the digital world.

Here the question arises, how to control the rapidly increasing digital communication and digital dependency in the era of COVID-19 and its adverse consequences on self-concept and alcohol dependence. Hence, the duration of quarantine is going to prevail for the unknown period. The footprints of digital communication are expected even in COVID-19 free life. The people would develop the digital psychiatric disorder. Therefore, the reconstruction of the mind is needed to promulgate cyber-free mental health.

## Conclusion

The self-concept is a very convoluted term and people often possess errors to elaborate their true self-concept. However, the significance of self-concept is very crucial for human well-being and healthy personal growth. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 era has been very challenging for all people, therefore the surge of negative self-concept has been observed. The negative self-concept is very obnoxious for health and leads to alcohol dependence. Therefore, American psychological association and ICD-10 must add the nature and treatment modality of cyber-disorders. The government and policymakers must formulate laws to reduce the ratio of cyber dependency. Furthermore, researchers, psychologists and psychiatrists must practice advanced therapeutic intervention for the therapy and counselling of the patients.

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