

# VICTIMHOOD AS A NEGATIVE SELF-CONCEPT

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**Resumen:** El presente estudio se centra en la manifestación de conductas victimistas haciendo hincapié en el autoconcepto negativo de la persona que las realiza. El autoconcepto se define como la imagen que una persona tiene de sí misma y la importancia que se otorga a la imagen que el resto tiene de esa persona. Existe una tendencia victimista interpersonal (TIV) que se caracteriza por una necesidad de reconocimiento, un elitismo moral, falta de empatía y rumiación. Esas personas tienen la necesidad de reafirmar ese autoconcepto negativo que tienen de ellas mismas. En el desarrollo de la personalidad este autoconcepto negativo tiene gran relevancia, al igual que la imagen que la persona considera que el resto tiene de ella misma. Por ese motivo la investigación tiene como objetivo demostrar que ese autoconcepto negativo va asociado a un patrón conductual de queja. Se han analizado los resultados de diferentes cuestionarios, entre ellos el FFMQ (Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire) para evaluar la autopercepción del yo, el juicio y la reactividad; la Escala de Victimismo para evaluar la tendencia interpersonal victimista y el Self Centrality Principle, para evaluar el narcisismo y cuán centrado estás en ti mismo. Con una muestra aleatoria de 33 sujetos, 13 hombres y 20 mujeres, éstos serán expuestos a dos situaciones en las que en una de ellas se pondrá a prueba esa reactividad emocional y se observará si la conducta de queja se asocia realmente a esa tendencia victimista. Como resultados se ha obtenido que aquellas personas que realizaron la conducta victimista son las mismas que obtuvieron resultados significativos en la evaluación de la TIV junto con una ausencia de juicio de las experiencias internas, lo que confirma la hipótesis propuesta.

**Palabras clave:** conducta victimista, autoconcepto, autoconcepto negativo, queja, reactividad emocional

**Abstract:** This study focuses on the manifestation of victimizing behaviors with emphasis on the negative self-concept of the person who performs them. Self-concept is defined as the image that a person has of him/herself and the importance given to the image that others have of that person. There is a tendency of interpersonal victimhood (TIV) that is characterized by a need for recognition, moral elitism, lack of empathy and rumination. These people have the need to reaffirm the negative self-concept they have of themselves. In the development of the personality this negative self-concept has great relevance, as well as the image that the person considers that others have of him/herself. For this reason, the research aims to demonstrate that this negative self-concept is associated with a behavioral pattern of complaint. The results of different questionnaires have been analyzed, among them: the FFMQ (Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire) to assess self-perception of the self, judgment and reactivity; the Victimization Scale to assess the tendency of interpersonal victimhood (TIV) and the Self Centrality Principle, to assess narcissism and how focused you are on yourself. With a random sample of 33 subjects, 13 men and 20 women, they will be exposed to two situations in which in one of them this emotional reactivity will be tested and it will be observed if the complaining behavior is really associated to this victimhood tendency. As results, it has been obtained that those people who performed the victimizing behavior are the same ones who obtained significant results in the evaluation of the TIV together with an absence of judgment of internal experiences, which confirms the proposed hypothesis.

**Key words:** victimization behavior, self-concept, negative self-concept, complaining, emotional reactivity.

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**Self-concept** is an individual's self-image, including thoughts and feelings that accompany that image. It refers to one's beliefs about one's self-esteem, social identity, body image, values, and even the skills or traits that the individual believes he/she possesses. Within this concept, the image that the person considers that others have of him/her is of great relevance, that is, **the social influence** he/she considers he/she deserves (Esnola, Goni, & Madariaga, 2008). That is why self-concept plays a very important role in the development of personality.

**Tendency for Interpersonal Victimhood (TIV)** is defined as a constant feeling that one's self is a victim. We could classify it as a negative self-concept. It consists of a **need for recognition** motivated towards the empathy of others.

Their focus is on their own distress rather than on possible solutions. Likewise, victimhood is associated with a **moral differentiation** in which the individual, unlike the rest, sees himself as a highly moral and ethical person. This leads them to focus more on their own suffering than on that of others; **most lack empathy**.

It's important to clarify that victimhood is not necessarily linked to victimization or past trauma. It can be developed by other factors such as context, socialization, and even attachment.

Attachment is likely to be related to TIV, as early relationships with caregivers have been shown to affect relational attitudes, emotions, and behavioral strategies (Gabay, Hameri, Rubel-Litschitz, & Nadler, 2020).

Anxious attachment is defined by a combination of an inability to regulate negative emotions and sensitivity to the responses of others, while generating a dependence on others to strengthen that self-esteem and self-worth.

## OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS

- To demonstrate that a person with a high tendency for interpersonal victimhood is characterized by a negative self-perception of the self and a high level of reactivity and judgment of internal experiences.
- Those subjects who have scored high on the interpersonal victimhood tendency, the moment they do not see the pen, will make a complaint regarding the lack of material and will end up asking for the pen before looking for a solution on their own.

**PARTICIPANTS:**  
13 men 20 women  
Age 19-56  
University studies-  
Non-university studies

**INSTRUMENTS:**  
FTMQ  
Self-centrality  
Principle  
Victimhood Scale  
STAI

**PROCEDURE:**  
Control session: the questionnaires are passed with all the material.  
Experimental session: the pen is hidden and the subject's behavior is observed.

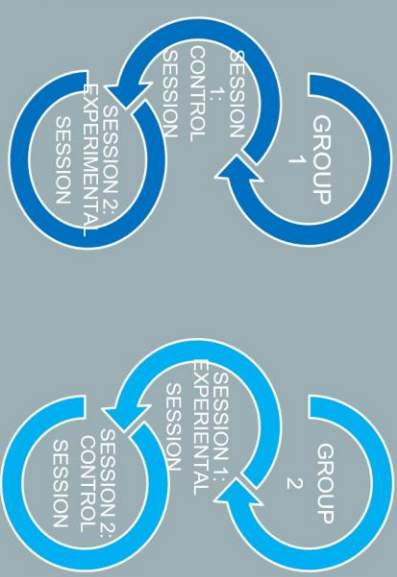


Table 1  
Results of the ANOVA for FTMQ

Dimensions	F	Sign.	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	Total Mean
Observe	1.95	0.172	2.86	3.31	3.08
Describe	0.05	0.825	3.16	3.77	3.45
Absence of judgment in internal experience	14.08	0.001*	3.43	3.31	3.37
Absence of reactivity in internal experience	1.14	0.293	3.57	4.27	3.91
Act aware	0.44	0.513	2.78	2.58	2.69

An analysis of variance was performed with the dimensions of the FTMQ as dependent variables and the variable "Time 2 pen", which refers to the experimental session where the pen is hidden, was used as a factor in the ANOVA. The results obtained were significant in the dimension "Absence of judgment in the internal experience".

Table 3  
Results of the ANOVA for Victimhood scale

Dimensions	F	Sign.	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	Total Mean
Need for recognition	5.60	0.024*	4.13	4	4.07
Moral elitism	4.41	0.044*	3.66	3.06	3.37
Lack of empathy	5.88	0.021*	2.63	2.07	2.95
Rumination	9.91	0.004*	3.16	2.95	3.06
Well-being	0.02	0.902	4.18	3.94	4.06
Self-esteem	1.27	0.268	3.53	2.94	3.24

An analysis of variance is performed with the dimensions of the Victimization Scale as dependent variables, while the variable "Pen time 2", which refers to the experimental situation in which the pen is hidden, is used as a factor in the ANOVA. The results were significant in the dimensions "Need for recognition", "Moral elitism", "Lack of empathy" and "Rumination".

Those who made the complaint during the experimental session show significant levels of nonjudgment in the internal experience, which explains the reaffirmation of the negative self-concept. However, they do not show high levels of reactivity. The results affirm that those who manifested the complaining behavior seek recognition by judging the incomprehension of others as immoral, focus only on their suffering and carry with them a constant rumination on their own suffering.

According to the results, neither sex, age, nor level of education had any influence on the research.

## THE HYPOTHESIS IS FULFILLED

Finally, it is worth noting the importance of the usefulness of behavioral analysis, since victimizers tend to cognitively reject this self-concept, while reaffirming it with behavior. Therefore, this behavioral analysis could serve as a way, as an alternative to questionnaires, to assess victimhood.

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