

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

Pamyaphy Ngashangva^{1*}, Dr. Pushpita Behera²

ABSTRACT

Narcissism and egocentrism were two constructs which appears to have shared a very fluid boundary, and are intricately linked with each other despite its varying implications in the field of clinical psychology and developmental psychology. From a clinical psychology's perspective, Narcissism in which egocentricity is just one manifestation, pertains to personality attributes whereas for a developmental theorist, egocentrism is largely perceived as a consequence of cognitive immaturity. Nevertheless, there seems to have a point of convergence i.e., preoccupation with oneself and a failure to understand or relate with others and the world around and therefore interfering with our ability to form meaningful and satisfying relationships. The usage of these two terms lacks systematic formulation in research especially in the context of understanding relationships. Different researchers apply these terms in varied ways, which furthermore leads to difficulty in developing a comprehensive measure. The objectives of this paper are to briefly examine the construct of narcissism and egocentricity and to review existing literature on the available measures, finally to examine narcissism and egocentricity on the quality of marital relationship.

Keywords: *Narcissism, Egocentricity, Marital Relationship*

Historical Origin of the term Narcissism and Egocentrism

Ovid's harrowing and enchanting myth of Narcissus in *Metamorphoses* (8 AD) depicts a handsome youth, who is madly in love with his own reflection in a pool. Finally, realizing that his love object cannot reciprocate his love, he pines away and dies. This is the retribution he received from the gods for rejecting many potential lovers. Apparently, the concrete understanding of this myth suggests a phenomenon of excessive self-love with an attitude of indifference towards others. However, this phenomenon is far from simple and straight forward. There has been a long history of discussions indicating a vast and complicated phenomenon. Despite its subsequent varying usage, the term nevertheless implies preoccupation with self or self-centeredness. The similar concept was later used in other theoretical construct as egocentrism in cognitive development and narcissism in psychoanalysis. A brief overview of varying description of this phenomenon is in order.

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Lady Shriram College for Women, University of Delhi, Delhi.

²Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Lady Shriram College for Women, University of Delhi, Delhi.

*Corresponding Author

Received: February 21, 2024; Revision Received: August 23, 2024; Accepted: August 26, 2024

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

Havelock Ellis (1898) describe autoeroticism - a sexual perversion in which the person takes oneself as a sexual object; a tendency in which a 'Narcissus – like' cases were 'for the sexual emotions to be absorbed, and often entirely lost in self-admiration'. However, Alfred Adler in 1912 describes egocentricity as the main feature of neurotic character, and states that neurosis would be one of the possible consequences in human developments under egocentric rule. He points out that the feeling of inferiority demands compensation in the sense of a maximization of oneself. In order to compensate for these feelings of inferiority, a model for a fictitious life plan is built as a guiding principle. This guiding principle then collects those faculties and memories in which they envisage the attainment of the ultimate goal. Allers explains the consequence of this egocentric position and therefore, the vision of life is severely restricted by the tendency to concentrate exclusively on oneself. "The neurotic is like a man gazing into a small hand mirror which reflects his own features but exclude the outside world" (Allers, 1931)

Freud (1914), believed that the infants first love object is her- or himself, and this act of self-love serves to constitute the ego through libidinal investment towards oneself. For Freud narcissism does not remain exclusively during our infancy, but is continually 'born again', and continually transformed into different 'object-love'. Erotic and parental love, he suggests, may ultimately be only dressed-up forms of self-love. One of the tasks of psychoanalysis is to unveil this disguised narcissism: to teach the patient that it may have been his own reflection he was contemplating in his lover's eyes (Rees, 2022). Freud's own view of narcissism varied a great deal, from a kind of sexual perversion and quality of primitive thinking to a type of object choice, a mode of object relationship, and self-esteem (Pulver, 1970).

In object relation tradition, Hartman's (1950) definition of narcissism as an investment of libidinal energy of the self is well accepted, and recognizes the need to shift from need gratifying object relation which is referred to as narcissistic to mature object relation based on love, respect and concern for others who are relatively complexly represented (Fairbairn, 1952). The commonly accepted features of narcissistic personality are grandiosity, extreme self-centeredness and lack of empathy for others despite the fact that they crave admiration and approval from others (Kernberg, 1985). Traditionally egocentricity has been acknowledged as one characteristic of narcissism, and in no way recognized as the only manifestation of egocentricity. One may be totally ego-centered without longing for admiration, personal glory or superiority. As put forward by Bursten (1989), many different clinical conditions show signs of narcissistic features, not only narcissistic personality. The arrogance of grandiose person, the embarrassment of the avoidant person, the demanding and sulking of the craving person, and the seething resentment of the paranoid personality result from a narcissistic orientation. Though, a classic narcissistic person may be egocentric, narcissism cannot be the only manifestation of egocentricity. Later definitions of narcissism are closer to the term egocentricity. Moore & Fine, (1967) defines narcissism as a concentration of psychological interest upon the self. Similarly, Ellis, Farrington, & Hoskin, (2019) define Narcissism (or egoism) as referring to a tendency to behave in a predominantly self-centered fashion.

In the developmental cognitive perspective, the concept of egocentrism was proposed by Piaget (1922) as an intermediary level between autistic and logical, scientific thought. Piaget critique Freud's theory on narcissism on the fact that, the infants were described as – narcissist- the qualities of an adult in love with himself and aware of it, as if the infant could clearly distinguish his self from others. If he is in love with himself, it is not because he

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

knows his self, but because he ignores all that is outside his dream and his desires. Narcissism, that is to say, absolute egocentricity, certainly gives rise to magical conviction, but only in so far as it implies absence of consciousness of self (Piaget, 1926/1929). From the mid-1930s on, egocentrism was conceptualized as a phenomenon that reoccurs at the beginning of different developmental stages. Piaget (1970) gave egocentrism a central role in the development of intellectual functioning. Infancy is marked by profound egocentricity in all domains of activity, wherein the self and the others are not cognitively distinguished. He theorized that cognitive development is a progressive decentration, in which the child learns to separate his or her own experience from reality and to consider one as an object.

According to Looft (1971), the transition from one stage of egocentrism to another takes place as the child goes through the developmental stages and noted that this newer form of egocentrism is a negative by-product of any emergent mental system, as it brings a new set of unrealistic, misrepresentations of the world. Specific forms of egocentrism may be observed at each stage as described in the table below.

Table 1: A tabular presentation of Looft's (1971) and Elkind's (1967) description of egocentrism at different developmental stage.

Piaget's Stages of development	Age range	Forms of egocentrism	Example
Sensorimotor stage	Birth – 2 years	Complete lack of differentiation between the infant and objects around them	Belief that the objects existence depended upon his or her presence
Preoperational stage	2 – 6 years	Lack of clear differentiation between symbols and their referents	Assuming that words carry much more information than they actually do.
Concrete operational stage	7 – 11 years	Failure to differentiate between mental products and perceptual information	Assumes that hypotheses constructed internally are products of external information and not the effect of his or her own cognition
Formal operational	adolescence	Inadequate differentiation between one's own thought and feelings and those of others	-imaginary audience and personal fables

Elkind (1967) defined the imaginary audience as a construct of adolescent egocentrism. Adolescents are consumed with their own appearance and behavior and believe that others are equally interested. He explains that the feeling of being the focus of others' attention can lead adolescents to project their feelings onto their imaginary audience. The personal fable is the corollary to the imaginary audience. Thinking of himself or herself as the center of attention, the adolescent comes to believe that it is because he or she is special and unique (Elkind, 1967).

According to Elkind (1967), egocentrism, particularly in the imaginary audience form, begins to diminish by age 15 or 16 whereas, the personal fable is most likely overcome by the progressive incorporation of intimacy into one's life; However, it probably never fully vanishes. Looft (1972), states that the essential meaning of egocentrism is embeddedness in one's point of view and it is through exchange with others that childish egocentrism vanishes.

Here, egocentrism is viewed as an inevitable developmental phenomenon during childhood. However, this view fails to explain the phenomenon of egocentrism in adulthood. The developmental explanation does not include the stage of adulthood since all the cognitive faculties are expected to be fully matured. The term egocentrism cannot therefore explain the egocentric attitude to which all humans are at times susceptible to irrespective of age. There is inadequacy in explaining egocentricity as a stable personality attribute under normal circumstances as a consequence of immaturity in cognitive and emotional capacities. As Looft (1972) believes egocentricity concerns the human condition in general.

Measures of Egocentricity

Egocentrism, have generally been studied within a developmental cognitive perspective, whereas it has been somewhat overlooked in the personality literature (Tajmirriyahi, Ta & Ickes, 2020). Studies have used narcissism scales to measure egocentrism (Robbins & Patton, 1985). The understanding that one's level of egocentrism might be a trait-like personality feature comes from data indicating that egocentrism is related to the personality trait of narcissism (Campbell *et al.*, 2000). Egocentrism is, however, only one of the psychological distortions of narcissism—a distortion that deals with the inability to take the perspective of others (Campbell *et al.*, 2000). Rogoza, Piotrowska, & Campbel, (2019) reviewed an up - to - date available measures of narcissism, highlighting different conceptions of narcissism existing within the literature such as grandiose, vulnerable, pathological, collective, and communal, all of which were measured through self-report measures. Some of the tools measured a one-dimensional aspect of narcissism such as Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988) and Narcissistic Grandiosity Scale (Rosenthal *et al.*, 2022) mainly captures grandiosity and on the one hand the vulnerable narcissism was highlighted in Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale by Hendin & Cheek (1997) and the Narcissistic Vulnerability Scale (Rosenthal *et al.*, 2019). There were multidimensional measures to study narcissism such as the Pathological narcissism scale (Pincus *et al.*, 2009) assesses both grandiosity and vulnerability, and the Five Factor Narcissism Inventory (FFNI) (Glover *et al.*, 2012) measures grandiosity and vulnerability. An exploratory factor analysis on the FFNI scales and revealed that they can be organized within three higher-order factors corresponding to the basic traits of antagonism, neuroticism and agentic extraversion (Miller *et al.*, 2016).

Egocentricity is also measured as a sub component of some test. In Psychopathic Personality Traits Scale (Boduszek *et al.*, 2016) which is used to measure self-reported psychopathic traits in forensic and nonforensic populations, egocentricity is one of the subscales. Rorschach's Egocentricity Index- Exner (2003) used the Egocentricity Index (EGOI) in his Rorschach Comprehensive System (CS) for understanding self-concern/self-focus and its relationship to narcissism. Exner, (2003) "it provides an estimate of self-concern and possibly self-esteem. It is considered as a crude measure of self-attending behavior. Self-involvement derives from self-image and equating with self-centeredness but that does not mean that people who are very self-involved or self-centered necessarily hold themselves in high regard; Self involvement can be cast in either a positive or negative framework and can be formed in both specific ("I'm not as outgoing as she is") and general ("I'm more creative than most") terms" (Exner, 2003). Tajmirriyahi, Ta & Ickes, (2020) developed a scale to assess individual levels of egocentrism for adolescents and adults. It is a single-factor scale that measures egocentrism as a personality attribute rather than as a developmental phase or as a pathological condition. There is dearth of measures solely focusing on egocentricity.

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

Another approach is in the developmental domains, mostly among child and adolescence within the tradition of Piagetian view. Egocentric tendencies were explored in cognitive domains as well as in emotional domains. Cognitive egocentrism was measured through Theory of Mind (ToM) task and visual perspective taking (PT) task. Studies showed that ToM continues to be detectable until late adolescence, and found improvement until early adulthood (Dumontheil *et al.*, 2010). In another study by Inakagi *et al.*, (2002) showed that older adults exhibited more egocentric responses than younger adults in a visual PT task. Similarly, Bailey & Henry (2008) reported better performance of young adults in a ToM false-belief task in comparison to old samples.

Egocentric tendencies in emotional domains and its underlying neural mechanisms have been investigated by Silani *et al.*, in 2013, and have developed a paradigm to explore Emotional Egocentric Bias (EEB), in which a series of five interwoven behavioral, fMRI, and transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) experiments were conducted. In this paradigm, pair of participants were presented with pleasant and unpleasant visuo-tactile stimulation to evoked congruent or incongruent emotions between a participant and another person. Participants had to provide empathic judgments of the emotions felt by the other person. It was observed that emphatic judgement was significantly affected by their own current emotional state establishing an egocentrically biased response, EEB increases when either disrupting right supramarginal gyrus (rSMG) or using a shorter visuo-tactile stimulation time suggests that these early perceptual integration processes and associated regulatory mechanisms might require some time to become effective. A study by Steinbeis, Bernhardt, and Singer (2014) showed that children displayed increased emotional egocentricity compared to adults related to reduced activation of rSMG.

Another different measure of egocentrism was limited to adolescents like Adolescent Egocentrism Scale (Elkind, 1967), the Imaginary Audience Scale (Elkind, 1967) and Adolescent Egocentrism Scale (AES, Enright et al., 1980). The concept of adolescent egocentrism (Elkind, 1967) links the cognitive structures peculiar to adolescence and the behaviors characteristic of this developmental period. While the origins of adolescent egocentrism are arguably cognitive, this construct has affective, non-cognitive characteristics including self-consciousness, invulnerability, and specialty (Elkind, 1967, 1978). These scales focus on the problems associated with egocentrism in adolescents such as feeling misunderstood (e.g., “Trying to get other people to know what it is like being me”) rather than on one’s own tendency to perceive that others’ views or opinions might differ from one’s own (Tajmirriyahi, Ta & Ickes, 2020).

It is noted that the measures available exclusively for egocentricity in personality psychology is lacking. So far, it was assessed through an inference from measures of Narcissistic traits and as a subcomponent of a test. While assessing egocentricity from a developmental perspective, it has been limited to younger populations, there is a need to extend into adult populations. As it potentially can affect our relationship with others.

Egocentricity in marital relationship

Egocentrism can be a source of misperceptions, conflicts, and misunderstandings in social interactions (Chambers & De Dreu, 2014). Egocentrism is, however, only one of the psychological distortions of narcissism—a distortion that deals with the inability to take the perspective of others (Campbell *et al.*, 2000). Freud (1921) asserts that love is nothing more than object-cathexis on the part of the sexual instincts with a view to directly derive sexual satisfaction. Long lasting love develops out of the initial sexual interest and continue loving it

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

in the passionless intervals as well. The capacity for enduring love relates also to the development of our capacity for sublimation, which promotes friendly, affectionate relations to be established with the family members who were the objects of our childish drives.

On the other hand, Kunkel (1984) elaborates that when the person- thinks, feels, and acts exclusively in the service of the preservation or elevation of his own ego; and also, when the consciousness is dominated by the ego-image i.e., idealized image that we have created about ourselves, then our behavior pattern and our decisions become “egocentric” because they serve the ego exclusively. The “other” simply becomes the means to fulfill our needs and desire. The ego strategically utilizes others in the service of their own sake. This self-centeredness attitude produces lack of mature relationship with the consequent paralysis of the capacity to love (Fromm, 1947). Kunkel (1984) explains the dynamics of egocentricity involved in relationship. Since egocentricity is a reaction to deflect hurt, therefore it is a natural product of fear. The objectives are thus exclusively in the service of the ego only with the predominant concern to protect one’s ego from others. This attitude of self-protection implies that an individual’s personal development is based on minimum expectations of others, because the desires to make others happy are turned into a personal desire to avoid being harmed by others. The goal of this attitude is always self-protection and the consequences in relationship is tragic, as it impairs the ability to give one’s most intimate being and to share happiness and destiny with others. As an individual attempts to deny the inescapability of communion or unity usually for protective reasons, personhood is progressively diminished (Stratton, 2006) because a fully personal realization implies a mutual love (Hildebrand, 2009). But, in egocentric tendency self-protection is promoted over love towards others.

Looft (1972) raised a pertinent issue related to the concept of egocentrism in adulthood. He claims that in the existing knowledge of cognitive development egocentrism is not even considered to be a concept relevant to adulthood. Looft (1972) maintains that adult egocentric behavior most likely is found in social interactions with others. He provided the example of the middle-aged person who displays increased contemplation of inner thought and decreased reactivity to others. Looft admits his evidence for adult egocentrism is not plentiful, yet asserts it is convincing. Looft (1972) feels that a strong case can be made regarding the influence of egocentrism in the lives of members of the human species, both individually and collectively and argues that even on the larger social scale, egocentricity of thought—the illusions caused by the immediate point of view—has been the central problem in the history of human affairs. Similarly, Elkind (1985) feels adult egocentrism can be observed as it manifests itself in everyday social interactions. He continues by saying, that the inability of husbands and wives or parents and children to see the other person's point of view, or credit it with any validity, is a major factor contributing to marital and child mental health problems. However, not many research focused on the effect egocentrism has on the family and marriage. Although, the institution of marriage and contributing factors to marital satisfaction have been investigated extensively.

Different terms like egocentricity/egocentrism/egocentric bias were used in marital or relational researches. In this paper, we have considered egocentricity on general basis as the researchers themselves have reported and therefore will not delve into deeper analysis of the term used. The main objective herein is to delineate and discuss the research findings.

Merill in 1990 felt the need to develop a tool to assess egocentrism in adults as there were no existing tools. She developed the Adult egocentric tendency to assess egocentrism in adults.

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

The scale was based on Loft's (1972) view of egocentrism. The scale incorporates the following factors- embeddedness in one's own views and the need to be right, the ability to differentiate between one's own views, and the process of decentering which aids in the development of perspective-taking and the decline of egocentrism. Decentering occurs when dissonant messages from others, during social interactions, systematically force individuals to re-evaluate perceptions from another's point of view and those of another increases as egocentrism declines. Her study found that egocentrism is measurable in adults, and also noted that there is a tendency for marital satisfaction to increase as egocentrism decreases and vice versa. Furthermore, it was reported that men, those who are highly educated and those with a lower number of children living in the household tend to display greater degrees of egocentrism.

Egocentric bias is another phenomenon which focuses on attribution and social cognition that have been investigated in the context of marriage. It is conceptualized as a perceived responsibility judgement of events in close relationship, such that each person in the relationship tends to claim a greater contribution to an activity than the partner is willing to attribute to them (Ross and Sicoly, 1979; Thompson and Kelly, 1981). Thompson and Kelly (1981) found that perceived self-contribution to positive events were inversely related to satisfaction, whereas similar judgements regarding negative events were unrelated to satisfaction. Fincham & Bradbury, (1989) cites that it is important to examine this bias in marriage because of its potential relation to marital satisfaction, and despite its theoretical importance data regarding the robustness of the egocentric bias are limited. Similarly, evidence for an association between egocentric attribution bias and its relation to marital satisfaction is limited. In their study, they found that egocentric bias is reliable. However, it was cautioned that the existence of this bias is tentative for two reasons. First, the use of a bipolar ratings assumes an inverse relationship between one's own and partners contribution, which the partner may not necessarily share this assumption. The bias obtained through forced choice response options lost its significance. Secondly, the egocentric measures used in most studies does not reflect a discussion at a conceptual level. Their study found that egocentric bias occurs even when the respondents are not forced to make a single comparative judgement for a relationship event; attribution bias is related to marital satisfaction, with the bias for negative event directly relating to satisfaction, whereas the bias for positive events was inversely related to marital satisfaction. For positive events some evidence was obtained for the existence of an egocentric bias, whereas the opposite bias also occurred, and an underestimation of one's contribution to positive events. However strong evidence was obtained to support the existence of egocentric bias for negative events. The process underlying such judgement were discussed by the authors as a result of information availability heuristics while responding in a simplistic strategy of retrieving information; and possibly due to sentiment override- a concept which Weiss (1980) uses to signify that spouse's response to partners behavior are largely determined by their general sentiment toward the partner rather than by anything about the behavior itself. According to this hypothesis, one might expect a group of satisfied couple to assign little contribution to their partners for negative events and to assign a great deal of contribution to them for positive events.

Murray *et al.*, (2002) studied the benefits of egocentrism in close relationships and they found that people in satisfying and stable relationships assimilated their partners to themselves, perceiving similarities that were not evident in reality. Such egocentrism - assuming that their partners are mirrors of themselves predicted greater feelings of being understood, and feeling understood mediated the link between egocentrism and satisfaction in marriage. In using the

term egocentrism, they were looking at a more restricted but related social–psychological sense—namely, that people use the self as a benchmark to make biased inferences about others (Dunning & Hayes, 1996), diverging from Piaget’s use of the term to refer to children’s failure to recognize that the perspective of others may differ from their own.

CONCLUSION

Egocentricity as seen in Narcissism, which conceptualizes it as a personality trait apparently has been a matter of great debate. Discussions range from describing it as sexual perversion or as a main feature of neurotic character. It also highlights maximization of oneself as a compensation to the feelings of inferiority, and also the investment of libidinal energy in oneself and seeking others only as an extension of oneself or simply as concentration of interest upon the self. This ego-centeredness not only manifest in personal vain glory or superiority but also in many clinical conditions as put forth by Bursten (1989). The measure of egocentricity in Rorschach Inkblot test gave an interesting aspect to egocentricity by linking it with an estimation of self-concern/self-esteem, self-attending behaviour, self-involvement which is derived from self-image and can be cast in positive and negative framework. There is lack of available comprehensive measures in this regard, and the development of scale to assess egocentricity by Tajmirriyahi, Ta & Ickes (2020) is moving forward in the right direction. In developmental approach, egocentrism is a failure to take the perspective of others as a result of cognitive immaturity among children as initially perceived by Piaget has also undergone a change, with the acknowledgement that egocentrism is a general human condition (Looft, 1972). Furthermore, the research undertaken from this perspective has incorporated not only the cognitive aspects but the affective components as well. Measures of egocentricity are therefore limited to young children and adolescence. The recent paradigm of EEB developed by Silani *et al.*, in 2013 has been used to study adult populations. Although, egocentricity as a phenomenon potentially can affect relationships, the research conducted in the context of marriage is minimal. A study conducted by Merrill (1990) using the construct given by Looft (1972), it was observed that there is tendency to decrease marital satisfaction as egocentricity increases. Some studies have looked into egocentricity as a bias in attributions and social cognitions. Their findings suggest that people satisfied in their marriage were more likely to assign contribution to their partners for positive events and assign little contribution to negative events. Another study wherein egocentrism is operationalized as tendency in assuming their partners are mirrors of themselves, predicted greater feelings of being understood, and this in turn mediated the link between egocentrism and marital satisfaction. The term egocentricity used in such research adopted different perspectives and also lacks standardized measures, making it difficult to understand and generalized or compare the findings across studies. Therefore, an effort to operationalized the concept is vital, keeping in mind the wide spectrum of its manifestations as a personality trait, as a feature of our cognitive, affective or emotional components of understanding and relating with others, and also as a social and interpersonal process of attributions.

REFERENCES

- Adler, A. (1912). *The neurotic constitution. Outlines of a comparative individualistic psychology and psychotherapy*. Aylesbury, UK: Chrysoma Associates.
- Allers, R. (1931). *The psychology of character*. New York, NY: Sheed and Ward.
- Bailey P. E., Henry J. D. (2008). Growing less empathic with age: disinhibition of the self-perspective. *The journals of gerontology. Series B, Psychological sciences and social sciences*. 63, 219–226. 10.1093/geronb/63.4 p219

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

- Birch, S. A. J., and Bloom, P. (2007). The curse of knowledge in reasoning about false beliefs: research report. *Psychol. Sci.* 18, 382–386. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.01909.x
- Boduszek, D., Debowska, A., Sherretts, N., & Willmott, D. (2018). Psychopathic Personality Traits Scale (PPTS): Construct Validity of the Instrument in a Sample of U.S. Prisoners. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 1596. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01596>
- Bursten B. (1989). The relationship between narcissistic and antisocial personalities. *The Psychiatric clinics of North America*, 12(3), 571–584.
- Campbell, W. K., Reeder, G. D., Sedikides, C., & Elliot, A. J. (2000). Narcissism and comparative self-enhancement strategies. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 34, 329–347.
- Chambers, J. R., & De Dreu, C. K. W. (2014). Egocentrism drives misunderstanding in conflict and negotiation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 51, 15–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2013.11.001>
- Dumontheil I., Apperly I. A., Blakemore S. J. (2010). Online usage of theory of mind continues to develop in late adolescence. *Developmental Science*. 13, 331–338. 10.1111/j.1467-7687.2009.00888.x
- Dunning, D., & Hayes, A. F. (1996). Evidence for egocentric comparison in social judgment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(2), 213–229. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.71.2.213>
- Elkind, D. (1967). Egocentrism in adolescence. *Child Development*. 38.1025-1034.
- Elkind, D. (1978). Understanding the young adolescent. *Adolescence*, 13(49), 127–134.
- Ellis, H., (1898). Auto-erotism: A psychological study. *Alienist and Neurologist*, 19, 260–299.
- Ellis, L., Farrington, D.P., & Hoskin, A.W., (Eds). (2019) *Handbook of Crime Correlates (Second Edition): Personality and Behavioral factors*. Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-804417-9.00005-3>.
- Enright, R.D., & Shukla, D. G., Lapsley, D. (1980). Adolescent egocentrism and self-consciousness. *Journal of youth and adolescence*. 9. 101-16. 10.1007/BF02087929.
- Exner, J. E., Jr. (2003). *The Rorschach: A comprehensive system* (4th ed.). John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Fairbairn, W. R. (1952). *Psychoanalytic studies of the personality*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Fincham, F. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (1989). Perceived responsibility for marital events: Egocentric or partner-centric bias? *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 51(1), 27–35. <https://doi.org/10.2307/352365>
- Freud, S. (1914). *On narcissism: an introduction.*, S.E., 14:73-102.
- Freud, S. (1921). *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego.*, S.E., 18:69-143.
- Fromm, E. (1947). *Man for himself: An inquiry into the psychology of ethics*. New York, NY: Fawcett
- Glover, N., Miller, J.D., Lynam, D.R., Crego, C., & Widiger, T.A. (2012). The Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory: A five factor measure of narcissistic personality traits. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 94, 500–512. doi:10.1080/00223891.2012.670680.
- Hartman, H. (1950). Comments on the psychoanalytic theory of the ego. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 5,74-96
- Hendin, H.M., & Cheek, J.M. (1997). Assessing hypersensitive narcissism: A re-examination of Murray's Narcissism Scale. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 31, 588–599. doi:10.1006/jrpe.1997.2204
- Hildebrand, Dietrich, von (2009) *The Nature of Love*, Trans. John F. Crosby and John Henry Crosby (South Bend: St. Augustine Press).

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

- Inagaki H., Meguro K., Shimada M., Ishizaki J., Okuzumi H., Yamadori A. (2002). Discrepancy between mental rotation and perspective-taking abilities in normal aging assessed by Piaget's three-mountain task. *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology*, 24, 18–25. [10.1076/jcen.24.1.18.969](https://doi.org/10.1076/jcen.24.1.18.969)
- Kernberg, O. (1985). *Borderline conditions and pathological narcissism*. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson.
- Keysar, B., Barr, D. J., Balin, J. A., and Brauner, J. S. (2000). Taking perspective in conversation: the role of mutual knowledge in comprehension. *Psychological Science*, 11, 32–38. doi:10.1111/1467-9280.00211
- Kunkel, F. (1984). *The origin and nature of egocentricity. Selected writings* (pp. 102–105). New York, NY: Paulist Press
- Looft, W. R. (1971). Egocentrism and social interaction in adolescence. *Adolescence*, 6(24), 487.
- Looft, W. R. (1972). Egocentrism and social interaction across the life span. *Psychological Bulletin*, 78(2), 73–92. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0033012>
- Merrill, K.A (1990). *The relationship between egocentric tendencies and marital satisfaction*. (Unpublished master's dissertation). The University of Arizona
- Miller, J.D., Lynam, D.R., & Campbell, W.K. (2016). Rejoinder: A construct validity approach to the assessment of narcissism. *Assessment*, 23, 18–22. doi:10.1177/1073191115608943
- Moore, B. E. & Fine, D., Eds. (1967), *A Glossary of Psychoanalytic Terms and Concepts*. New York: American Psychoanalytic Association, p. 57.
- Murray, S. L., Holmes, J. G., Bellavia, G., Griffin, D. W., & Dolderman, D. (2002). Kindred spirits? The benefits of egocentrism in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(4), 563–581. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.82.4.563>
- Ovid (1958). *The Metamorphoses*. (H. Gregory, Trans). New York, NY: Viking Press. (Original work published in 8 C.E.)
- Piaget J. (1926[1929]) *The child's conception of the world*. Kegan Paul Trench Trubner, London
- Piaget, J. (1922) 'Essai sur la multiplication logique et les débuts de la pensée formelle chez l'enfant' [Essay on Logical Multiplication and the Beginnings of Formal Thinking in Children], *Journal de psychologie normale et pathologique* 19: 222–61
- Piaget, J. (1970). "Piaget's Theory". In Carmichael's *Manual of Child Psychology*, Vol. 1 (ed. by P.H. Mussen, New York: Wiley), 703–32.
- Pincus, A.L., Ansell, E.B., Pimentel, C.A., Cain, N.M., Wright, A.G.C., & Levy, K.N. (2009). Initial construction and validation of the Pathological Narcissism Inventory. *Psychological Assessment*, 21, 365–379. doi:10.1037/a0016530
- Pulver, S. E. (1970). Narcissism: The term and the concept. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 18(2), 319–342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000306517001800204>
- Raskin, R., & Terry, H. (1988). A principal-components analysis of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory and further evidence of its construct validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 890–902. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.54.5.890
- Rees, W. (2020). *We other narcissists: self-love in Freud and culture*. *Textual practice*, 36(6), 889–908. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0950236X.2020.1839956>
- Rogoza, R., Piotrowska, M., & Campbel, W.K. (2019). Žemojtel- Measurement of narcissism: From classical applications to modern approaches. *Studia Psychologica*.
- Rosenthal, S. A., Hooley, J. M., Montoya, R. M., van der Linden, S. L., & Steshenko, Y. (2019). The Narcissistic Grandiosity Scale: A measure to distinguish narcissistic

Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship

- grandiosity from high self-esteem. *Assessment*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/1073191119858410
- Rosenthal, S. A., Montoya, R. M., Hooley, J. M., & Jurgens, C. T. (2022). The Narcissistic Grandiosity Scale: A meta-analytic examination of item convergent and discriminant validity. *Psychological Assessment, 34*(9), 891–897. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0001151>
- Ross, M., & Sicoly, F. (1979). Egocentric biases in availability and attribution. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 37*(3), 322–336. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.37.3.322>
- Silani, G., Lamm, C., Ruff, C. C., & Singer, T. (2013). Right supramarginal gyrus is crucial to overcome emotional egocentricity bias in social judgments. *The Journal of neuroscience, 33*(39), 15466–15476. <https://doi.org/10.1523/JNEUROSCI.1488-13.2013>
- Steinbeis, N., Bernhardt, B. C., & Singer, T. (2015). Age-related differences in function and structure of rSMG and reduced functional connectivity with DLPFC explains heightened emotional egocentricity bias in childhood. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience, 10*(2), 302–310. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsu057>
- Stratton, S. (2006). Self, attachment and agency: Love and Trinitarian concept of personhood. In P.C. Vitz, & S.M. Felch (Eds.), *The self. Beyond the post modern crisis*. Wilmington, DE: ISI Books.
- Tajmiriyahi, M., Ta, V.P., & Ickes, W. (2020). Measuring Egocentrism as a Trait-Like Personality Attribute: The Development and Validation of the Egocentrism Scale. *Psychological Studies, 65*, 481 - 488.
- Thompson, S. C., & Kelley, H. H. (1981). Judgments of responsibility for activities in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 41*(3), 469–477. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.41.3.469>
- Weiss, R. L. (1980). Strategic behavioral marital therapy: Toward a model for assessment and intervention, Volume 1. In J. P. Vincent (Ed.) *Advances in family intervention, Assessment and theory* (pp. 229-271). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Ngashangva, P. & Behera, P. (2024). Self-Love or Self Preoccupation? Exploring Egocentricity in the Context of Marital Relationship. *International Journal of Indian Psychology, 12*(3), 1458-1468. DIP:18.01.142.20241203, DOI:10.25215/1203.142