Mirrors and Self Image: From the Perspective of the Art Students (An Applied Aesthetic Study at Al-Yarmouk University, Irbid Jordan)

Dr. Insaf Rabadi, Associate Professor, Faculty of Arts, Yarmouk University

Abstract

This study aims at exploring students' self-esteem by subjecting the arts students at Al-Yarmouk University in Jordan to the experience of self-esteem by developing self-images using the mirror reflections of their self images, students were asked to face mirrors, and then draw what comes in their minds, write down feelings, emotions, attitudes and thoughts. Each student work separately without interfering; by which he/she develop his/her own attitudes, thoughts and self description throughout the reflections of the mirrors. Results of the study show different attitudes, different self descriptions and different look for life and self.

Keywords: Mirrors, Self Image, Self-esteem, Art, Aesthetic, Jordan

1.1 Introduction

Mirrors have been used as a teaching tool, and have proven to be an efficient element in affecting perceptual attitudes toward self image reflecting perception, thoughts, and feelings about body, soul and emotions.

Self-image is how to perceive self. It is a number of self-impressions that have built up over time: What are hopes and dreams? What are thoughts and feelings? What have done throughout life and what are the future plans? These self-images can be very positive, giving a person confidence in their thoughts and actions, or negative, making a person doubtful of their capabilities and ideas.

Person's self-image is defined by events that affect him or her (doing well or not in school, university, work, or relationships). Others believe that a person's self-image can help shape those events. There is probably some truth to both trends of thought: failing at something can certainly cause one to feel bad about oneself, just as feeling good about oneself can lead to better performance on any project, but it cannot be denied that self-image has a very strong impact on happiness, and the outlook on life can affect those around us. If we project a positive self-image, people will be more likely to see us as positive, capable persons.

Mirrors reflects self-image; reaching a point of attitude called self-esteem, which is in psychology, the term used to describe a person's overall sense of self-worth or personal value. Self-esteem is often seen as a personality trait, which means that it tends to be stable and enduring. Self-esteem can involve a variety of beliefs about the self, such as the appraisal of one's own appearance, beliefs, emotions and behaviours, and according to one definition (Braden, 1969); there are three key components of self-esteem:

1. Self-esteem is an essential human need that is vital for survival and normal, healthy development.
2. Self-esteem arises automatically from within based upon a person's beliefs and consciousness.
3. Self-esteem occurs in conjunction with a person's thoughts, behaviours, feelings and actions.

Therefore, it is important to note that self-esteem is a concept distinct from self-efficacy, which involves the belief in future actions, performance or abilities.

1.2 Problem Statement

Students of arts at Al-Yarmouk University in Jordan were subjected to the experience of self-esteem by developing self-images using the mirror reflections of their self images, students were asked to face mirrors, and then draw what comes in their minds, write down feelings, emotions, attitudes and thoughts.

The problem of the study lies in the look of the students who have undergone the experience towards themselves, through the ideas that took place in their minds when looking in the mirror; establishing an attitude at that moment describes their feelings, emotions and thoughts.

Figure (1): Mirror reflections for creating self images

1.3 Importance of the Study

The importance of this study appears through trying to link the aesthetic concept of self-esteem through the formation of self-images by looking into the mirror and then open the way to imagine and unlock feelings, draw the now, and draw the future.

This experience allowed students to unleash their imagination, through self-description, and then link this description with the ability of self-expression through the reflections in the mirror images; which reflects the positive interaction between images and ideas, aesthetic and philosophy.

1.4 Study Terminology

The study identified the following terms, which differ in their definitions throughout different subjects of knowledge, but subordinated to this study as follows:

1.4.1 Mirrors: Referring to the study tool as the mirror used by the students to stair in and then develop the self-images for creating an attitude of self-esteem.

1.4.2 Self-Images: Referring to the study outcomes as the students developing attitudes toward themselves, life, feelings, emotions and others

1.4.3 Self-Esteem: Referring to the study different self descriptions of each student upon his/her own believes and thoughts.

1.5 Literature Review

The mirror effect is a reflection of one's self through the reflections of inner self. It is used in education as a meta-cognition tool and as a vector of knowledge. The mirror effect can be obtained directly from person through observation, listening to the mind inside comments (Asendorpf, 2002), throughout its application, the helping relation requires mastering many skills at the personal and interpersonal levels. At the heart of this mastery, there is a body of knowledge which draws from various fields: psychology in its contribution to understanding oneself and others; sociology centred on the dynamics of human relationships; the fundamentals of psychiatry to grasp the deviations of the persons it examines as well as the art of self-expression; communication principles and helping relations, as one must understand the difficulty of this complex learning in which self-perception and self-image are significant elements for organizing and modulating attitudes and behaviour. Self- image is both the mental picture, and how to perceive self when looking in a mirror. Self-esteem is how you value and respect ourselves as persons, it is the "real" opinion that one has of himself, therefore, self-esteem impacts how you take care of yourself, emotionally, physically and spiritually (Rochat& Striano, 2002).

1.6 Discussion and Analysis

Results vary from one student to another, due to the sharp differences among students in their different cultures, social backgrounds, mental abilities, and their psychological aptitudes.

1.6.1 The Experiment

Each student to be given a mirror, white papers and colored drawing pens, then asked to track the following procedures:

- Stair into the mirror for a while, as long as it takes;
- Draw a picture of what comes on mind;
- Write down what comes on mind.

1.6.2 The Study Sample

The study sample consisted of (50) undergraduate Art students at Al-Yarmouk University, Irbid-Jordan, distributed into age and gender categories (table 1, table 2,).

Table (1): Study sample by gender

Sample by Gender	Male	Female
50	23	27

Table (1): Study sample by age

Sample by age	Less than 20 years	20-25 years	More than 25 years
50	14	35	1

1.6.3 Data Gathering

All white papers were gathered, divided by age category, and gender category, and then they were categorized upon the followings:

- Papers with drawings and texts separated ,
- Papers with drawings mixed with text expressions.

1.6.4 Data Analysis

Analysis was conducted by adopting the written expressions as well as the drawing expressions in graphics and by linking images and texts with the self-images and connecting texts with the self-esteem concept, and the results came as follows:

1.6.4.1 Papers with drawings and texts separated

Papers with separated texts and drawings have formed the majority of the responses of the sample reaching 71 per cent, mostly using one color (see figure 2)
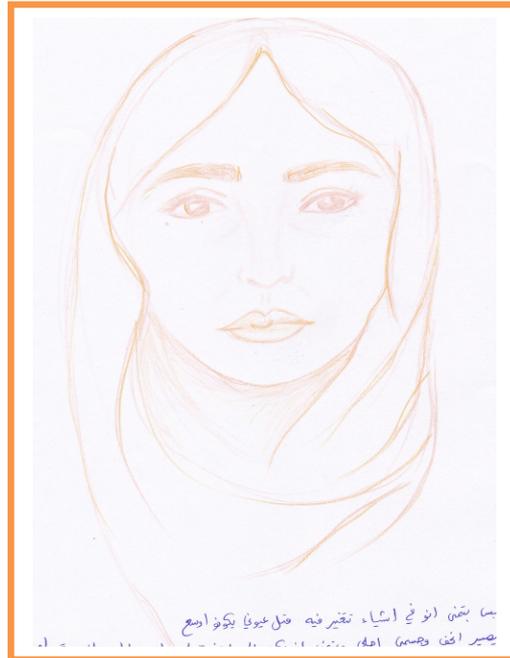

Figure (2): Papers with drawings and texts separated

1.6.4.2 Papers with drawings and texts mixed

Papers with mixed texts and drawings have formed the minority of the responses of the sample reaching 29 per cent, mostly using mixed colors (see figure 3)

Figure (3): Papers with drawings and texts mixed

1.6.5 Discussion

Most of the respondents highly estimated themselves, developing an interacted feelings mixed with shape, personal images, environmental reactions and future perspectives, hence, results will discuss the clear and direct student's trials with different expressions as follows:

1.6.5.1 Shape

The self-esteem starts with the satisfaction of the exterior image, which is determined by several factors: shape, height, beauty and others impression; one respondent sees that, his/her beauty is his/her source of self confidence (figure 4).

Figure (4): Respondents highlighting the shape impact

Another respondent sees that, the change in his/her life must be with the change in shape; height, hair, eyes color and even bigger body (figure 5).

Figure (5): Respondent highlighting the shape impact

This shallow perspective of the inevitable link between the concept of shape and the level of self-esteem reflects the dissatisfaction with the reflections of the image in the mirror, and through the analysis of all the texts of the responses of the sample, the percentage of responses that linked shape with self-esteem was 52%.

1.6.5.2 Beyond Shape

Remarkable expressions go beyond the shape concept, reflecting intelligent interactions with the self-image in the mirror; one respondent sees that, peace and culture are connected through his self image in the mirror (figure 6).

Figure (6): Connecting peace and culture through self image in the mirror

Another respondent sees that, silence and calm are the drivers of change; as change is a must for adapting with the surrounding environment (figure 7).
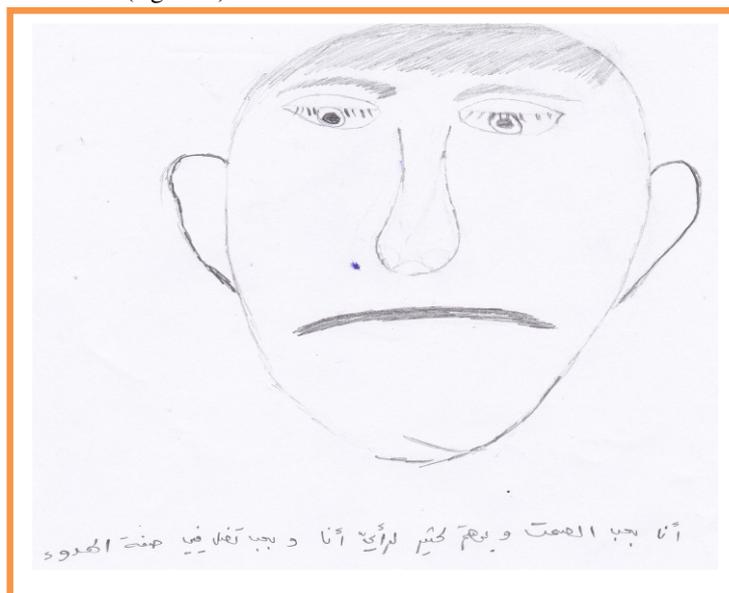

Figure (7): Connecting silence with calm through self image in the mirror

1.7 Conclusions
Results of the study were divided into two categories:

1. A group of students that linked reflections in the mirror self-image with shape.
2. A group of students that went beyond shape with deeper thoughts; thoughts based on linking multiple concepts through the reflections in the mirror image.

1.7.1 Group 1

The group of students that linked reflections in the mirror self-image with shape, forming 52% of the study sample, and esteeming themselves upon shape through the mirror self-image of shape; a shallow thinking that reflects the shallowness of the culture-conscious, ignoring the human being way of thinking and way of dealing with others, which confirms in this group the impact of shape in the judgment, regardless the cultural, social or the scientific background.

1.7.2 Group 2

The group of students that went beyond shape with deeper thoughts based on linking multiple concepts through the reflections in the mirror image, forming 48% of the study sample, and highly esteeming themselves with deeper thoughts that go beyond shape through the mirror self-image; a deeper thinking that links different concepts of culture, peace, satisfaction and change.

1.8 Recommendations

In light of the study results and conclusions, the researcher recommends the following recommendations:

1- The need to focus on the concept of self-esteem.

2- Clarifying that the concept of self-esteem does not depend on shape only.

3- Emphasize that the self-esteem depends on the level of thinking.

4- Emphasize that the self-esteem depends on the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment.

5- Clarifying that self-esteem depends on the estimation of others, which is based on the idea of coexistence and the acceptance of others.

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