



Strategies to Cultivate Self-Awareness among Students and Teachers in Educational Institutions

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Abstract

This paper discussed different strategies and techniques to develop self-awareness among students as well as teachers of different educational institutions of our society. The present paper also describes different types of self-awareness with different examples and how it will be useful for both teachers and students. This work also focuses its benefits for the students and teachers during teaching. This theoretical paper also finds many outcomes and useful suggestions for the teaching learning process. Regression of these outcomes against self-awareness measures revealed that self-reflection and insight predicted beneficial outcomes, rumination predicted reduced benefits and increased costs, and mindfulness predicted both increased proactivity and costs. As different reviews are there these studies definitely help to refine the self-awareness concept by identifying the unique outcomes associated with the concepts of self-reflection, insight, reflection, rumination and mindfulness. It can be used in future studies to evaluate and develop awareness-raising techniques to maximize self-awareness benefits while minimizing related costs.

Keywords: Self-Awareness, Strategies, Educational Institutions, Self-Reflection, Rumination etc.

INTRODUCTION

Self-awareness is just one's ability to perceive and understand the things that make him/her who he is as an individual, including your personality, actions, values, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts. Self-awareness has long been seen by practitioners and researchers as both a primary means of alleviating psychological distress and the path of self-development for psychologically healthy individuals. Four decades ago, Fenigstein et al. wrote that "increased awareness of the self is both a tool and a goal" (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975, p. 522), while more recently an extensive review has demonstrated that different aspects of self-awareness, including mindfulness and rumination, mediate the impact of mindfulness-based interventions on mental health outcomes (Gu, Strauss, Bond, & Cavanagh, 2015). The importance of self-awareness goes beyond well-being and mental health to include substantial impacts on day-to-day functioning. It has important effects on performance, with reflection and mindfulness encouraging persistence with tasks despite performance-related stress (Feldman, Dunn, Stemke, Bell, & Greeson, 2014) and rumination related to interpersonal difficulties (Brinker, Chin, & Wilkinson, 2014).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As we know self-awareness is defined as "conscious knowledge of one's own character, feelings, motives, and desires," according to Oxford Language.

Psychologists Shelley Duval and Robert Wicklund proposed this definition:

"Self-awareness is the ability to focus on yourself and how your actions, thoughts, or emotions do or don't align with your internal standards. If you're highly self-aware, you can objectively evaluate yourself, manage your emotions, align your behavior with your values, and understand correctly how others perceive you."

Put simply, those who are highly self-aware can interpret their actions, feelings, and thoughts objectively.

It's a rare skill, as many of us spiral into emotion-driven interpretations of our circumstances. Developing self-awareness is important because it allows leaders to assess their growth and effectiveness and change course when necessary.

Why is Self-Awareness Important?

Many research organisations have researched the nature of self-awareness. Their research indicates that when we look inward, we can clarify our values, thoughts, feelings, behaviors, strengths, and weaknesses. We are able to recognize the effect that we have on others. Eurich's research finds that people with self-awareness are happier and have better relationships. They also experience a sense of personal and social control as well as higher job satisfaction.

In the same time when we look outward, we understand how people view us. People who are aware of how people

see them are more likely to be empathetic to people with different perspectives. Leaders whose self-perception matches others' perceptions are more likely to empower, include, and recognize others.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature enables the researchers to define the limits of his/her field. It helps the researchers to delimit and define his problem. Here some of the research studies highlighted and try to look on the topic rigorously, **Trapnell & Campbell, (1999); Trudeau & Reich, (1995)** found that Self-awareness can be broadly defined as the extent to which people are consciously aware of their internal states and their interactions or relationships with others. **Brown & Ryan, (2003)** Viewed as an overarching theoretical construct, self-awareness is operationalized in different ways depending on the focus of the research. A distinction is often drawn, for example, between situational and dispositional self-awareness, reflecting the different approaches of social psychologists and personality psychologists respectively. **Silvia & Duval, (2001)** Situational self-awareness is an automatic process by which we compare our current actions to our internalised standards, making changes where necessary to reduce inconsistency. **Fenigstein et al., (1975)** Dispositional self-awareness (also known as self-consciousness or self-attentiveness) in contrast, is the trait-like tendency for an individual to focus on and reflect on their own psychological processes and inner experiences as well as their relationships to others. Fenigstein further distinguished between public and private self-consciousness, with the former being an awareness of how one appears to others (similar to the concept of self-monitoring) and the latter being awareness of and reflecting on one's internal states. **Grant et al. (2002)** note that these abilities to monitor and evaluate are essential components of self-regulation and goal-directed behaviour. While self-reflection and insight are related to well-being, it is not a straightforward relationship. Insight is related to increased psychological well-being and cognitive flexibility, while self-reflection is associated with higher anxiety but lower depression. A so-called 'self-absorption paradox' seems to exist: higher self-attentiveness is associated with both better self-knowledge and increased psychological distress. **Harrington & Loffredo, (2011)** A comparison of the SRIS and reflection / rumination conceptualizations of self-awareness demonstrated that Insight (from the SRIS scale) was the best predictor of six different dimensions of psychological well-being . Rumination negatively predicted autonomy, mastery and self-acceptance while reflection positively predicted personal growth. This study further demonstrated how a focus on self-awareness outcomes can help to elucidate theoretical distinctions within the self-awareness concept.

RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

It gives teachers the power to influence outcomes as students. It helps them to become better decision-makers It gives them

more self-confidence — so, as a result, they communicate with clarity and intention with their students. It allows them to understand things from multiple perspectives. It frees us from our assumptions and biases. Self-awareness skills are important because they allow students to see themselves and their emotions clearly. This not only enhances students' ability to recognize their own strengths and limitations—which can aid in their education—but also fosters feelings of confidence and self-purpose.

As an educator, it's essential to consider the ways that self-awareness skills lead to better outcomes for students, including improved:

• Academic performance	• Conflict and stress management
• Teamwork and collaboration	• Goal achievement

Self-awareness skills help students understand themselves and others, behave properly in the right settings, and make sense of their cultural identities. Social-emotional learning (SEL), the framework by which students come to hone their self-awareness skills, can also educate students on how to properly label their emotions. This can help them avoid mislabelling and projecting their emotions, which can lead to behavioral issues and other negative student outcomes. Therefore, in this paper an attempt has been made to analyze the types, benefits, strategies of self-awareness skill and how its helps to improve the educational environment in educational field and the teacher taught relationship, along with tried to get answers of above and below praiseworthy questions.

OBJECTIVES

1. To highlight different types of Self-awareness
2. To highlight different strategies to develop self-awareness among students and teachers
3. To study impact and benefits of self-awareness during teaching;
4. To made some suggestion with regard to strategies of self-awareness.

Research Questions

1. What are different types of Self-awareness?
2. What are the different strategies to develop self-awareness among students and teachers?
3. Whether it has any impact and benefits for teaching learning process?
4. How self-awareness can be a tool for the development of teaching learning process as well as emotional booster for the students?

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey method used in the study as the investigators tried to get information about more than one

variable also with better understanding of perceptions of stakeholders (Hittleman and Simon, 1997). Through this method information about conditions, situations and events that occur in the present can be obtained (UNESCO, 2005).

Therefore, in the present study, the investigator used this method to explore all possibilities to measure the impact and effectiveness and strategies for self-awareness and how it will be helping the students and teachers for their confidence building and also helping the teaching learning process, Also the problems and its eradication from the root with providing different suggestions.

Secondary Data Collection

The sources of secondary data are the published and unpublished reports. Data from secondary sources were gathered from books, articles, journals, published reports, and Government documents. Quantitative information with regard to current impact, issues on integrated policies and issues on tribal employment.

DISCUSSION

Different Types @ Self-Awareness

Basically there are Two Types of Self-Awareness

1. *Internal self-awareness*
2. *External self-awareness*

Across the studies we examined, two broad categories of self-awareness kept emerging. The first, which we dubbed *internal self-awareness*, represents how clearly we see our own values, passions, aspirations, fit with our environment, reactions (including thoughts, feelings, behaviors, strengths, and weaknesses), and impact on others. We've found that internal self-awareness is associated with higher job and relationship satisfaction, personal and social control, and happiness; it is negatively related to anxiety, stress, and depression.

The second category, *external self-awareness*, means understanding how other people view us, in terms of those same factors listed above. Our research shows that people who know how others see them are more skilled at showing empathy and taking others' perspectives. For leaders who see themselves as their employees do, their employees tend to have a better relationship with them, feel more satisfied with them, and see them as more effective in general.

But further it has been sub-divided in to 4 types according to its **Archetype**

It's easy to assume that being high on one type of awareness would mean being high on the other. But our research has found virtually no relationship between them. As a result, we identify four leadership archetypes, each with a different set of opportunities to improve: Based on these two types of self-awareness, Eurich has presented four 'self-awareness archetypes'.

	Low External Self-Awareness	High Internal Self-Awareness
High Internal Self-Awareness	Archetype: Introspectors 1. High internal self-awareness 2. Low external self-awareness	Archetype: Aware 1. High internal self-awareness 2. High external self-awareness
Low Internal Self-Awareness	Archetype: Seekers 1. Low internal self-awareness 2. Low external self-awareness	Archetype: Pleasers 1. Low Internal self-awareness 2. High external self-awareness

Each is one described as under:

Introspectors: Introspectors have high internal self-awareness, meaning they are very much aware of their own emotions. However, they're often unaware of how others perceive them (low external self-awareness). They often don't seek out feedback from others, which can limit their self-growth and lead to plenty of blindspots (Eurich, 2018).

Aware: The 'aware' archetype is the idealized model because it represents people with very high emotional intelligence. These people are both internally and externally self-aware, meaning they will both self-reflect regularly and seek out external information and feedback to help broaden their perspectives and address blindspots (Eurich, 2018).

Seekers: Seekers don't think much about themselves, their emotions, thoughts, or identities. They also aren't aware of how others perceive them. As a result, they're often frustrated by their lack of progress (especially in terms of networking and relationships) (Eurich, 2018).

Pleasers: Pleasers tend to be more focused on and concerned

about how others perceive them than their own self-perception. By focusing too much on pleasing others, they often make decisions that aren't in their own best interests, such as by saying 'yes' to too many collaborations, leading them to becoming burned-out! (Eurich, 2018)

Different Strategies to Develop Self-Awareness

There are different strategies to cultivate self-awareness among the students and teachers of educational organisations as under:-

Envision Yourself

Always teachers and students should visualize the best version of themselves. "Ideal selves reflect our hopes, dreams, aspirations, and speak to our skills, abilities, achievements, and accomplishments that we wish to attain." (Higgins, 1987; Markus & Nurius, 1986.) As you lean into your strengths to become the better version of yourself, you can use this idealized self to keep moving in the right direction and not be distracted by setbacks and other obstacles.

Ask the “what” Questions

At the core of self-awareness is the ability to self-reflect. The trouble is, we the students and teachers are always asking ourselves the wrong questions. In our attempt to resolve internal conflict, we are asking, “Why? Instead of ‘what’?” Yet there’s no way to answer that question since we don’t have access to our unconscious. Instead, we make up answers that may not be accurate.

We the teacher community should know the danger of the “why” question is that it sends students and both of us down the rabbit hole of our negative thoughts. Then students are starting focus on their weaknesses and insecurities.

Asking the “what question” puts students and both of us into the objective and open space of considering all the factors influencing a particular outcome. For example, instead of “Why don’t I speak up at meetings?” we could ask:

- “What was I experiencing in my body at the time?”
- “What happened that caused me to go into my old story of not being good enough?”
- “What can I do to overcome my fear of speaking up?”

This kind of introspection allows us to look at behaviors and beliefs for what they are. With self-awareness, we can examine old patterns and stories that do not serve us, and then we can move on. Asking the right questions empowers us to make different choices that bring different results.

Strengthen Your Brain

As we know the amygdala, also called the primitive brain, was the first part of the brain to develop in humans. It functioned as a kind of radar signalling the need to run away or fight back. That part of the brain is skilled at anticipating danger and reacts before we can even name a negative emotion. Our heart races, our stomach tightens, and our neck muscles tense up.

Your body’s reaction is a tripwire signalling the pre-frontal cortex to register or name a negative emotion. If you bring awareness to your physical state, you can, at the moment, recognize the emotion as it is happening. Becoming skillful at this rewires your brain.

Naming your feelings is critical in decision-making. When we let our feelings overwhelm us, we can make bad decisions with unintended consequences. Naming your emotions allows us to take a “third-person” perspective to stand back and more objectively evaluate what’s going on.

Let’s bring this home with an example. Teacher, a self-aware person, are having a conversation with their students and receiving some negative feedback. Now teachers heart starts to race, and he/she is feeling threatened. He/she say to himself, “I feel like this person is attacking me.” But, before teacher cry or go ballistic, teacher should stop himself and hear the person out. Teacher should discover that this person had at least one good point and start up a different conversation, one that is mutually satisfying and productive.

Ask others about their Perception of You

Through this technique students and teachers can now readyand accept that feedback doesn’t have to be scary, ask other peers how they perceive them in certain situations. Getting specific will help to give them the most concrete feedback. Get brave and ask them how they would like to see you behave.After getting feedback make a list of words to describe your attitude and behaviors at the time.

Keep a Journal

Journalling is a great way to pay attention to what’s going on in your private and public self. It will also help you to recognize patterns that either serve you or not. The teacher may prompts students to follow bellow technique and questions to themselves to be self awared:

1. What did I do well today?
2. What challenges did I face?
3. What was I feeling?
4. How did I respond? In retrospect, would I have responded differently?
5. What strengths did I use to keep me focused on the best version of myself?
6. What is my intention for tomorrow?

Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a practice. It helps both the teachers and students within institution be aware of what’s going on in their mind, body, and teaching learning environment. Meditation is one of a few practices that they can insert into their daily life with school time regularly, and practicing mindfulness is a wonderful tool for developing greater self-control.

Here are some ideas of mindfulness activities to get you started with the school for the betterment of the students, teachers as well as teaching learning process:

• Practice deep breathing	• Name you surroundings
• Organize your space	• Draw or paint

The road to self-awareness not an end but is a journey. The most self-aware people in the world see themselves on a quest to mastery rather than at a particular destination. As you move forward in developing your self-awareness, ask yourself regularly, “How will you move toward the best version of yourself today?”

Impact and Benefits of Self-Awareness @ Teaching Learning Process

The benefits of self-awareness are profound and far-reaching, profoundly impacting various aspects of life in case of students in particular teachers in general. Some key benefits include enhanced decision-making in teaching learning situation, relationship-building between students, teachers and peers, personal and professional growth, stress

management, and emotional health in teen ages. Each is outlined below:

Relationships and Interpersonal Skills: Having high internal and external self-awareness means both teachers and students tuned not just into their own actions and emotions but also those of the people around them. This can help predict and respond appropriately to others' behaviors, needs, and emotions, strengthening and deepening their relationships.

Personal and professional growth: By understanding your strengths, weaknesses, core values, and areas that need improvement, teachers can develop strategies to bolster their skills and address areas of weakness in their teaching learning process in particular profession in general. In a professional context, this might translate to choosing projects that align with teachers' strengths or opting for upskilling in areas where they are not as confident.

Stress management: Recognizing students emotional and physical reactions to stress can help them develop effective coping mechanisms particularly in difficult situation in schooling. Whether it's understanding that a walk outdoors can calm their mind or realizing that speaking about their challenges helps relieve stress, these strategies are borne out of self-awareness.

Emotional health: Self-awareness lets them better understand and manage their own emotions, leading to improved psychological well-being. Take, for example, developing clarity about learning, friendship, sleep patterns, foods, exercise patterns, or actions that affect their mood. This self-awareness can help them to make life decisions that can manage their emotions more effectively. Decoding students and teachers' emotional responses leads to better resilience and overall emotional health during teaching learning process and profession growth.

As we mentioned earlier, strengthening self-awareness has a variety of benefits. There are some specifics of each one depends on the individual.

Here are some examples of common benefits of self-awareness:

- It gives us the power to influence outcomes
- It helps us to become better decision-makers It gives us more self-confidence — so, as a result, we communicate with clarity and intention
- It allows us to understand things from multiple perspectives
- It frees us from our assumptions and biases
- It helps us build better relationships
- It gives us a greater ability to regulate our emotions
- It decreases stress
- It makes us happier

Suggestion with Regard to Strategies @ Self-Awareness

After all above discussion following are some of suggestions for cultivating self-awareness in the institutions-

- Try to recognise when you are under stress and just understand why.
- Know your strengths and think how to use them optimally.
- Understand your weaknesses and work to improve them.
- Be aware of your motivating forces.
- Know your personal values and feel how they dictate your decisions.
- Realize when you are happiest and striving to spend more time in that state.
- Understand your key skills and leverage them in work and life.
- Recognize when you are overwhelmed and take necessary action to control.
- Be aware of your mood swings and manage them effectively.
- Always actively seek feedback from peers, friends, or family.
- Notice how others react to your words and actions in various contexts and change.
- Be considerate of others' needs while expressing your own.
- Adjust your behavior to align with cultural norms or social expectations.
- Understand how your punctuality or lack thereof affects others.
- Recognize how your reactions to feedback impact the feedback giver.
- Pay attention to others' vocal tone or nonverbal cues when interacting with you.
- Monitor how your work style meshes with or disrupts team dynamics.
- Understand how your leadership style is received by your subordinates and peers.
- Ignore feelings of stress or anxiety without investigating their cause.
- Always regard your personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Be aware of deep-rooted personal values.
- Recognize patterns of mood swings.
- Respect significant past experiences that shape present behavior.
- Be visionary about personal set goals and life expectations.

- Set your physical and emotional boundaries.
- Recognize the effects of negative or unproductive habits.
- Assess personal beliefs and how they influence perceptions.
- Do not fail to notice reactions or feedback to your behavior from others.
- Be cautious to the effect of your emotional state has on people around.
- Do not ignore the suitability of your communication style for various situations and audiences.
- Be sensible how others react to your punctuality habits.
- Recognize how your reactions to feedback affect the person providing it.
- Regard others' perspectives to take them into account in decision making.

CONCLUSION

By developing a measure of the outcomes of self-awareness, this study has contributed to extending our understanding of the self-awareness concept and its effects in everyday life especially for the teaching and students' community. The above paper identifies the main impacts of self-awareness on people's day-to-day lives and provides initial evidence of the outcomes associated with the practice of common mindfulness and self-awareness techniques. It can be used in future studies of the comparative effect of these techniques in order to identify ways of improving self-awareness that can enhance reflective self-development, acceptance and proactivity while minimizing related emotional costs.

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