

CHAPTER 4

RISKY BEHAVIORS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: THE ROLE OF SHAME-GUILT PRONENESS AND SELF-ESTEEM

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SELF-CONSCIOUS EMOTIONS

Individuals have a number of living standards shaped by variables such as cultural, biological and environmental factors. These standards can shape our feelings, thoughts and behavior. Our concordance with these standards regulates our place in the society, our relationships and our perceptions about our self. Our self-assessment regarding standards compliance can lead to a number of complex emotions, such as self-conscious (Lewis 1995: 68).

Self-conscious emotions that arise with early self-perception and self-evaluation ability are also mentioned as social feelings and moral feelings (Tangney et al. 2007: 21). Shame, guilt, embarrassment and pride are among the emotions of self-conscious (Tangney 1999: 541). In order for emotional self-conscious to emerge, vital standards must be comprehended, self-cognition must be acquired and cognitive ability to self-assessment according to these standards must be obtained (Lewis 1995: 68).

For a more comprehensible definition of the concept, five main features that distinguish self-conscious emotions from the basic emotions are listed. (1) Self-conscious emotions must include self-consciousness. (2) Even though the basic emotions emerge on the first 9 months of life, the earliest form of self-conscious emotions emerge between 18 -24 months. (3) As basic emotions have functions on survival (for instance, fear), self-conscious emotions enable achieving complex social goals. (4) While basic emotions have distinctive and universal forms of facial expression, self-conscious emotions does not have such expressions. (5)

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meaningful results are obtained. Although it is considered as one of the scales that best measure the emotions of shame and guilt, adaptation studies to different cultures can be contradictory. Emotions of shame and guilt are highly influenced by culture as feelings of self-cognition. In this case, it is thought that it would be beneficial to examine, conceptualize and develop a culture-specific scale of self-cognition feelings such as shame and guilt peculiar to the Turkish culture (Kugler et al. 1992; Dost et al. 2006).

The research was carried out with Aydın Adnan Menderes University students. It is thought that these variables may be important for understanding the strengths of predicting risky behaviors and for preventing studies; by studying on the impact of emotions of shame-guilt and self-esteem in predicting risky behaviors with longitudinal studies.

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