

Personality, Attitudes, and Friendships Study (Time 2): Aggregate Summary of Results

The following information is related to a study that you may have participated in November/December of 2020 and then completed the second part in February/March of 2021. If you participated in this study, you completed an online survey about your feelings and attitudes towards personality and your relationship with a selected close friend in the Fall term of 2020 (Time 1) and then again in the Winter term of 2021 (Time 2).

In Western society, people prefer higher self-esteem over low self-esteem. Perhaps not surprisingly, previous studies show that those with lower self-esteem have lower well-being. We wanted to see whether those with lower self-esteem would hide their self-esteem, and whether concealing self-esteem influences their well-being. Hence, the goals of this study were (1) to determine if individuals with lower self-esteem conceal their self-esteem more, and (2) to determine if individuals who conceal their self-esteem more also have increased personal distress and (3) and decreased levels of friendship quality.

KEY FINDINGS:

Were individuals with lower self-esteem more likely to conceal their self-esteem from their close friends?

Yes. Individuals who had lower self-esteem also reported higher levels of self-esteem concealment compared to those who were higher in self-esteem at both Time 1 and Time 2.

Did individuals who concealed their self-esteem more report more personal distress?

Yes. Individuals who concealed their self-esteem more also reported higher levels of personal distress, such as burnout and feeling more tired, compared to those who concealed less at both Time 1 and Time 2.

Did individuals who hid their self-esteem more report lower levels of friendship quality?

Yes. Individuals who concealed their self-esteem more from their close friends also reported lower levels of friendship quality, such feeling less accepted and less close, compared to those who concealed less at both Time 1 and Time 2.

*Did individuals who concealed their self-esteem more at Time 1 **later** report more personal distress and lower levels of friendship quality at Time 2?*

Yes. Individuals who concealed their self-esteem more at Time 1 also reported higher levels of personal distress and lower levels of friendship quality at Time 2 compared to those who concealed less.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

The present study suggests that self-esteem concealment **might** undermine well-being. Because this was a correlational study, we cannot conclude does that self-esteem concealment causes

higher personal distress and/or lower friendship quality. Future research could conduct experimental studies to test for a cause-and-effect relationship. Future research could also explore whether individuals use self-esteem concealment in other close relationships such as with romantic partner or a family member. It would also be beneficial to investigate whether different cultures, who have different attitudes towards self-esteem, might influence the concealment of self-esteem and its consequences.

If you would like more information related to this study, please refer to:

Cameron, J. J., Stinson, D. A., Hoplock, L., Hole, C., & Schellenberg, J. (2016). The robust self-esteem proxy: Impressions of self-esteem inform judgments of personality and social value. *Self and Identity*, 15(5), 561–578. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2016.1175373>

Chaudoir, S. R., & Quinn, D. M. (2016). Evidence that anticipated stigma predicts poorer depressive symptom trajectories among emerging adults living with concealable stigmatized identities. *Self and Identity*, 15(2), 139-151.

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact:

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Thank you again for your participation!