

Academic Arrogance

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Abstract

Arrogance can be termed psychopathological in real terms. However, academic arrogance borders closely on mania proneness, narcissistic traits related to inflated self-perceptions due to dominance in a particular field or due to anxiety and self-depressions due to subordination and submissiveness. Globally extensive research has indicated that academic arrogance is identified in individuals who are rooted in heightened dominance in any particular field of education or research. Academic arrogance is observed in the academia where individuals acquire self-inflated perceptions of academic superiority!

Keywords: Academic arrogance, inflated perceptions, psychopathological, superiority complex, traits, misogynists, illusory superiority

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I. Introduction

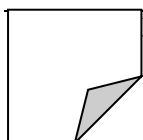
Superiority in any field in general, psychologically, imparts a special cultural trait to one's character. Particularly, a general belief is that mastering or qualifying for a higher or doctoral degree makes one assume that having spent enough time on that particular subject, they should be superior to others in that subject. This superior feeling or academic arrogance destroys the human being in that person, isolating them from others in the field in which they are involved. This implies that many in the society shun such a character. Academic arrogance can be harmful to the individual at a personal level and as well be disadvantageous to the scientific community. Such arrogancy can be spotted in persons who always tend to be in the central focus of discussions, conferences, meetings, and all gatherings in academia. This is much in focus in higher educational and research institutions. These are people who are supercilious, presumptuous about their presence in social get togethers of researchers or academics. To quote "Acting Superior but Actually Inferior?". Such arrogant people normally react when they observe that their ego is threatened. They resort to aggression as a means of defending themselves against someone who seeks to undermine or discredit their views of self-aggrandizement.

II. Origins of Academic Arrogance

Roots of Academic Arrogance - Knowledge and Arrogance

This relates more or less directly to the teaching community. *Some fresh teachers* at school feel grumpy when the student does not understand a word about what is taught – the fault lies on the teacher or the student? The teacher because of her knowledge about the subject assumes that all the students can immediately catch what is taught; to the contrary the teacher assumes that the students learning for the first time about a difficult subject can immediately understand. The teacher becomes very upset and grumpy and shouts at the class. This is a *highly insolent* behaviour on the part of the teacher, in the background of what happens in a classroom. This is a simple example of a rude arrogance displayed by the teacher- "infuriating slow learners". These types of teachers later develop into arrogant teachers, not being liked by students. A similar case could be argued out about any other professional – say, for an experienced lawyer treating a junior; or an any other experienced person treating his assistant. Large number of cases are to be found that these juniors tend to become arrogant toward their colleagues later! These types of actions cannot be even considered as *marginally motivation*.

Berating an academic before colleagues is also seen in many as a demonstration of 'Academic Arrogance'. Such type of arrogant behaviour has been reported in several higher educational institutions. Many a time, a senior professor because of his age and seniority, and perhaps of his high academic stature is reported to be taunting his juniors about their academic teaching or performances. Some of these juniors later become perpetrators of arrogance! By such manners, they are forced to believe that a rude and arrogant way to put across certain views are acceptable, without themselves realising their mistakes. Some turn to be misogynists, basically treating women in a harsh way!



Characteristics of Academic Arrogance

Some of the blatant displays of arrogance can be noticed in some of the formats explained hereunder, which mostly has to do with the ‘self-illusory superiority syndrome’- the ‘I, Myself and Me’ to a certain extent!

- Personal Self-Assessment – have an unrealistic” illusory superiority” of having extra-ordinary abilities and knowledge far ahead of others,
- Comparing and contrasting – comparing and contrasting themselves and ranking themselves higher with respect to others, egoistic,
- Discrediting others - under estimating students and colleagues, and belittling them,
- Despising - or look down upon some of the academics from whom they took courses, and act as if they are superior to them, misogynists are another creed,
- Seeking more publicity - and expect to occupy the front seats in any discussion or presentations, dominating at get-togethers
- Expertise and arrogance displayed - because they see themselves as superior to other academicians and students in their field of expertise,
- A large amount of research indicates that arrogant academics get into a hierarchical relationship with others forming conflicting teams within; this does not augur well for inter-disciplinary research or work and becomes an obstacle for progress,
- This has made the younger generation to be less tolerant to religions, castes, or creed.

How can Academic Arrogance be Eliminated

“I think as intellectuals, educated person, the learned and the know-er, the ‘don’t knows’ look up to you purely as role models, that can push us beyond our limits, inspiring and motivating us to do better than we ever feel we can do. So why then do you intellects demoralize and de-motivate our spirit with your intellectual egotism?” - Nneoma Okoroafor. This is a quote, from one who was totally demoralized.

Arrogance is one of these attributes that hampers and disturbs workplace relationships and causes unnecessary uneasiness amongst fellow workers, creating a toxic uncomfortable climate for everyone. To avoid such persons is to totally psychologically boost his image so that the person starts questioning within whether the behaviour should stand corrected. General occupational stress is the response to a stimulus or stimuli that causes imbalance in the physical and mental equilibrium of an individual and gives an illusory feeling of superiority. Such persons are incapable of doing things by themselves. Arrogant people are usually less intelligent and skilled, although they pretend to be superior to others. Their arrogance is totally unsubstantiated. Positive approach may be to allow them handle specifically difficult time-consuming programs and projects; so that they realise their mistakes and problems and would seek to identify some junior capable worker to join them and this could gradually improve their internal conflicts. Another negative approach could be to entrust them with some very most difficult jobs without any assistance, in that they find it difficult to continue. Further mentoring could perhaps improve their physical discomfort. Arrogance is a trait identified with less competent and low esteem people!

III. Conclusion

Arrogance is known by, when a person’s views and interests are ignored, and whose charge is to see to their wellbeing, a moral harm has occurred. We ought not to ignore their views or interest, but rather find ways to be sensitive to them. As intellectuals, it becomes a primary duty for all of us to shun arrogance, as it impedes workplace progress, and also does not in any way contribute to a moral society.

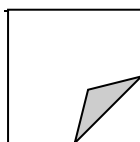
Invariably, arrogance hides the incapacity of the person to do something by himself, or rather reflects on his character to despise and discredit others, and stand out in the crowd. The only way to tame such people is to educate them to be more acceptable to society and also their teammates. Arrogance can manifest itself in academics in many forms. It can be identified in persons dis-crediting other colleagues by sheer dominance or insulting them; placing oneself superior to others in general; comparing oneself with others, and above all, praising himself all along! Though, it is generally agreed that the Dunning-Kruger effect is an extreme example of the “more generic bias illusory superiority”- a recipe for self-destruction!

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