

Research Shows Pride's Potential to Foster Individual Success

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(PhysOrg.com) -- The age-old question of whether pride is the seventh sin or an adaptive virtue has been answered by two Northeastern University scientists. Contrary to popular belief, the researchers found that pride not only leads individuals to take on leadership roles in teams, but also fosters admiration, as opposed to scorn, from teammates.

"We found that pride is quite undeserving of its negative reputation," said David DeSteno, associate professor of psychology and co-author of the study. "Pride actually constitutes a functional social emotion with important implications for leadership and the building of social capital."

DeSteno and lead author Lisa Williams designed an experiment including individual and group activities. For the individual activities, certain participants were induced to feel proud. Participants next interacted cooperatively on a problem-solving task and were asked to evaluate their partners' leadership and likability. The participant who received the pride induction took on a dominant role and was perceived as the most "hands-on" during the activity. In addition, their teammates viewed them as more likable than the other participants.

"These are some of the first findings that show functional outcomes of pride within the context of actual social behavior," said Williams.

"Although when taken to extremes, pride can certainly be maladaptive, this research demonstrates the emotion's potential for fostering successful interpersonal interaction."

The findings were published in the March issue of the journal *Psychological Science*. The authors believe that these findings hold implications for successful management and team dynamics, especially in the context of organizational behavior.

"Pride," they note, "can play an integral role in enhancing team functioning by fostering confidence and admiration."

Provided by Northeastern University

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