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The Effects of Self-Esteem on Reading and Math Achievement in Third and Fifth Grade Students

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THE EFFECTS OF SELF-ESTEEM ON
READING AND MATH ACHIEVEMENT
IN THIRD AND FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS



Carol Ann Beatty, B.A.

An Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
Of Lindenwood University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Masters of Arts
1998

ABSTRACT

This study examined whether self-esteem had a significant effect on reading and math achievement. Data were collected from 90 third and fifth grade students in a Midwestern, suburban elementary school. Results of a self-esteem test (Piers-Harris Children's Self-concept Scale) were correlated to standardized reading and math test scores (Missouri Mastery and Achievement Test, MMAT). The results indicated a direct correlation. The variation in the level of self-esteem scores suggests a parallel relationship with reading and math achievement scores. The direct correlation demonstrates if one score (self-esteem) is high, then the other score (reading or math) will more than likely be high. Or if one score (self-esteem) is low, then the other score (math) will more than likely be low. Based on this data, self-esteem and reading and math could be taught together instead of as separate subjects in elementary schools today.

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DEDICATION

To my mother, Velma Jean Forren Beatty

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I am grateful to Jean Szpak for her encouragement to fulfill my goal of earning a master's degree I would like to thank my son, Nicholas Ryan, for his support during my time away from home to complete this goal and for eating hot dogs much of the time for dinner. Thank you to Pam Nickels, Ed Doerr, and Claire Halloran, for their professional support and guidance. Thank you to Bryce Courteney, the author of "The Power of One" for writing an inspirational book about the power of the human mind, body, and spirit, together creating self-esteem.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The variable of self-esteem and the relationship it plays on academic achievement has been the focus of research during the last thirty years (Piers & Harris, 1964; Bloom, 1976; Chapman, Cullen, Boersma, & Maguire, 1981; Song & Hattie, 1985). Generally the correlation between the level of self-esteem and academic achievement in elementary school children is mildly to moderately positive (Lyons & MacDonald, 1990). Since most elementary schools place their teaching emphasis on the development of cognitive abilities, these results tend to suggest a need for schools to examine the role of non-cognitive variables—self-concept, locus of control, affect, motivation, attributes about school, interest in subject matter, curiosity, temperament, social sensitivity and creativity (Messick, 1979, p.282).

Lyons & MacDonald (1990) reported that the measure of self-concept has been criticized for lack of psychometrically adequate instruments. They identified more recent studies suggesting many facets of the construct of self-concept and concluded that two specific components in their findings: academic self-concept (math, English, and science), and general self-concept (social, emotional, and physical). Having made this distinction Lyons & MacDonald state that it now appears that many of the past contradictory findings related to self-concept and achievement may be partially a function of inadequate use of

the self-concept construct. These researchers hypothesize one might reasonably expect that academic achievement would be highly correlated to academic self-concept rather to general self-concept. Therefore, previous correlations of achievement and general self-concept may have involved weaker links in the achievement/self-concept relationship.

Coopersmith (1976) defines self-concept as “a person’s perception of him/herself (p.211). Piers & Harris (1969) define self-concept as a relatively stable set of self-attitudes reflecting both a description and an evaluation of one’s own behaviors and attributes (p.8). Shavelson’s (1976) model of self-concept includes the definition of self-esteem as the evaluative dimension of the self that includes feelings of worthiness, pride and encouragement (p. 600). For the purpose of this study self-esteem, as it relates to self-concept, will refer to the non-cognitive variables as the social, emotional, and physical components. These two terms, self-esteem and self-concept, may be interchanged throughout this study.

In some schools the use of intervention programs, such as special self-esteem classes and retention programs, have been used to assist students who are not achieving academically. In a recent study Hocko (1993) used the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale and the California Achievement Test to explore the effects of self-esteem on

reading achievement. While studying fourth grade students in a middle class suburban setting, she found a positive, but not significant effect. This result challenges the effectiveness of educational intervention programs that seek to raise reading achievement by improving self-concept.

In another study Setencich (1994) researched the impact of early grade retention in academic achievement and self-esteem of seventh and eighth grade students. In this study retention had been the answer to the problem of what to do with students who were unprepared for the academic and social demands of the next grades. Using the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) and the Self-Esteem Inventory School Form Setenich (1994) hypothesize that retained students would score significantly lower than their non-retained peers on academic and self-esteem measures. Her results indicated that retained students have significantly lower academic achievement and self-esteem scores than those of the promoted pupils.

These two examples, retention and self-esteem classes, lead us to conclude current interventions may be insufficient in assisting students to succeed in a school setting. The purpose of this study is to look at the relationship of self-esteem to reading and math achievement in third and fifth graders. If there is a relationship of self-esteem on reading and math achievement, then what types of programs or what can teachers do to

develop and enhances this relationship?

The literature tends to focus on the development of the school age child, definitions of self-esteem and academic achievement, and previous research on the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in a school setting. In order to understand to what extent self-esteem interrelates with academic achievement, this study is designed to determine if a relationship can be identified. The null hypothesis tested is that there is no significant difference in self-esteem and the level of reading and math achievement in third and fifth grade students.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD

According to Erikson (1963) the psychosocial task of the school age child, ages 7 through 12, is to begin to create and develop a sense of competence and perseverance. It is at this stage of development when the child works very hard to succeed. Also at this stage there is rapid weight gain and girls generally tend to have more of a growth spurt than boys (Erikson, 1963). Newman and Newman (1995) report the school age child becomes more coordinated and is very active physically. The child's focus on environment shifts from home to school. Friends are very important and the ability to resolve conflicts is learned.

Several developmental tasks according to Erikson's psychosocial theory include learning physical skills, learning to get along with same age children, and developing skill in reading, writing, and math. The school age child is developing a conscience, morals, and values, and achieving personal independence, and building self-esteem.

Piaget developed a theory with four basic stages of cognitive development, and it is at age six or seven in which the third stage, concrete operational thought, begins and usually ends at around 11 or 12. At the concrete operational stage children begin to appreciate the logical necessity of certain casual relationships (Newman & Newman, 1995). They are more successful problem-solvers and can manipulate

categories and classification systems into groups. Beginning in the concrete operations, children can use many of the principles that are fundamental for scientific reasoning. Metacognition is also available to them when the school age child thinks about his thinking. This skill helps them prepare and organize information to think more clearly and effectively. At this stage of cognitive development the school age student also learns about principles that govern objects and physical relationships which helps them to learn about themselves and others (Newman & Newman, 1995).

L.S. Vygotsky studied the school age child in a social setting. He suggested that meaning comes from the child's social, historical, and cultural contexts as well as from the child's biological maturation (Newman and Newman, 1995). School age children enjoy watching older children perform a task, and they copy the strategy. Asking parents and teachers for help when a task is too difficult is another way in which school age children develop independent problem-solving skills by using their resources. In Vygotsky's theory just as a child thinks differently from an adult, a child from a different culture or family will think differently. This concept is important for a school setting to be aware of and to accommodate within the early grades of a child's education.

The development of healthy self-esteem and the success of academic achievement, along with good problem-solving skills, are

crucial at this stage of child development when the environment focus switches from a home setting to a school setting. The school age child is able to transfer information learned at school to the home setting.

SELF-ESTEEM

Unfortunately, like so many other terms in psychology, there is no generally agreed upon definition for self-esteem (Branden, 1983).

Branden defines self-esteem as “a concept pertaining to a fundamental sense of efficacy and a fundamental sense of worth, to competence, and worthiness in principle (p.45). In Branden’s definition he states, “I trust in my mind to make choices and decisions that will guide my life (p 45).”

According to Barksdale (1989) and Rosenberg (1989), self-esteem is a concept, an attitude, a feeling, and an image toward a particular entity, namely the self. Shavelson’s (1976) self-concept model includes the definition of self-esteem as the evaluative dimension of the self that includes feelings of worthiness, pride, and encouragement (p. 600). Coopersmith (1976) defines self-concept as a “person’s perception of him/herself (p.278). Piers & Harris (1969) define self-concept as a relatively stable set of self-attitudes reflecting both a description and an evaluation of one’s own behaviors and attributes (p. 8).

There are two different levels of self-esteem: high self-esteem, “feeling self-confidence and self-respect” (Branden, 1983, p 46)); and

low self-esteem, “feeling little self-confidence and little or no self-respect(p. 46). When one has a high level of self-esteem, the individual takes responsibilities for choices, feelings, and actions. High self-esteem allows one to see oneself as valuable, competent, loving and lovable.

Barksdale (1989) states an individual has the ability to share in relationships with others with a realistic awareness of oneself and one’s rights. Low self-esteem allows one to see oneself as unworthy, incompetent, unloving and unlovable (Branden, 1983). Individuals with low self-esteem tend to have a negative self-image, a poor self-concept, and difficulty building relationships. Rosenberg (1989) indicated that low self-esteem implies self-rejection, self-dissatisfaction, and self-contempt. As a result these individuals may experience “limited intelligence, energy-level, and opportunities that influence the scope of a person’s productive ambition (Branden, 1983).

Kerris, Cornell, Sun, Berry & Harlow (1993) studied why the level of self-esteem of some people is more unstable than that of others. Their findings support the view of individuals who place substantial weight on self-evaluation information stemming from any source, both internal and external, are more likely to possess unstable self-esteem. The more an individuals’ feeling of overall self-worth are contingent on specific evaluation information, the more unstable their self-esteem is likely to be (Waschull and Kernis, 1996).

During early and middle school age, a theory of self becomes differentiated. Children can distinguish between the real self, how one actually is, and the ideal self, how one would like to be (Newman and Newman, 1996). Self-esteem for children is based on three important sources: messages of love, support, and approval from others, specific attributes and competencies, and the way one regards these specific aspects of self (Pelham & Swann, 1989).

ACHIEVEMENT

To achieve means to learn to perform, accomplish, to gain or win (Webster, 1990). Achievement tests are designed to measure the attainment of skills taught within a school. The achievement tests measure the current level of a student in reading, math, social studies, or science, or other academic domains.

There is some question as to whether schools should administer standardized tests at all. In a paper presented at the Association for Childhood Education International (Perrone, 1991) few teachers believe that a given child's achievement can be accurately represented by standardized tests. Reasons for caution in the use of tests include the possible loss of children's self-esteem. Perrone pointed out how a child internalizes information about his or her performance on standardized tests affect how a child feels about himself (i.e. self-esteem). In giving

academic tests, schools add academic testing as a variable in determining a child's self-esteem. This statement corresponds to the Lyons & McDonald's (1990) definition of self-esteem identifying general self-concept (social, emotional, and physical) and how the noncognitant variables are not included in schools for children.

Emotional and behavioral problems are commonly reported as factors in learning disabilities and may cause frustration or repeated academic test failure (Black, 1974). A circular pattern between personality and learning problems is probable with both school performance, test taking ability, and poor self-concept. Also, this circular effect may increase in the frequency and intensity of emotional and behavioral problems as age increases, resulting in lower academic scores in later grades.

Stipek & Gralinski (1996) studied school age students in grades 3 through 6 to examine associations among children's beliefs about intelligence and effort, goal orientations, self-reporting learning strategies, and academic achievement. The results of their study revealed a coherent set of beliefs about intelligence and academic performance and that beliefs are powerful predictors of achievement outcomes.

SELF-ESTEEM AND ACHIEVEMENT

In speculating a relationship between the level of self-esteem and academic achievement, Hocko (1993) conducted a study on the effects of self-esteem on reading achievement. Data were collected using the Piers Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and the California Achievement Tests. Her results with fourth grade middle school students found a positive, but not significant effect.

It should be noted Schike & Fagan (1994) conducted a study examining the contributions of self-concept and intelligence as predictors of academic achievement among fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students using the Piers Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and the Multidimensional Scale. Their results suggest that intelligence accounted for the most variance in achievement and that general self-concept added a small amount above intelligence.

In another study Howerton, Enger, and Cobbs (1992) researched at-risk adolescent African-American males in grades 6 through 8. Instruments used were the Coopersmith Self-Inventory (SEI) and scores from the Stanford Achievement Tests in addition to academic performance. Their results demonstrated self-esteem related directly to standardized test battery composite scores and school age averages. The overall average self-esteem score for these subjects was lower than for most means reported in normative studies for the SEI.

A study performed by Higgins, Schatz, and West (1994) examined self-esteem in relation to earned grades, achievement test scores, and other factors for fifth and sixth grade students. Using the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) at midyear and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) at the beginning of the year and the end of the year, the most significant positive correlation was between SEI and grades earned.

Also Keltikangas-Jarvinen studied self-esteem as a predictor of future school achievement in Finnish adolescents, ages 12 and 15. Self-esteem was assessed by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) when the students entered junior or senior high school. School achievement was measured when they graduated. Self-esteem appeared to be a valid predictor of future grade point average (GPA).

In looking at the correlation between self-concept and achievement, a different relationship was found. As reported earlier, Lyons & MacDonald (1990) studied the relationship of academic self-concept (math, English, science) of sixth grade students as compared to general self-concept (social, emotional, physical). These researchers reported academic self-concept correlated significantly higher with teachers' grades and standardized measures of achievement than with general self-concept scores. Self-concept in all these studies confirms that Lyons & MacDonald said, "there is not a consistent operational definition of self-esteem (p. 1135)." For the purpose of this paper, this researcher

will use the term "self-esteem." This may or may not be synonymous with the term self-concept as cited in the literature review. This study will use Lyons & MacDonald's definition of general self-concept as social, emotional, and physical.

PRESENT STUDY

The school age child is a period of development when the child begins to create and develop a sense of competence and achievement potential. Developing skills at this age include physical skills, friendship development, morals and values development, and building self-esteem. Assessment of skills in the elementary schools focus mainly on academic subjects such as reading, math, science, and social studies.

While addressing the issue of self-esteem, students may exhibit signs of low self-esteem or high self-esteem with varying degrees in between but there is not a consistent operational definition among researchers. There are two components to self-concept: academic self-concept and general self-concept. While schools focus their attention on academic self-concept consisting of math, English, and science, the possibility exists of attention being given to general self-concept as well, consisting of social, emotional, and physical skills.

This study examines the relationship of the level of self-esteem and reading and math achievement in third and fifth grade students. This study is designed to test the null hypothesis that there is no relationship

between the level of self-esteem and reading and math achievement in third and fifth grade students.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Subjects were 90 third and fifth grade students attending a small elementary school, population size approximately 351, in a middle class suburb of St. Louis, Missouri. Of the sample, 39 % were third grade students and 51% were fifth grade students. Of the sample, 22 % were African American and 68% were Caucasian, and 26% were girls and 64% were boys.

INSTRUMENTS

The instrument used for assessing the level of self-esteem was the Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Scale (Piers & Harris, 1984). The PHSCS subtitled "The Way I Feel About Myself" was designed as a brief, self-report measure to aid in the assessment of self-concept in children and adolescents, ages 8 through 18, grades 4 through 12. Jeske (1984) reported the PHSCS has test-retest reliability coefficient ranging from .42 to .96 and internal consistency estimates for the total score ranging from .88 to .93.

To determine the reading and math achievement, scores were obtained from the Missouri Mastery and Achievement Tests (MMAT, Assessment Resource Center, 1994). The MMAT is a battery of criterion-referenced achievement tests that evaluate key skills and corecompetencies as determined by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and

educators throughout the state of Missouri. The Assessment Resource Center reported item response theory reliability estimate for grade 3 as .937 for reading, .906 for math; for fifth grade reading is .931, and math is .920. The validity is aligned with the key skills that it is suppose to measure. These tests were administered in a group setting by classroom teachers in April, 1997.

PROCEDURE

The PHCSC was administered in a classroom group setting using a 4-page booklet in which the student circles “yes” or “no” response. The students had ample time to complete the form. The test was hand scored by the researcher and an overall assessment of self-concept was reflected in the total raw score and percentile score. For specific information the PHCSC scale provided six “cluster scales”: Behavior, Intellectual and School Status, Physical Appearance and Attributes, Anxiety, Popularity, and Happiness and Satisfaction. These cluster scales were developed and incorporated into most but not all of the 80 items on the questionnaire.

Prior to the administration of the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale this researcher discussed the testing procedures with each of the six classes. Data was collected immediately by this researcher. This process took approximately 30 minutes per third grade class and 20 minutes per fifth grade class.

The MMAT consists of 34 distinct subject tests assessing student performance. Tests for grades 3 and 5 covered reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. The tests are bound together in a booklet, administered to the class in a classroom setting by the classroom teacher. It takes 40 minutes to administer one test of the MMAT. There are two sections per subject, four subjects per test booklet for grades 3 and 5, taking approximately 320 total minutes to administer the test in its entirety. Students were not timed and may be allowed time to complete the test at their own pace. The MMAT was scored by machine by Assessment Resource Center.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

A Pearson correlation was used to see if a relationship exists between the level of self-esteem on the PHCSC, and reading and mathematics achievement from the MMAT. Self-esteem and reading and math scores are both interval scales, dependent variables. The closer the correlation is to 1 the higher

the correlation will be. The accountable variance is obtained by squaring the correlation (r).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The information used in calculating the data was taken from a sample of 90 third and fifth grade elementary level students, both male and female. The mean score for self-esteem was 78.74 which is the average of the participants' self-esteem score (TPERSE). The standard deviation was 21.59. The mean score for reading achievement was 63.80 with a standard deviation of 26.57. The mean score for mathematics achievement was 61.0 with a standard deviation of 29.12. See Table 1.

TABLE 1 STATISTICS SELF-ESTEEM/READING/MATH SCORES

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Cases</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
TPERSE	90	78.74	21.59
ACHIEVER	90	63.80	26.57
ACHIEVEM	90	61.00	29.12

Table 2 displays the Pearsons' correlation which demonstrates a direct correlation between the level of self-esteem and reading and mathematics achievement. As the level of self-esteem increases reading achievement (.4455) and math achievement (.2714) increases. The variation of the level of self-esteem scores suggests a parallel relationship of 19.85% of the variation in reading achievement scores. This correlation is highly

significant ($P = .001$). The variation of the level of self-esteem scores suggests a 7.35% of the variation in math achievement. This correlation is significant ($P = .01$). Reading and math achievement are strongly correlated, highly significant ($.001$). The null hypothesis is rejected which states there is no relationship between the level of self-esteem and reading and math achievement. These correlation scores demonstrate a parallel relationship between the level of self-esteem and reading and math achievement.

TABLE 2
PEARSONS' CORRELATION OF LEVEL OF SELF-ESTEEM
BY ACHIEVEMENT IN READING AND MATHEMATICS

	Level of SE	P
Reading Achievement	.4455	.001
Math Achievement	.2714	.01

- Variance correlation by percentile
- N=90

Data suggests the level of self-esteem and reading and mathematics achievement scores are integrated as a whole component; as one moves up, the other moves up; and as one moves down, the other will move down. Research would like to prove one component affects the other but these two components are intricately linked and cannot be separated.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The null hypothesis being tested states that there is no significant relationship between the level of self-esteem and reading and math achievement in third and fifth grade students. The null hypothesis is rejected which suggests that there is a highly significant correlation creating a parallel relationship: as one variable is high, the other variable is high and when one variable is low, then the other variable is low. These correlation scores may assist us in predicting if one score is high, the other score will be high. Or if one score is low, then the other score is low.

In the study performed by Howerton, Enger & Cobbs (1992) with at-risk adolescent African American males, their results support this parallel relationship between self-esteem related directly to standardized test scores.

In Setencich's (1994) study of the impact of early grade retention of seventh and eighth grade students, the results also may support this parallel relationship of the level of self-esteem and reading and math achievement. Retained students scored significantly lower than their non-related peers on academic and self-esteem measures. The students who were functioning below grade level had low self-esteem scores. This study supports the results that if either score is high, we can predict the other score will likely be high or if either score is low, the other score is

likely to be low. Since this correlation is identified, it would be advantageous for teachers, school counselors, and parents to utilize these findings in assisting students with low levels of self-esteem and/or low academic performance. Early identification and interventions at the third and fifth grade levels may assist schools in recognizing these students through academic testing records and overall school performance.

By changing the way we view self-esteem as related to academic achievement we may begin to assist more students in obtaining “a fundamental sense of efficacy and a fundamental sense of worth” (Branden, 1983) by which would support a student’s ability to learn to perform, accomplish and win.

Katz (1993) stated that becoming more aware of incorporating non-cognitive variables (social, emotional, physical) in our school systems, healthy self-esteem is more likely to be developed when children are engaged in activities for which they can make real decisions and contributions than in frivolous activities. This study’s results suggest the possibility of non-cognitive variables as an integral part of the “self-esteem class” for the sake of self-esteem rather than self-esteem variables for the sake of development of self as an active participant in academics.

In Lyons & MacDonald’s (1990) study of the many facets of the construct of self-concept the results of this study demonstrate the need to view academic self-concept (math, English, science) and general self-

concept (social, emotional, physical) as two strong components of self-concept that are linked.

The outcome of this study can also be linked to the beginning of middle school, adolescent career choice, and social and academic development. Kaplan (1996) proposes recommendations at the middle school level in balancing academic, personal, and social needs by addressing personal development through curriculum and instruction. Kaplan argues that academic achievement enhances self-esteem, concluding that students' academic achievement and personal development needs can both be met. Further results of this study would then suggest addressing self-esteem and academic achievement in grade school as preparation middle and high schools.

Monaco & Gaier (1992) emphasized adolescence as a time of greater openness to data regarding career decisions and value systems. Chui (1990) hypothesized students with a higher self-esteem evidenced more career goals than those with low self-esteem. He reported that students who were assessed as career decisive showed higher self-esteem than indecisive peers.

LIMITATIONS

This study is limited in that it did not provide information on other factors such as socioeconomic status, gender, race, and family support effecting the level of self-esteem in third and fifth grade students. In a recent study Sterbin(1996) suggests that the relationship between self-esteem and school achievement is significantly related to socioeconomic status, gender, and locus of control. Honig (1993) states that parents are a young child's greatest resource, and quality parenting helps develop children's self-esteem.

This study was limited to the general population without specific emphasis on special populations such as learning disabled or behavior disorder students who are integrated into the regular classroom. Young (1990) investigated the correlation between self-concept and reading achievement in 20 reading disabled students. The results suggested a low positive but a statistically significant correlation was not found between the total self-concept scores and total reading achievement scores in learning disabled students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The variation of the level of self-esteem scores suggests a parallel relationship with the variation of reading and math achievement. These correlation scores may assist us in predicting if one score is high, the other score will be high and if one score is low, the other score will be low. Until we can identify a direct correlation between the effects of self-esteem on academic achievement, results of this study suggest treating the relationship as a whole unit. This new paradigm is not independent or dependent but rather works within a Gestalt that allows what were once identified as discreet areas of achievement (i.e. math, reading, self-esteem) can now be considered within a comprehensive developmental construct.

Since school age is the development stage for acquiring concrete operational thought, metacognition is a skill that would be beneficial for classroom teachers to teach as a way of successful problem solving. As students view their thoughts and performance levels they can learn to successfully solve their problems, self-evaluate and build trust in their own minds. This recommendation supports Kerris, Cornell, Sun, Berry, and Harlow's (1993) study of why the level of self-esteem of some people is more stable than that of others. Their findings supported the view that the more an individual's feeling of overall self-worth relies on specific evaluation information, the more unstable their self-esteem is likely to be.

In an article titled "What Happens When Students Take Part in Their Own Assessment" (1996) a second grade teacher helped her students improve self-confidence and self-esteem by making them active in their assessment.

Using cooperative learning, portfolios assessment, surveys and interviews, she examined whether students could assess their own abilities and improve class work. The teacher reports students gained pride in their work and participated more positively in class.

In conclusion, when a machine malfunctions or breaks down, it is important to recognize where the breakdown occurred and fix the broken link to allow the machine to function properly again. As educators it is important to recognize when a breakdown of low self-esteem or low academic performance occurs. Early identification, intervention and treatment of low self-esteem and low academic performance can impact on the success of a child's educational career. Other recommendations may include the need for more studies to support this new paradigm.

WPS

APPENDIX

PIERS-HARRIS CHILDREN'S SELF CONCEPT SCALE

"THE WAY I FEEL ABOUT MYSELF"

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale

Ellen V. Piers, Ph.D. and Dale B. Harris, Ph.D.

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Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Age: _____ Sex (circle one): Girl Boy Grade: _____

School: _____ Teacher's Name (optional): _____

Directions: Here is a set of statements that tell how some people feel about themselves. Read each statement and decide whether or not it describes the way you feel about yourself. If it is *true or mostly true* for you, circle the word "yes" next to the statement. If it is *false or mostly false* for you, circle the word "no." Answer every question, even if some are hard to decide. Do not circle both "yes" and "no" for the same statement.

Remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Only you can tell us how you feel about yourself, so we hope you will mark the way you really feel inside.

TOTAL SCORE: Raw Score _____ Percentile _____ Stanine _____

CLUSTERS: I _____ II _____ III _____ IV _____ V _____ VI _____

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6 7 8 9

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- 1. My classmates make fun of meyes no
- 2. I am a happy personyes no
- 3. It is hard for me to make friendsyes no
- 4. I am often sadyes no
- 5. I am smartyes no
- 6. I am shyyes no
- 7. I get nervous when the teacher calls on meyes no
- 8. My looks bother meyes no
- 9. When I grow up, I will be an important personyes no
- 10. I get worried when we have tests in schoolyes no
- 11. I am unpopularyes no
- 12. I am well behaved in schoolyes no
- 13. It is usually my fault when something goes wrongyes no
- 14. I cause trouble to my familyyes no
- 15. I am strongyes no
- 16. I have good ideasyes no
- 17. I am an important member of my familyyes no
- 18. I usually want my own wayyes no
- 19. I am good at making things with my handsyes no
- 20. I give up easilyyes no

- 21. I am good in my school workyes no
- 22. I do many bad thingsyes no
- 23. I can draw wellyes no
- 24. I am good in musicyes no
- 25. I behave badly at homeyes no
- 26. I am slow in finishing my school workyes no
- 27. I am an important member of my classyes no
- 28. I am nervousyes no
- 29. I have pretty eyesyes no
- 30. I can give a good report in front of the classyes no
- 31. In school I am a dreameryes no
- 32. I pick on my brother(s) and sister(s)yes no
- 33. My friends like my ideasyes no
- 34. I often get into troubleyes no
- 35. I am obedient at homeyes no
- 36. I am luckyyes no
- 37. I worry a lotyes no
- 38. My parents expect too much of meyes no
- 39. I like being the way I amyes no
- 40. I feel left out of thingsyes no

41. I have nice hairyes no
42. I often volunteer in schoolyes no
43. I wish I were differentyes no
44. I sleep well at nightyes no
45. I hate schoolyes no
46. I am among the last to be chosen for gamesyes no
47. I am sick a lotyes no
48. I am often mean to other peopleyes no
49. My classmates in school think I have good ideasyes no
50. I am unhappyyes no
51. I have many friendsyes no
52. I am cheerfulyes no
53. I am dumb about most thingsyes no
54. I am good-lookingyes no
55. I have lots of pepyes no
56. I get into a lot of fightsyes no
57. I am popular with boysyes no
58. People pick on meyes no
59. My family is disappointed in meyes no
60. I have a pleasant faceyes no

61. When I try to make something, everything seems to go wrongyes no
62. I am picked on at homeyes no
63. I am a leader in games and sportsyes no
64. I am clumsyyes no
65. In games and sports, I watch instead of playyes no
66. I forget what I learnyes no
67. I am easy to get along withyes no
68. I lose my temper easilyyes no
69. I am popular with girlsyes no
70. I am a good readeryes no
71. I would rather work alone than with a groupyes no
72. I like my brother (sister)yes no
73. I have a good figureyes no
74. I am often afraidyes no
75. I am always dropping or breaking thingsyes no
76. I can be trustedyes no
77. I am different from other peopleyes no
78. I think bad thoughtsyes no
79. I cry easilyyes no
80. I am a good personyes no

For examiner use only

	1-20	+ 21-40	+ 41-60	+ 61-80	= 1-80 Total
I	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
II	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
III	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
IV	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
V	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
VI	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total Score	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

- 1. M
- 2. I
- 3. It
- 4. I
- 5. I
- 6. I
- 7. I
- 8. M
- 9. W
- 10. I
- 11. I
- 12. I
- 13. It
- 14. I
- 15. I
- 16. I
- 17. I
- 18. I
- 19. I
- 20. I

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