

# Social Skills and Self-Concept of Learners

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to determine the significant influence of social skills to the self-concept of students. This study also aimed to determine which domains of social skills significantly influence the self-concept of students. This study utilized a non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing descriptive-correlational technique. Research instruments on social skills and self-concept of the students were used as sources of data. Utilizing Pearson  $r$ , this study found out that the indicators of social skills and learning self-concept of students are significantly correlated. Using regression, it was found out that the social skills of the students significantly influenced their self-concept.

**Keywords:** social skills, self-concept of students, education, non-experimental quantitative research, descriptive-correlational technique, Philippines.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Self-concept is a filtering and coloring mechanism for children's daily experiences. It is how the child sees himself. It is made up of a sense of belonging and being accepted, a sense of being good, and a sense of being capable of doing things well. Whether self-concept is positive or negative, it can influence important areas of a child's development and achievement. It can also affect the child's relationship with others, especially family members (Cokley and Patel, 2007).

Students with poor self-concept tend to have unhealthy peer relations. As a proof, teachers across the globe always face troubles with students who initiate fight with their classmates. If not fighting, other students do not acquire a sense of friendliness and often caught bullying and showing aggression against their classmates in the form of boxing or name-branding. While others are fond of verbal teasing, other students do not integrate themselves with their classmates during group activities (Kronier and Bierman, 2007).

As school children are expected to develop a self-concept at the age they are expected to, in the Philippines, there are students who have poor emotional stability as they frequently worry a lot, depressed on just anything, and even feel nervous when asked to answer on the board. There are students who even cry when asked to answer simple mathematical problems (De Guzman and Choi, 2013).

Similarly, students with low self-concept have issues on emotional stability and general esteem. These students manifest poor relationship with their classmates and are usually troubled and always caught bullying other classmates or getting poor scores in their assessments. These students become common concerns of teachers as subjects for behavior modification (Harter, 2006).

The researcher has rarely come across of local research that explores the social skills and self-concept of students. This undertaking therefore, can become a blueprint of new knowledge and supplementary to the existing document for every variable involved in this research. It is in this considerable magnitude that the researcher decided to conduct the study as the weight of social skills to the self-concept of the students cannot be underscored. Social skills as one important variable in this study contributes to the self-esteem of the students as pointed out in the various literature from authors like Harter (1999), Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger and Vohs (2003) and Joshi and Srivastava (2009), among others.

## II. BODY OF ARTICLE

This study utilized the non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing descriptive technique. This study employed the descriptive method to determine the self-concept and social skills of the learners. Descriptive method research is a measure of variable with varying level of measurement. According to Johnson (2012) this research is appropriate when researcher would like to establish the relationship between two variables. In this study, the self-concept and social skills of the learners were described.

## III. RESULTS

### Level of Social Skills of the Learners

Results of the study revealed that students manifested high level of social skills. According to Wright (2006) student's social skills are important for early school success and later adjustment. Those without adequate social skills are at risk for difficulties including peer rejection, behavior problems, and poor academic achievement. One social skill that brought out in the study was social play and emotional development. This means that students shared toys and talks about the play activity even if the play agenda of the other child may be different and they followed game with rules when they play with other students.

Another indicator of social skills is emotional regulation. This shows that students demonstrated empathy towards peers and accepted mistakes without getting upset or angry. The result is in cognizant with the belief of Willis (2008) which stated that students who managed emotion well have an easier time getting along with their peers. The process of learning to manage feelings is a complicated one that starts as soon as a baby looks into her parents' eyes and begins to establish an attachment relationship.

Likewise, students displayed social skills by means of their group skills. Sugai and Horner (2006) stressed that most students who have a good social facilitation when in group tend to have most friends because their peers feel comfortable with their presence. Peters (2009) added that a student who has group skills makes plenty of friends in school. The results of this study is in consonance with the findings of Capps and Miller (2006) that socialization within the group is important among school children as this pave way to understanding other people as they discover themselves.

Findings of this study revealed a high level of communication skills of the students which means that students make variety of comments, related to the topic during conversations with friends, answer social question, and give compliments to peers. Wenglinsky (2005) believed that helping students improve public communication skills is motivating them to develop themselves. Practicing communicating with peers is important. With constant practice, students easily learn and become expert in what they at first afraid to do. In this regard, Hohlfeld, et al (2008) suggested that a teacher should create a group of children about the same age to hone their presentation skills, and the audience will hear the speaker and help evaluate the performance. This exercise will help students feel confident in front of a crowd, pinpoint areas where they are struggling, and share their own thoughts with other shy speakers.

### Level of Self-concept of the Learners

Self-concept as the core of human personality is the sum total of people's perceptions about their physical, social and academic competence. It is the view of oneself and the set of perceptions that the person has about himself, the set of characteristics, attributes, qualities and deficiencies, capacities and limits, values and relationships that the subject knows to be descriptive of him according to Jambor & Elliott, (2005) and Miller, (2007). The results of this study revealed a high level of self-concept of the students. This indicates that students have an overall, general feeling of self-worth and they are usually aware that they have both strengths and weaknesses. The result of this study is in consonance with the findings of Dai and Rinn, (2008) that students with high self-concept make general self-assessments about their ability to make friends, their competence at adult-like work tasks.

Results of the study revealed a high level of physical appearance which means that students feel good about their body built and their weight is just about right. Tomporowski et al (2008) stressed that a good-looking student is often the one who is usually recognized by the teacher and eventually this student develops rapport with teachers. The finding of this study is similar to the idea of Taras (2005) that students who find themselves physically attractive tend to be more sociable and they easily win friends.

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Result of the study revealed a high level of same sex peer relations which is the rapport displayed by the student towards similar sex. Chen et al (2006) assumed that when students grow, the ground rules of friendships develop and change. While some students begin to form their clique, others become more exclusive to making friends of their same sex. The results of this study explain the idea of Rhodes and Lowe (2008) that students are more comfortable with their same sex friends as they can always relate to one another. Inhibitions are rarely manifested since friendship with same sex easily relates to one another.

The findings of this study revealed a high level of opposite sex peer relations which is the connection displayed by the students towards other sex. Kember (2009) believed that students begin to get interested in forming friendship with opposite sex especially when they are on the onset of puberty. The result of this study is congruent to the statements of Liu and Carless (2006) that by the stage when students develop admiration to opposite sex, students increasingly would like to associate with their opposite sex.

Meanwhile, the results of this study revealed a high level of parent relations. Student's physical and emotional status, as well as their social and cognitive development, greatly depends on their family dynamics. The rising incidence of behavioral problems among children could suggest that some families are struggling to cope with the increasing stresses they are experiencing. The result of this study is akin to the statement of Quinlan (2008) that parent relations is among the most important aspects for a student in developing trust and confidence.

The findings of this study revealed a high level of spiritual/values religion which means that students have connection to one's faith. Spirituality has different meanings for different people, but is often associated with developing a sense of connection to something greater than oneself. Spiritual development in children is often equated with levels of psychological or social development. The result of the study is similar to the findings of Nye (2009) and Palmer (2010) that nourishing spiritual development among the students has multiple personal and societal benefits. Students who experience spiritual growth do better emotionally, academically and socially.

Meanwhile, findings of this study revealed a high level of honesty/trustworthiness. Trust is very important to students, and trustworthiness is necessary for meaningful, long-lasting relationships. It is job of parents to teach children the value of trust and the advantages that stem from trusting and being trusted. The result of this study reflects the idea of Suldo and Shaffer (2008) that being trustworthy fosters strong and lasting relationships. Parents need to both provide a way for their students to see a relationship that is built on trust and to let them know that they can trust. This shows them acts that children can emulate as well as allows them to engage in a trusting relationship that future relationships can be built on.

This study revealed a high level of emotional stability which means that students have deep understanding on matters relating to oneself like that of understanding one's own emotion. Emotional stability is the capacity to maintain one's emotional balance under stressful circumstances. For students to develop into emotionally stable individuals, they need unconditional love, opportunities to develop self-confidence and appropriate guidance and discipline. Abraham (2006), Fernandez- Berrocal and Ruiz (2008) and Clarke (2010) believed that ideally, a student who is mentally and emotionally stable is able to think clearly and positively, learn new skills, is self-confident, and has a healthy emotional outlook on life. He is also able to adapt to new situations easily. To develop into emotionally stable individuals, children need unconditional love, opportunities to develop self-confidence and play with their peer group. They also need encouragement from teachers and caretakers, a safe and secure living environment and appropriate guidance and discipline.

Findings of this study revealed a high level of general esteem where students have an evaluative judgment about himself. The result of the study is in congruence to the idea of Abbey (2006) that students who have a good general-esteem believe that they are good, capable individuals or that they are somehow inept or unworthy. At the same time they are usually aware that they have both strengths and weaknesses, that they do some things well and other things poorly.

Furthermore, the result of this study revealed a high level of maths. Students are constantly learning new skills and mastering new materials. Acquiring new abilities is a vital part of growing up and entering adulthood. Math is one of the most elementary of such skills. Knowledge of math at a young age can help prepare students for many different fields of education and even teach them an entirely new way to think. The result of this study is parallel to the findings of Ghazali and Zakaria (2011) that students who are good at math build an underpinning for learning the math they will encounter as they pass through primary and secondary educational levels.

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Meanwhile, the results of this study reveal a high level of verbal which is the speaking ability of the students. The best way to improve children's communication skills is to have conversations with them no matter how simple or complex it is. This remains one of the most important things one can do to help a child improve his communication skills. The result of this study is similar to the statements of Sigman and McGovern (2005) and Vitkovitch et al (2006) that positive communication results in a positive response. Positive verbal communication encourages children to have a favorable outlook on life.

The result of this study revealed a high level of problem-solving skills. One of the most important skills students develop is problem-solving which is a process of recognizing a problem, devising a plan and executing that plan for the desired result. With creative activities and games, students will learn how to develop problem-solving skills, an ability that will serve them throughout the rest of their lives. The findings of this study is similar to the statement of Robichaud and Dugas (2005) and Osborne (2007) that effective problem solving skills allow every student to work through conflicts and seek out solutions to everyday events in life. Whether-a student meets and overcomes challenges in life depends, in part, on how well-developed his problem-solving skills are. Helping him develop those skills builds confidence and independence and puts him on the road to self-sufficiency.

The findings of this study revealed a high level of physical ability. Parents and teachers can help promote healthy physical development in students through the use of a variety of activities and games. The findings of this study is akin to the statements of Hillman et al (2005) that physical ability of students allows them to perform tasks from simple to complicated that help them become better individuals.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study revealed a high level of social skills and self-concept of students. Generally, the findings of the study showed that social skill is frequently positively correlated with self-concept and this suggests that increasing students' social skills is a more effective means to boost their self-concept.

Self-concept is found to have a significant influence when regressed on social skills. Further analysis from the regression results revealed that the two variables have positive and linear relationship. However, there are also other variables that can be accounted for the remaining variance.

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