ASSESSMENT, SELF-ESTEEM AND EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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Although the relationship between self-esteem and educational performance has been clearly demonstrated, teachers usually don't take it into much consideration. In the daily practice of assessment, instruction, and classroom management, teachers can improve or undermine the self-esteem of students. Without conscious knowledge about the way routine classroom assessment impacts students, some of the pedagogical (educational) practices can destroy the foundation of students' self-esteem. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and consider the mediating role of self-esteem into assessment as a tool to improve educational performance. While there is no single way to define self-esteem, the majority of authors agree about three general compound-correlated factors such as locus of control, sense of acceptance and self-efficacy which actually help to operationalise the self-esteem construct. The concept of self-esteem is related to the totality of feelings about one's self (Rosenberg, 1979). Self-esteem is generally formed according to the individual's interaction with the inner, physical and social world and can be defined as the person's evaluation and global value judgment about the self, reflecting the perceptions of abilities, loveliness, and the attributions of causality for the events in life. The concept of locus of control from Rotter's theory of social learning (1954) is considered to refer to the cognitive component of self-esteem. An internal locus of control is the belief that the course of life is largely due to oneself and refers to how students believe they have control over the situations and experiences that affect their lives, learned from freely making choices and taking responsibility for the consequences. Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as the assumption that one will successfully perform an intended task. When a student obtains factual feedback that he succeeded in a given task or has a talent, he will be confident in applying that ability in the future. On the other hand, a sense of belonging and acceptance (Murray, 1938; Maslow, 1940; McClellend, 1960) is the core of mental health and the ability to trust and take risks. Without the experience of acceptance, students are unable to love and accept each other and the teacher. In a classroom with emotional support and no destructive criticism, students feel confident to express themselves, overcome limitations and take risks to face difficulties.

Classroom assessment methods which provide strategies to improve self-esteem focusing in the three above discussed demands will create a safe environment for functional behavior and high academic performance. When teachers use assessment in order to enhance self-esteem in the framework of student development needs, the resulting practices will promote mental health, producing more successful, hard-working, respectful, and self-directed students.