



SENSE OF WORTH AND INTERACTIONAL FITNESS OF LEARNERS

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the relationship between the sense of worth and the interactional fitness of learners. This study utilized the non-experimental quantitative research design using descriptive techniques involving teachers in Malita North District of Davao Occidental Division, Philippines. The study was conducted on the second semester of School Year 2022-2023. Research instruments on the sense of worth and interactional fitness of learners were used as sources of data. Using mean and Pearson-r as statistical tools to treat the data, the study showed the following results: the level of sense of worth is high, the level of interactional fitness of learners is and high, there is a significance on the relationship between sense of worth and interactional fitness of learners.

Keywords: *Sense of Worth, Interactional Fitness of Learners, School Administration and Supervision, Quantitative Research, Philippines*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sense of worth of learners 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).

In Malaysia, students with poor sense of worth 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 (Mohammad Zadeh, Awang, Kadir Shahar, & Ismail, 2018).

As school children are expected to develop a sense of worth 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, in Davao City, students with low interactional fitness have issues on emotional stability and general esteem. These student's 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 (Galabo, 2019).

The researcher has rarely come across of local research that explores the sense of worth and interactional fitness. 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 sense of worth to the interactional fitness of the students cannot be

underscored. Sense of worth as one important variable in this study contributes to the interactional fitness 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.

The conceptual paradigm is shown in figure 1. The independent variable of this study is sense of worth which indicators were taken from Zahra (2010) with indicators: physical appearance, honesty/trustworthiness, emotional stability, and general esteem. The dependent variable of this study is social fitness which indicators were taken from Merrell & Gimpel (2014) with the following indicators: social play and emotional development, emotional regulation, group skills, and communication skills.

This study is anchored on Social Development theory of Vygostky (1934) which argues that social interaction precedes development; consciousness and cognition which are the end product of socialization and social behavior. This theory is very much applicable in this study. The social skills of the students which include interacting with their classmates have become an important aspect of their personal development and their self-concept.

Eisenmann (2006) believed that interactional fitness 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 at school seems to be affected by the image that other significant persons such as teachers, parents, peers have of the student and by social comparison with others in the same setting.

This study is also anchored on self-worth theory by Covington (1984). The theory proposed that achieving success is a common way for people to attain self-acceptance, which is their top aim in life. Conversely, success is frequently found through rivalry with others. Sense of worth is characterized as our acceptance of who we are, flaws and all, as well as our sense of sufficiency and awareness of our redeeming characteristics.

This study aimed to determine the significance of the relationship between the sense of worth and the interactional fitness of learners.

This study is significant to the Schools Division Office where the study was conducted as it will give the personnel a concrete view of the levels of the variables which this study is aimed to identify. This will guide the personnel as their reference for future decision-making to improve on the aspects which the study is intended to uncover.

This study is aimed to determine the relationship between the sense of worth and interactional fitness of the learners. For a sense of worth, it will cover only the indicator of physical appearance, honesty/trustworthiness, emotional stability, and general esteem. For interactional fitness of learners, it includes only the following: social play and emotional development, emotional regulation, group skills, and communication skills.

The study is implemented in some public schools in Davao Occidental Division within the second semester of the School Year 2022-2023.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed the non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing correlational technique. A substantial proportion of quantitative educational research is non-experimental because many important variables of interest are not manipulable. Because non-experimental research is an important methodology employed by many researchers, it is essential to use a classification system of non-experimental methods highly descriptive of what we do, and which also allows us to communicate effectively in an interdisciplinary research environment.

Correlational research designs evaluate the nature and degree of association between two naturally occurring variables (Johnson, 2012). This study will find out the significance of the relationship between the sense of worth and the interactional fitness of the learners.

The research sample included only those Grade Six learners who expressed their willingness to take part in the conduct of the study. Only those learners who signed the Assent Form and have Informed Consent will be included as the research respondents. Similarly, these students must be enrolled in the public school in Davao Occidental Division during the School Year 2022-2023.

This study utilized purposive sampling in determining the sample of this study. Only those students who manifested their willingness to participate in the research were included in the study. These students must have Informed Consent to show their voluntary participation of the study.

The research instrument used by the researcher in gathering data has two parts. The questionnaire on sense of worth which indicators were taken from Zahra (2010) with indicators: physical appearance, honesty/trustworthiness, emotional stability, and general esteem.

The questionnaire on interactional fitness in this study is taken from Merrell & Gimpel (2014) with the following indicators: social play and emotional development, emotional regulation, group skills, and communication skills.

On the other hand, the level of social fitness of students was interpreted using the following scale.

The researcher simplified and contextualized the questionnaires without losing the original content. The first draft of the contextualized version of the instruments was submitted to the research adviser for comments and recommendations to improve its presentation. The final copies were submitted to the panel of experts for approval.

The final revision of the questionnaire was made by incorporating the corrections, comments and suggestions given by the expert validators. The validators rated the survey questionnaires with a rating of 4.18 with a descriptive equivalent as good.

The following steps will be undertaken in the gathering of data for this study. First the researcher asked permission from the Superintendent. After the request was granted, the researcher also sent a letter to the district supervisor indicating the intention to conduct the study in the district. The researcher attached the letter of approval from the division superintendent. The same letter of request was also sent to the school heads.

The school allowed the researcher to gather data for the research during activity period in the afternoon. This was a big challenge for the researcher because the travel going to schools requires enough time. The need to orient the respondents on the nature of the study is also essential to ensure that they have understood the purpose of the research so that they will religiously respond to the questionnaire with their best of their ability.

As soon as the researcher got into the school, he went to the office of the school head and showed the letter of approval and endorsement from the superintendent and from the district supervisor. After which, the researcher met the teachers and the school head and gave them a brief orientation on how they will respond to the questions in the questionnaire. As soon as the respondents were able to complete answering the questionnaire, the researcher collected them and tallied the responses. Interpretation followed the statistician handed the data.

The following statistical tools were used in the analysis of data. Mean. This was used to determine the level of sense of worth and interactional fitness of the learners. Pearson r. This was used to determine the significance of the relationship between the sense of worth and interactional fitness of the learners.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The standard deviation in the descriptive tables, Table 1 and Table 2, ranged from 0.30 to 0.40 which is less than 1.0 as the typical standard deviation for a 5-point Likert Scale. This means that the ratings in the accomplished questionnaires were close to the mean, indicating consistency of responses among the respondents (Wittink and Bayer, 1994).

Level of Sense of Worth **in terms of Physical Appearance**

Presented in Table 1.1 is the level of sense of worth in terms of physical appearance with a mean score of 3.73 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follow: follows physically attractive body, I have a good body build, and my body weight is about right (neither too fat nor too skinny).

Results of the study revealed a high level of physical appearance which means that students feel good about their body build 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.

Level of Sense of Worth **in terms of Honesty/Trustworthiness**

Presented in Table 1.2 is the level of sense of worth in terms of honesty/trustworthiness with a mean score of 3.69 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follows, always rely on me, I never cheat, and I do not lie.

Honesty/Trustworthiness had a mean score of 3.69 which means that students had the capacity to perform something and they enjoyed working out with of new ways in solving problem aside from having intellectual curiosity.

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.

Level of Sense of Worth **in terms of Emotional Stability**

Presented in Table 1.3 is the level of level of sense of worth in terms of emotional stability with a mean score of 3.75 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follow: I am usually pretty calm and relaxed; I am inclined towards being an optimist and I do not spend a lot of time worrying about things.

Among the enumerated indicators, emotional stability ranked the highest, with a mean score of 3.75 although all indicators had similar descriptive high level and this showed that students have a deep understanding on matters relating to oneself like that of understanding owns emotion, and students manifest being pretty calm and relaxed, inclined towards being kind and optimist, and do not spend a lot of time worrying about things.

This study revealed a high level of emotional stability which means that students have deep understanding on matters relating to one self like that of understanding owns 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.

Level of Sense of Worth in terms of General Esteem

Presented in Table 1.4 is the level of level of sense of worth in terms of general esteem with a mean score of 3.73 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follow: I have a lot of respect for myself, I do lots of things that are important, and I know how to prioritize things.

General esteem had a mean score of 3.73 which means that students had an overall understanding of the student about oneself and have done many important things and knew how to prioritize things; physical ability had also a mean score of 3.73 which means that students had awareness about oneself and his acceptance to his own imperfections and they believed they have a physically attractive body, had a good body built, and weighed just about right.

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.

Summary of Level of Sense of Worth

Shown in Table 1.5 is the level of sense of worth of students with an overall mean of 3.72 with a descriptive equivalent of high indicating that all enumerated indicators were oftentimes observed. The overall mean was the result obtained from the mean of the indicators for the specific items from the questionnaire intended for this particular indicator which was appended in this study.

The results of this study revealed a high level of sense of worth 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.

Level of Interactional Fitness in terms of Social Play and Emotional Development

Presented in Table 2.1 is the level of level of interactional fitness in terms of social play and emotional development with a mean score of 3.43 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follow: play with other children, shares toys with others, and follows game with rules.

Students also make variety of comments, related to the topic during conversations, answer simple social questions, and give compliments to peers; social play and emotional development had a mean score of 3.43 which means that students play simple games with peers, share toys and talk about the play activity even if the play agenda of the other child may be different, and follow game with rules.

Results of the study revealed that students manifested high level of social fitness. 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.

Level of Interactional Fitness in terms of Emotional Regulation

Presented in Table 2.2 is the level of level of interactional fitness in terms of emotional regulation with a mean score of 3.74 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follow: Can manage my emotions, feel the emotions of my friends, and accept making mistakes without becoming upset/angry.

Another indicator or 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.

Level of Interactional Fitness in terms of Group Skills

Presented in Table 2.3 is the level of interactional fitness in terms of group skills with a mean score of 3.78 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follow: seek assistance from peers, and follow directions and gives assistance to peers.

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.

Level of Interactional Fitness in terms of Communication Skills

Presented in Table 2.4 is the level of interactional fitness in terms of communication skills with a mean score of 4.33 or very high. The result of this mean score is taken from the strands of the indicator which are as follows: make variety of comments, related to the topic during conversations, can answer simple social questions, and give compliments to peers.

Findings of this study revealed a high level of communication skills of the students which means that students make a variety of comments, related to the topic during conversations with friends, answer social questions, 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.

Summary of Level of Interactional Fitness of Learners

Presented in Table 2.5 is the level of interactional fitness of learners with an overall mean of 3.67 with a descriptive equivalent of high indicating that all enumerated indicators were oftentimes observed except the indicator social play which has a descriptive level of moderate. The overall mean was the result obtained from the mean of the indicators for the specific items from the questionnaire intended for this particular indicator which is appended in this study

Among the enumerated indicators group skills obtained the highest mean of 3.78 although all indicators had a similar descriptive high level and this showed that the students manifest good attitude in seeking assistance, participating in the group and following the group during socialization with others; for emotional regulation, it obtained a mean score of 3.74 which means that students understand own emotion and regulate them to display flexibility and problem-solving skills, students also label and identify emotions in oneself, demonstrate empathy towards peers, and accept making mistakes without becoming upset/angry; communication skills had a mean score of 3.73 which means that students manifest conversational skills during socialization by means of nonverbal conversational skills, questioning, and giving compliments.

Significance on the Relationship between Sense of Worth and Interactional Fitness of Learners

Illustrated in Table 3 were the results of the test of the relationship between the variables involved in the study. The overall correlation had a computed R-value of 0.216 with a p -value of 0.000 which is significant at 0.05 alpha level. Doing an in-depth analysis, it could be gleaned that the sense of worth and interactional fitness of learners with a p -values of 0.000 which is lesser than .05 level of significance.

This implies that the higher the sense of worth is, the higher the interactional fitness of learners there is. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between sense of worth and interactional fitness of learners is rejected.

The result of this study confirms the Social Development theory of Vygostky (1934) which argues that social interaction precedes development; consciousness and cognition which are the end product of socialization and social behavior. This theory is very much applicable in this study. The social skills of the students which include interacting with their classmates have become an important aspect of their personal development and their self-concept.

Eisenmann (2006) believed that interactional fitness 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 at school seems to be affected by the image that other significant persons such as teachers, parents, peers have of the student and by social comparison with others in the same setting.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS

The level of sense of worth has a mean score of 3.72 or high and the level of interactional fitness of learners obtained a mean score of 3.67 or high. Based on the correlation analysis between sense of worth and school interpersonal dynamics, it the computed R-value of 0.216 with a probability value of 0.000 which is significant at the 0.05 level.

5. CONCLUSION

With considerations on the findings of the study, conclusions are drawn in this section. The study found to exhibit a high level of sense of worth. This means that the provisions relating to sense of worth is embodied in the item is oftentimes manifested.

The study found to exhibit a high level of interactional fitness of learners. This indicates that the provisions relating to interactional fitness of learners embodied in the item is oftentimes manifested.

The results of the study also confirm that there is a significant relationship between sense of worth and interactional fitness of learners. This implies that the higher the sense of worth, the higher is the interactional fitness of learners Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between sense of worth and interactional fitness of learners is rejected.

The study found a significant relationship between sense of worth and interactional fitness of learners. The researcher therefore recommends that the District Office of the Department of Education where the study was conducted, the Public-School

District Supervisor may present the results of this study and provide technical assistance to teachers to strengthen their practice especially on sense of worth since this is important in developing the interactional fitness of learners.

The study revealed a high level of sense of worth. The researcher recommends that school heads may help teachers improve the implementation of Project WATCH to help students improve in the aspect of Honesty and Trustworthiness as this is the lowest among the indicators. The teacher may also reward students who are manifesting honesty so that other students will follow observing the conduct of honesty and trustworthiness.

The study revealed a high level of interactional fitness of learners. The researcher recommends that the District Office may provide technical assistance to teachers in terms of social play and emotional development as this is the lowest among the indicators. Mentoring and on boarding may be utilized to help teachers on this aspect. Teachers also may integrate fun-based learning to help students improve their social skills while learning competency.

The researcher also recommends to future researchers conduct similar study and explore some indicators that are not included in this study in another setting in order to uncover new knowledge relevant to the well-being of teachers.

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