
AFRO-WESTERN ART: INSTRUMENTAL IN THE SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF A POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT AS INTEGRAL PART OF MENTAL HEALTH



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ABSTRACT

Self-concept is at the basis of almost all human achievement. A positive self-concept is one of the most important motivating forces in promoting higher scholastic achievement as well as promoting mental health. In this article the results of a quasi-experiment are described. An art programme from an Afro-Western perspective was implemented to set a context within which adolescents could be willing to change their self-concept from negative to positive. A scale (Grobler, 1996:Annexure B) consisting of four sub scales (validated previously on a sample of 1 436 high school students) was used to evaluate the self-concept of the respondents. In a quasi-experimental research design, the art programmes offered to a group of 20 pupils who were divided into those with a positive self-concept (eleven adolescents) versus those with a negative self-concept (nine adolescents). The results of the implementation of this quasi-experiment are discussed in this article. Students' t-tests were used to analyse the data. The results of the implementation of this experiment indicated that significant differences between the pre-test groups were eliminated in the post-test situation. This indicates that the implemented art programme supported the adolescents with negative self-concepts in their development, and thus promotes their mental health.

OPSOMMING

Selfkonsep is onderliggend aan bykans alle menslike prestasie sowel as die bevordering van geestesgesondheid. 'n Positiewe selfkonsep is een van die belangrikste motiveringskragte in die bevordering van beter skoolastiese prestasie. In hierdie artikel word die resultate van 'n kwasi-eksperiment bespreek. 'n Kunsprogram vanuit 'n Afro-Westerse perspektief is geïmplementeer om 'n konteks te skep waarbinne adolessente gewillig sou wees om hul selfkonsep van negatief tot positief te verander. 'n Skaal (Grobler, 1996:Bylae B) bestaande uit vier subskale (voorheen gevalideer op 'n steekproef van 1436 hoërskoolleerlinge), is aangewend om die selfkonsep van die respondente in hierdie ondersoek te evalueer. 'n Kwasi-eksperimentele navorsingsontwerp is toegepas op 'n groep van 20 leerlinge wat verdeel is in leerlinge met 'n positiewe selfkonsep (elf adolessente) en leerlinge met 'n negatiewe selfkonsep (nege adolessente). Die resultate van die implementering van die kwasi-eksperiment word in hierdie artikel bespreek. Studente se t-toetse is gebruik om die data te analiseer. Die resultate van die implementering van die eksperiment dui daarop dat die beduidende verskille tussen die twee voortoetsgroepe uitgeskakel is tydens die toepassing van die natoetse. Hierdie bevinding dui daarop dat die geïmplementeerde kunsprogram adolessente met negatiewe selfkonsepte ondersteun het in hulle ontwikkeling, en dus ook die bevordering van hulle geestesgesondheid.

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

In modern society the strive and pressure for higher achievement, is ever increasing. There is an increased need to promote achievement and to identify factors which could be utilised to promote achievement as integral part of mental health. In terms of personality attributes, self-concept may be one of the most obvious contributory factors in the promotion and prediction of achievement. Child (1981:53) defines self-concept as: "...the image we create of ourselves and the self-value or esteem generated from this image. These conceptions which we hold of ourselves as a result of interaction with significant others and which influence our behaviour are known collectively as the self-concept". The self-concept refers to a person's inclination, feelings and knowledge with relation to his/her own abilities, skills, appearance and social acceptability (Botes, 1987:3). A person's self-concept large-

ly depends on the degree to which others recognise, respect and acknowledge him or her (Grobler, 1996:21): The self-concept of many individuals may be negative as a result of a variety of interpersonal, intra-personal and environmental influences. The manifestation of a negative self-concept may often be observed as enduring pessimism, negativism, socially unacceptable behaviour, low scholastic achievement and even other forms of mental disorders.

If a child with a negative self-concept could be assisted to obtain a positive self-concept, it might lead to higher scholastic achievement as integral part of mental health. In the research presented, an approach is followed to address the problem of a negative self-concept within a quasi-experimental design. The prominent question addressed is: "Is it possible to create a context in which children with a negative self-concept can be supported to change and develop a positive self-concept?" In other words, can children be supported to change from having a negative self-concept to having a

positive self-concept? If the problem of a negative self-concept is to be addressed, it is important to search for an educational activity that could enable the child to participate in the process of changing his/her self-concept. Against this background the question could be asked whether art in its varied nature might be instrumental in such an endeavour. The eventual aim of such an enterprise is to promote higher scholastic achievement, that would contribute to a positive self-concept and thus also the promotion of mental health. In this article a mentally healthy individual is a person who has self-awareness, who likes, respects and accepts himself for what he is, and who acknowledges his limitations and seeks improvement (Kreigh & Perko, 1983: 35).

AIM OF THE ARTICLE

The aim of this article is to describe research conducted:

- to analyse and discuss the mental health relevance of art and a resultant art programme aimed at assisting children to change a negative self-concept to a positive self-concept. Within the context of this article the value of art, and especially the crafts, within the Afro-Western context will be emphasised. This will be analysed with in the context of the therapeutic nature of art;
- to measure and evaluate the self-concept and possible changes of the self-concept of a group of adolescents in a quasi-experimental research programme; and
- to derive mental health principles in view of the findings.

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL ORIENTATION

Within the context of this investigation, art will be implemented as a therapeutic tool (McNiff, 1992:39-43). According to Wilson and Kneisl (1996:758) art therapy is manual, recreational and creative techniques that facilitate personal experiences and increase social responses and self-esteem. Art therapy frees emotions and heals the psyche (Johnson, 1997:324). It focuses on the power of creative processes and heals without analysis. Safe expression of pain is provided and it may be used as a diagnostic, as well as a therapeutic, tool. Art therapy is particularly useful with adolescents, but also with children and adults (Johnson, 1997:324; Hogarth, 1991:330).

In the sections that follow, the multi-facetedness of art will be analysed and discussed and its relationship to self-concept will be shown and described. Thereafter, the implementation of the quasi-experimental programme will be discussed and the results presented. Finally, mental health directives will be given in view of the findings.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Afro-Western art: The programme to be discussed arises out of the idea that many of the European masters of art rejuvenated their art by incorporating African art into their practice. Exponents of these trends are, in particular, artists such

as Van Gogh, De Bröcke, Gauguin, Picasso, Franz Marc and most of the abstract artists (Tansey & Kleiner, 1996:1001, 1039, 1047). The research presented in this article is aimed at the problem at hand, regardless of race, sex, colour, cultural background or creed. The emphasis is on assisting an adolescent with a negative self-concept and low self-esteem through art and especially the practising of Afro-Western inspired art and craft to change his/her self-concept to promote mental health. The reasons for such a stance might be found in the inherent characteristics of African inspired art, such as basic honesty, a free feeling for form and the pure implementation of colour. The approach in this research is, firstly, to promote honest, critical self-analysis without being afraid of the outcome. The adolescent must be guided to relate to the subject matter to be created. Secondly, the adolescent must be guided to visualise the ideas within him- or herself. Thirdly, guidance must be given on decisions on the practical implementation of these ideas. The approach followed in this article will be that art and its practise occur within a specific context. Therefore, the art form required to serve the specific situation and its needs best, is used, irrespective of whether it is of Western or African origin. The approach will be to identify and to discuss, rather than to isolate.

Art in a mental health perspective: The major question at this juncture is: "Can an art programme create a context to facilitate an adolescent to change in such way that a negative self-concept becomes a positive self-concept to promote mental health?" The answer to this question is encapsulated in the inherent properties of art and its interrelation with human activities. Furthermore, art is multifaceted and linked to multiple dimensions of the human personality. Part of this mosaic of properties will be identified and discussed and the relation to self-concept and its development will be indicated. One of the most basic aspects of practising art is a feeling of satisfaction when creating something unique (McNiff, 1992:35-37; Lewis & Greene, 1983:149-150). The experience of such a feeling often contributes towards the enhancement of a positive self-concept.

Art as a social activity: Art as a human activity is as old as human existence. It is through art that an individual makes his/her existence known to others, gains other's respect or disrespect, and through which communication takes place. Art produces something to discuss, to talk about - one's artifacts are being accepted, criticised or even rejected - with the eventual positive or negative effects on the individual involved. The person often becomes his/her art (Lewis & Greene, 1983:200). Through art the individual involved learns to digest criticism and starts to criticise others, but at the same time modifies own self-criticism. This causes the perceiver to become humble not only concerning other's criticisms and evaluations, but also with respect to own evaluations. Part of being human is to evaluate and to be evaluated, thus stimulating own independence and individuality within communality amongst others (Lewis & Greene, 1983:103). Finally, within a social context, art and the practise thereof is catching - one is being drawn into the act willfully or sometimes even unwillfully, making it important in

its therapeutic nature. From the above, it should be clear that art in a social context is of utmost importance when the development of a healthy self-concept is prominent.

Art in relation to moral development: Art in itself is inherently related to morals, norms and values - either reinforcing or rejecting them, but awareness of morality and art is synonymous. Art and its practise addresses the most inner being of a human (see also McNiff, 1992:179, 207-208). It also addresses the aesthetical and the affective nature. Practising art demands honesty - honesty towards oneself and others. Art demands original work, the artist must create his/her own art work and refrain from "stealing" from others. As such, when investigations concerning the self-concept is undertaken, the normative dimension cannot be ignored. Thus, art is a vehicle that cannot be ignored.

Art in its relationship to achievement: Art, as a vehicle to promote achievement in a structured manner, is one of the most important learning instruments (see also Lewis & Greene, 1983:107 a.f). Basic elements of learning are inherent to the practising of art, which demands planning, sensitivity for structure, decision-making, task execution, directed application, strive to complete a task, courage to take risks and thus achievement at its best. It demands conveying the perceived experimentation with colours, materials and various media. The practise of art broadens the experiential world of the practitioner. In all these activities there is an attempt to master, to manage one's own situation, to evaluate the end product and eventually the inescapable acceptance that the end product almost always differs from the planned product.

Practical art programme: In the practise of art many, if not all the senses, are involved. For example, most often fine as well as gross sensory-motor skills play a role, while spatial perception and perception of contrast and balance are required. Simultaneously, the practise of art is recreation as well as effort; self-confidence is experienced as well as immediate satisfaction, but also self-evaluation and self-criticism. Thus, a combination of cognitive, ethical-moral, affective, social and other abilities are simultaneously active within the individual. The practitioner of art thereby learns self-acceptance, acceptance of own shortcomings, perseverance, to start again, to compare and to self-evaluate but also to appreciate and accept oneself and to accept one's own shortcomings. In the program applied, most of the aforementioned aspects were addressed in one way or another, as well as the aspects concerning Afro-Western art.

The practical programme was implemented over a period of three months during which the characteristics were implemented through the various activities to which the selected children were subjected. These included, amongst others, the following:

- The expression of feelings towards art, the evaluation of own ideas concerning art, the evaluation of own art activities, expression and independent selection of ideas to express, development of own sense, for example through

the ability to handle various art materials, own decision-making and self-activities. The main emphasis was to support the adolescent to develop his/her own self-concept through learning his/her own self and the support of own development. Guidance were given to these adolescents on the basis of initial input by them, which was then moulded into and positioned within the programme, the emphasis being that the adolescents were to be supported to develop their own self.

- The following art activities were used to accomplish the aforementioned: simple line drawing, pottery, flower clay, painting of self-manufactured artifacts, maizena paint, i. e. a type of impasto paint in which only the five basic colours were used, the use of food colours and cotton buttons as brushes.
- The activities were positioned within the Afro-Western context in which these activities were to be highly cost-effective. This is the reason why cotton buttons and other household materials were demonstrated and implemented as art media. Furthermore, characteristics such as basic honesty, free feeling for form and the application of colour were promoted and stimulated.
- The assignments included, amongst others, the following: portray what you like to do in your free time, draw the animal that you like best, make an image of this animal, practice what you have learned at home and paint a card, for example a mother's day card.

Self-concept in a mental health perspective

Self-concept is an acquired ability and it has an unlimited potential for development and actualisation (Purkey & Schmidt, 1990:16). Although the self-concept is dynamic, it is also fairly stable. Cognitive life, which develops strongly especially during adolescence (Garbers, Wiid, Myburgh, Van Biljon & Fourie, 1983:3; Van Biljon, 1978:47), leads to greater stability of the self-concept of individuals. Combs and Snygg (1959:127) state that at the nucleus of the self-concept is what a person believes of him-/herself. In this regard Rogers (1965:136) singles out the following aspects:

- Self-concept is an organised configuration of conceptions and perceptions about the self.
- This configuration consists of the following elements:
 - perception of own characteristics and abilities
 - evaluation of own abilities in comparison to other persons
 - evaluation of own experiences as positive or negative.

Kearns (1988:1) states that a positive self-concept is the most important factor to motivate a strive towards higher scholastic achievement. If the adolescent believes that she/he possess the necessary abilities, it might motivate her/him to strive towards higher achievement as integral part of promoting mental health. Furthermore, a person who maintains a high positive self-concept will not be easily disturbed by a low test result or unfair criticism (Baron, 1986:119) from a teacher, for example. The opposite is also true. A positive self-concept could thus be one of the most important motivating forces in achieving higher scholastic achievement at school. Thus, it is presumable that a child with a positive

self-concept might be motivated to achieve and that this basic human ability could be utilised to promote scholastic achievement.

Having a positive self-concept alone is not enough to promote higher scholastic achievement because experience and research have taught that scholastic achievement depends on multiple factors (Myburgh & Grobler, 1997). Myburgh and Grobler (1997) have shown that self-concept together with IQ explain 40% of the variance of scholastic achievement. Considering that the contribution of self-concept towards scholastic achievement in this context was 9% (8,6% from academic self-concept and 0,4% from social self-concept) (Myburgh & Grobler, 1997), the influence of self-concept cannot be ignored (Meyer, 1988:112). A profile analysis of top achievers (Untiedt, 1994:48/56) showed that if the student has the potential to achieve academically (high IQ i.e. 135) together with factors such as perseverance and responsibility, high scholastic achievement could be expected.

According to Shavelson, Hubner and Stanton (1976:413), the general self-concept can be further refined into an academic and non-academic self-concept. According to Vrey (n.d.:3) the non-academic self-concept is complex and various dimensions can be distinguished, such as the self in relationship to his/her own physique, the self in relationship to own psyche, the self and family relations, the self and others, the self in relation to moral norms, and the self and own self-critique. The self-concept scale used in this investigation consists of four subscales (factors) based on 33 items (see Table I). This self-concept scale was developed utilising a sample of 1436 high school students from Afrikaans, English and black communities in the greater Roodepoort area (Myburgh & Grobler, 1997). Responses to individual items were registered on a seven point scale. In the investigation of reliability and validity, item analyses and various consecutive factor analyses consisting of first and second order factor analyses, were conducted on the data. The identified factors are discussed in greater detail below. The Cronbach alpha for the self-concept scale is 0,8600 (for further information on this scale see Myburgh & Grobler, 1997). In Table 1 the highest item factor loading per factor and the Cronbach alpha coefficients are also given per factor.

Factors identified for self-concept (Table 1)

The following four factors were identified for self-concept:

- **Social self** (factor S1): indicates popularity with others, getting along with others, making friends with others, attractiveness, handling of situations and the perception of own physique. The Cronbach alpha is 0,7473 indicating that this factor could be regarded as a scale in its own right.
- **Family self** (factor S2): describes the respondent's perceptions of, relations with, and attitudes towards his/her family. The Cronbach alpha for the 7 items is 0,7215, which also indicates a relatively high reliability.
- **Moral self** (factor S3): refers to orientation towards values, i.e. religious orientation, honesty, fulfilling of responsibilities and conduct towards others. The Cronbach

alpha is 0,6975.

- **Academic self** (factor S4): refers to various aspects involved in academic achievement, i.e. taking pride in own achievements, gaining respect of others in view thereof, setting high standards, enthusiasm for own school work and selection of friends in view of their academic achievements. The Cronbach alpha is 0,6715.

These four factors were used in a quasi-experiment to investigate possible changes in self-concept before and after the implementation of the art programme with the 20 primary school adolescents (age group: eleven and twelve years) to be described below.

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

A pre-test - post-test experimental and control group quasi-experimental (Vockell, 1983:173-178) research design was applied. The teacher identified nine adolescents in her class with a negative self-concept. These nine adolescents were the experimental group, leaving eleven adolescents in the control group. Following this, a self-concept scale questionnaire (Grobler, 1996:Appendix B) containing 33 items was applied to all 20 adolescents as a pre-test (see Table I). The average age of the 20 grade seven adolescents is 12,3 years and the standard deviation is 0,44 years. It is accepted (Adams & Gulotta, 1989:4) that being an adolescent is often challenging because the individual adolescent is physically able to do many things independently such as reading any material available, watching any television programme, entering the adult world and even working outdoors. Unfortunately she/he is often not psychologically mature enough to understand, accommodate or to act responsible in view of the demands resulting from the above-mentioned scenario because she/he lacks the necessary knowledge and experience to handle strenuous situations. She/he does not have the necessary life experience, life skills or maturity. The inability of the adolescent to cope with the demands of certain situations could result in the development of self-concept problems. It was therefore important to investigate whether the introduction of an art programme could support the development of a positive self-concept of adolescents, that would in turn promote their mental health.

In the analysis of the data, various subsets of information were compared. In these comparisons hypotheses were made between

- pre-test and pre-test data, i.e. the control group versus the experimental group,
- post-test and post-test data, i.e. the control group versus the experimental group,
- pre-test and post-test data, i.e. separately for the control and the experimental group, and
- the increment or loss/gain between the control and the experimental group from the pre-test to post-test situation.

In all these situations the null hypotheses (Ho) of no difference between the means were tested against the alternative hypothesis (Ha) of a significant difference. In the case of the

TABLE 1: SELF-CONCEPT: ITEMS,FACTORS AND FACTOR LOADINGS

ITEM: To What extent	FACTOR S1 (11 items)	FACTOR S2 (7 items)	FACTOR S3 (8 items)	FACTOR S4 (7 items)
35 are you popular with the opposite sex?	0.623			
54 do you make friends easily?	0.601			
64 are you popular, people are seeking for your company?	0.574			
26 do you get along well with other people?	0.527			
32 do you regard yourself as attractive?	0.465			
5 are you popular with friends of the same sex?	0.454			
52 can you live up to any situation?	0.379			
10 do other pupils choose you for participating in learning activities/joint task groups?	0.344			
76 do you know that you can solve your own problems?	0.292			
12 do you think that your weight/mass is correct?	0.255			
1 are you healthy?	0.246			
33 is your family a happy one?		0.733		
15 are you proud of your family?		0.683		
62 does your family respect you?		0.576		
24 do you treat you parents well?		0.442		
14 are you content with yourself as a person?		0.399		
3 do you have relatives that will help you if you experience problems?		0.341		
39 are you satisfied with your height?		0.254		
66 are you a religious person?			0.588	
17 are you honest?			0.525	
50 does your religion encourage you?			0.503	
42 are you polite to strange people?			0.395	

44 are you satisfied that you fulfill your responsibilities?			0.387	
73 are you a person who tells lies?			0.366	
48 do you have perseverance?			0.347	
28 do you like all the people you know?			0.255	
81 are you proud of your learning achievements?				0.631
83 do the other pupils have a tendency to respect you for your academic abilities?				0.616
31 do you set high academic standards/demands for yourself?				0.607
69 are you enthusiastic about new schoolwork?				0.465
19 are you inclined to make friends with other pupils who perform well academically?				0.264
7 is your behaviour impeccable/irreproachable?				0.253
57 do you expect success in your work even before you have finished the task?				0.203

CRONBACH ALPHA	0.7473	0.7215	0.6975	0.6715
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comparison of the pre-test data of the experimental with the control group, it is expected that if the teacher had succeeded in identifying the groups correctly, differences in the self-concept of the two groups would have occurred. Similarly, had the implemented programme caused any positive results, then this would be reflected in one way or another in significant changes in the results as reflected in the post-test data.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

At first it was necessary to analyse the data obtained from the pre-test to ensure that there were differences between the group of adolescents identified by teachers as having a negative self-concept, i.e. the experimental group (EG) and those adolescents having a positive self-concept, i.e. the control group (CG). What is quite interesting in this analysis (see Table 2) is that the same factors, i.e. social self (factor S1) and academic self (factor S4) which significantly explained the variance in scholastic achievement (Myburgh & Grobler, 1997), were the two factors on which significant differences between the nine adolescents with a negative self-concept were identified [factor S1: EG (53,8) < CG (60,2); P=0,048, i.e. 5% level of significance; factor S4: EG (29,3) < CG (35,9); P=0,027, i.e. 5% level; tested with a two-sided test.]

Furthermore, averages of scholastic and expected scholastic achievement show the same tendencies (average: EG

(48,6%) < CG (64,7%); P=0,003; expected average: EG (62,2%) < CG (77,3%); P=0,017). On the other hand there were no significant differences between the two groups concerning the highest qualification of the father or the mother, age or personal circumstances. This was also reflected by the fact that no significant differences between the IQ's of the control and the experimental groups were present (see Table 3). It must be stressed that although it seems as if the IQ-values of the control group are higher, it is not significantly higher. Therefore, under experimental conditions and for all practical purposes the two groups are equal with respect to this indicator.

To conclude, the analysis of the pre-test indicators between the control and experimental groups indicates that:

- the teachers identified the two groups correctly; and
- the personal circumstances of the two groups do not differ significantly.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

From Table 2 it follows that:

- there is no significant difference between the post-test results;
- there is no significant development for either the control or

TABLE 2: RESULTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QUASI-EXPERIMENT: AVERAGES AND PROBABILITIES

FACTOR	PRE-TEST AVERAGES		POST-TEST AVERAGES		PROBABILITIES (P-value)				
	Experimental group	Control group	Experimental group	Control group	PRE-TEST Experimental versus Control	POST-TEST Experimental versus Control	EXPERIMENTAL Post-test Minus Pre-test	CONTROL Post-test Minus Pre-test	DIFFERENCES Exp.(Post-Pre) Versus Control (Post-Pre)
Social self (S1)	53.8	60.2	54.8	53.5	0.0484	0.8008	0.6925	0.1273	0.1614
Family self (S2)	41.3	43.7	39.7	41.7	0.3693	0.5963	0.4060	0.1697	0.9277
Moral self (S3)	42.2	43.3	41.4	42.1	0.7014	0.8156	0.7129	0.6080	0.6783
Academic self (S4)	29.3	35.9	31.9	34.1	0.0270	0.4141	0.2157	0.1883	0.1270

TABLE 3: AVERAGE INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT (IO) OF THE TWO GROUPS AND PROBABILITIES

	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP (EG)	CONTROL GROUP (CG)	PROBABILITIES (P-value)
Non-verbal IQ	98.4	96.4	0.880
Verbal IQ	86.3	94.8	0.196
Total IQ	86.1	95.4	0.130

experimental groups; and

- there is no significant difference between the development of the control group and the development of the experimental group.

The interpretation of these results is that it seems as if the applied art programme supported the adolescents with negative self-concepts to develop in such a way that the initial significant differences were eliminated in the post-test situation. This was also reflected in the fact that the initial difference on the 5% level of significance concerning their expected marks [(EG) 62,2% versus (CG) 77,3%; P-value = 0,0167] changed to no significant difference [(EG) 66,6% versus (CG) 75,1; P-value = 0,0665] in the expected marks in the post-test situation. It therefore seems that the implementation of this art programme succeeded in supporting children with a backlog concerning their self-concept to be supported in development in such a way that differences were eliminated to no significant difference between the experimental and control group in the post-test situation. This is quite substantial bearing in mind that this happened after only a short period of three months of implementing this programme.

As in any experimental programme there is almost always a mortality of participants. This also happened in this research.

The initial number of participants in the experimental and control group was higher. In the comparison of these results, which is not given in this article, the differences between the pre-test results of the two groups were even more accentuated than in the data presented in this article. Due to the natural movement of people, in this case the ones with the greater self-concept problems, this group was also subjected to such a fallout. One wonders what the influence of a brief subjection to this programme might be in such cases. The follow-up in the case of these participants was not successful.

MENTAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS AND DIRECTIVES

Art as a therapeutic intervention technique is important in that it could create a context in which positive self-concept formation and development of adolescents can be facilitated and supported. Human science professionals who work with adolescents must take cognisance of the results of this programme and train prospective human science professionals who work with adolescents accordingly. The applied programme also gave ample space for the adolescents to participate in the planning of activities. Their contributions were eventually "fitted " into and around the principles upon

which the programme was based. Thus, many of the important aspects concerning the self-concept, such as to be heard, to participate and to experience the results of one's own creativity, were addressed. This might have contributed to the positive development of the self-concept of these adolescents.

One of the interesting conclusions from this investigation is that even though most of the relevant indicators, including environmental aspects and IQ, showed no significant differences, there might still be differences between various groups of adolescents concerning their self-concept. This research further indicated that, despite such differences and even backlogs, adolescents could be supported in the positive development of their self-concepts. This could be done by giving them the opportunity to be successful in assignments.

In reviewing the outcome of the applied programme, further research with adolescents applying an art programme over a longer period of time appears to be necessary. This is especially true for the value which is attached to the adolescents' academic self in the educational situation. The adolescents should be given the opportunity to be proud of their learning achievements and they should be respected for their academic abilities. They must be supported in setting realistically high academic standards and demands for themselves; they should also be supported to be enthusiastic about new school work and to expect success in their work even before they have finished the task. This will lead to the promotion of their mental health.

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