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## The relationship between perception of child-rearing and self-esteem and its effect on perceived and actual scholastic competence in children

Christina Castro

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTION OF  
CHILD-REARING AND SELF-ESTEEM AND ITS  
EFFECT ON PERCEIVED AND ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC  
COMPETENCE IN CHILDREN

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A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science  
in  
Psychology

---

by  
Christina Castro

June, 1992

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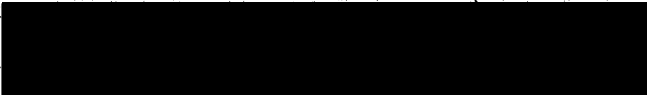
By  
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June 1992

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Date

  
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## ABSTRACT

Parental child-rearing, self-esteem and perceived and actual scholastic competence were evaluated in 70 4th, 5th, and 6th grade children. The children completed a questionnaire which included Harter's Self-Perception Profile, the Parent-Child Relationship Questionnaire, and a brief demographic sheet which was included to determine gender and ethnicity. Actual test scores were accessed in order to determine the children's actual scholastic competence. As expected, self-esteem was found to be a strong predictor of children's perceptions of their scholastic competence. In addition, parental acceptance was found to predict self-esteem, while encouragement of autonomy was found to predict scholastic competence. Although girls were expected to perceive themselves as less competent than boys, this hypothesis was not supported by the results. The findings also failed to support the hypothesis that minority students would be less accurate in their perceptions of their academic competence. The findings are significant and have implications for interventions with children in that they indicate an association between parental behaviors and self-esteem as well as an association between self-esteem and perceived and actual scholastic competence.



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## INTRODUCTION

Many factors are believed to contribute to competence and self-esteem in children. Coopersmith (1981) has proposed that competence is a major component in self-esteem. He operationally defines competence as success in meeting achievement demands. Harter (1983) also views competence as one of various dimensions that affect our sense of self-worth. Dweck and Elliott (1983) have suggested that positive self-perception is a significant motivational factor influencing children's intellectual performance and achievement. Self-perception can affect a child's motivation to seek and master skills that they are potentially able to master. These authors suggested that motivational tendencies are separate from children's actual ability. Thus, some children who are fully capable of performing various tasks may perform below their ability and may perceive themselves as incapable. These findings are supported by previous studies (Crandall, 1969; Dweck, 1983; Stipek & Hoffman, 1980) which concluded that often the most competent are the most susceptible to performance debilitation, especially among females. Decreased performance frequently takes the form of underachievement or future failures.

The concept that self-perception impacts motivation assumes that individuals' beliefs about the outcomes they encounter direct their subsequent behavior in those and

related situations (Dweck and Elliott, 1983). However, the literature is not conclusive as to what factors result in the child's beliefs about their particular abilities or perceived competence. The present study is an effort to assess the relationship between perceived competence, actual competence and self-esteem. Self-esteem can be defined for the purpose of this paper as "the degree of correspondence between an individual's ideal and actual concepts of him or herself," (Campbell, 1984). Covington (1984) discusses a self-worth theory whose basic assumption is that various factors affect one's sense of worth and adequacy. These factors include performance level, perception of ability, and degree of effort expenditure. His self-worth theory stresses ability perceptions as a primary source behind achievement motivation. Furthermore, this study suggests that perceived or actual competence may influence self-esteem. Alternately, one might view self-esteem as a component of perceived competence.

#### CHILD-REARING AND SELF ESTEEM

Several factors are recognized as influencing children's competence, including reciprocal parent and child influence, parent behaviors, and children's perceptions of competence (Sigel 1985; McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 1982; Hazzard, Christiansen, & Margolin; Seginer, 1983;). Relevant research in the area of children's competence has also denoted stable

relationships between parental child-rearing practices and children's self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1981; Givelber, 1983). Coopersmith (1981) has investigated child-rearing practices in relation to self-esteem and posits that high self-esteem is developed from a successful reciprocity between parent and child. He proposed that parental acceptance increases self-esteem and parental rejection diminishes self-concept. Coopersmith found children with high self-esteem less disposed to perceive their parents as negative or destructive. Givelber (1983) reported that children's self-esteem derived from parents' ability to provide acceptance, encouragement, and the permission to be separate individuals. Hazzard, Christensen and Margolin (1983) evaluated the relationship between perceived parental behavior and children's self-esteem and behavior problems. They found that children who perceived their parents as exhibiting more positive behaviors toward them were more satisfied with themselves and how they were leading their lives. Goodnow (1984) also discusses the possibility that parental child-rearing practices may lead to developmental outcomes concerning achievement and self-concept. Pekrun (1990) discussed the propensity for the following two variables to be correlated with adolescents' self-concept: (1) support-related variables of parental child-rearing styles and (2) scholastic achievement evaluations.

Furthermore, the research in this area discusses parental perceptions of their children's abilities as possibly mediated by actual ability and children's self-perceptions (Phillips, 1987).

In discussing the area of competence in children it is important to discuss how self-perception of competence, perception of parental child-rearing, and self-esteem could combine to create the perception of incompetence in children including those who may actually be competent. Furthermore, it is also important to discuss how Bandura's theory of self-efficacy coincides with children's perceived and actual competence. Understanding how these factors operate is important because, as noted by Phillips (1984), children's self-perceptions of competence have been linked to the organization and regulation of achievement behavior.

#### SELF-EFFICACY AND ACHIEVEMENT BEHAVIOR

Self-efficacy is postulated to be pertinent to children's achievement behaviors due to its supposed motivational effects (Schunk, 1981). According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy may be defined as a person's conviction that he or she is or is not competent enough to perform a certain behavior. Self-efficacy has been found to influence factors such as performance level, task choice, perseverance, thought patterns and reactions to stress (Wood & Locke, 1987). Bandura posits that various procedures

modify behaviors in part by building and strengthening a sense of self-efficacy. These procedures may include actual performance, modeling and systematic desensitization (Schunk, 1981).

Perceived self-efficacy similar to perceived competence impacts outcome performance. Bandura (1982) states that, "perceived self-efficacy is concerned with judgements of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations" (p.122). According to Schunk (1983), there can be some discrepancy between actual performance and perceived performance. Furthermore, how one perceives one's self-efficacy regardless of the accuracy, will influence choice of activities and environmental settings. This is consistent with Bandura's suggestion that those who question their capabilities reduce their effort or give up altogether, while those who have a firm sense of efficacy manifest greater effort to overcome challenges. In addition, successes increase self-efficacy and repeated failures lower it. Thus, the more elevated the level of perceived self-efficacy, the greater the performance achievements. These findings have also received support from other researchers (Schunk, 1981; Schunk, 1983; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991).

Schunk (1981) provided two treatment modalities, didactic and cognitive modeling, to children who had

experienced repeated failures in arithmetic. He found that both modalities increased arithmetic persistence, accuracy and perceived efficacy. These findings supported the supposition that children's self-perception of their abilities correlates highly with their achievement.

The role of self-efficacy on performance has also been noted in other contexts. For example, Bandura, Reece, and Adams (as cited in Bandura, 1977) evaluated different levels of perceived efficacy in phobic subjects. They found a relationship between performance and perceived efficacy which suggested that performance varied as a function of perceived self-efficacy. In a study on the effects of attributional feedback concerning ability and effort on the perceived self-efficacy of children, Schunk (1983) demonstrated that the utilization of attributional feedback for children promotes rapid problem-solving, self-efficacy, and achievement. Schunk further stated that an absence of attributional feedback may create doubt concerning efficacy in children despite their performance. A meta-analysis on the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance and persistence was completed by Multon, Brown and Lent (1991). In this meta-analysis they evaluated 39 studies focusing on the role of self-efficacy beliefs in academic performance and academic persistence. They reported positive and



significant relationships between self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance and persistence providing further support for the notion that perceived self-efficacy is related to academic performance.

#### GENDER DIFFERENCES AND CHILDREN'S COMPETENCE

In a series of studies, Crandall (1969) noted that girls of various ages have lower expectations of success than boys and that boys overestimate their successes, whereas girls underestimate theirs. Parsons, Adler, and Kaczala (1982) discussed ways in which teachers and parents might be perpetuating, if not engendering, sex differences. They studied the effect of parents' beliefs on children's achievement self-concept and related beliefs. Questionnaires measuring attitudes and beliefs about mathematics achievement were dispersed to children in grades 5-11 and their parents. These findings showed that parents of daughters reported that math was harder for their child and that their child had to work harder to do well in math. Thus, parents who think that math is difficult for their daughters and who think their daughters are not very proficient in math have daughters who also possess a low self-concept of their math skills, see math as difficult, and have low expectations for future performance. These findings were not supported, however, by Fulkerson, Fur, and Brown (1983) who evaluated sex differences in expectations

and achievement on three tasks (mazes, drawings, mathematics) in third, sixth, and ninth-grade boys and girls. These researchers found that the boys in this study did not have higher expectations than girls at any grade level or on any task. Possible explanations for these findings include suggestions that girls expect to excel on tasks that are labeled "feminine" rather than those labeled "masculine." Therefore, perhaps the tasks in this study were equally sex differentiated.

Phillips (1984) also discussed sex differences with respect to the association between children's perceptions of their cognitive competence and their actual competence. Harter's Perceived Competence Scale was administered to 117 highly competent children. In this study actual competence was assessed by report card grades. Phillips found that nearly 20% of the children perceived themselves as having low levels of academic performance. This group aimed for lower academic levels, expected to achieve at lower levels of academic performance than their peers, perceived that their teachers held notably lower expectations of their performance, and attributed greater importance to luck as a cause of high grades. Phillips found that girls were more likely than boys to attribute their high grades to studying hard and low grades to insufficient ability and lack of teacher and parent assistance. Alpert-Gillis and Connell

(1989) evaluated how children's experience of competence or incompetence in school influenced general self-esteem differently for boys and girls and for children with different sex-role orientations. For this study, mean perceived competence scores within the cognitive domain, and general self-esteem scores from The Perceived Competence Scale for Children (Harter, 1982) were calculated.

Alpert-Gillis and Connell found that upper elementary school children's general self-esteem was only partially related to biological gender. However, general self-esteem was predictive of perceived capacity to do well in school more strongly for girls than boys. These researchers concluded that while both boys and girls associate their feelings of self-worth with their perceived capacities to perform schoolwork, girls do so more intensely than boys. They proposed that this was possibly due to their belief that girls take failure more personally than boys.

Licht, Stader, and Swenson (1989) discussed how children's academic self-concepts, causal attributions, and perceptions of teacher feedback were influenced by academic area, achievement level, and sex. It has been previously found that girls often approach intellectual tasks with lower expectations of success than do boys, however, some of these expectations seem to be quite unrealistic with respect to their actual performances. Furthermore, girls are less

likely to substantiate their successes as due to high ability. However, they seem to express as much certainty as boys when the tasks are familiar and when they have received adequate feedback. In a study with fifth-graders, Licht et al. found that boys were more likely to attribute their successes than their failures to ability. In addition, high achievers were more apt to hold the task responsible for their failures than they were to credit the task for their successes. Furthermore, boys were found to receive more feedback than girls.

#### ETHNIC DIFFERENCES AND CHILDREN'S COMPETENCE

In Fulkerson, Fur, and Brown's (1983) study, racial differences were evaluated concerning children's expectations and achievements. It was found that blacks expected to achieve notably less than whites at the third-grade level. These racial differences were even more prominent in the higher grades. Stevenson, Chen and Uttal (1990) also examined school achievement among black, white and Hispanic elementary school children. They found that black and Hispanic children held a less realistic concept of how well they were doing in school. Also, black children's self-evaluations of their skills in math and reading were not linked to their actual level of achievement. Stevenson et al. concluded that some students discontinue trying to achieve rather than risk possible declines in self-esteem.

They also noted a decline in the motivation of minority students possibly for the above reasons.

#### CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF COMPETENCE

Children's perceived competence has been discussed in the literature as an influence on their achievement (Harter, 1983; Lynch, 1981; Markus & Nurius, 1984). Purkey (1970) postulated that a student regarding himself as a failure at school will reject and distort evidence that oppose his perceived self, regardless of how persuasive the information appears to an outside observer. Harter (1983) notes that positive perceptions of competence are inherent in sustained achievement motivation. Covington (1984) studied the effects of effort and ability on feelings of self-worth on college students. Students rated their ability to deal with the subject matter and their degree of effort put forth in a lower-division course. This researcher also submitted the grades he received in the course and how much self-worth they experienced from the course. Covington found that feelings of self-worth depended on the student's achievements regardless of how they were obtained. Furthermore, they found that perceived ability accounted for approximately half of the variation in feelings of worth. These researchers proposed that "by the time individuals reach young adulthood, they base concepts of their worth on self-perceptions of competency" (Covington, 1984, p. 9).

Chan (1988) proposed that it was highly evident that children with high abilities would have superior self-perceptions of competence due to their frequent successes in school. She explored self-perceptions of competence in four areas: cognitive, physical, social, and general self-worth. These results indicated that gifted students in upper primary classes in general had higher perceived competence than their nongifted peers. Comparably, Hodge and McSheffrey (1990), conducted a study investigating several issues pertaining to self-concept in gifted children. These were outlined as: (1) the relative independence of the components of self-concept, (2) the way in which the specific aspects related to overall feelings of self-worth, and (3) the extent to which a developmental process operates in the formation of the self-concept. This research indicated that perceived scholastic competence was an indicator of Global Self-Worth for the gifted students.

Bierer (1982) studied achievement-related cognitions including perceived cognitive competence, anxiety over schoolwork, perception of control in the academic domain and preference for challenge. Three groups were identified: (1) those who overrate their competence contingent on the teacher's judgement; (2) those who underrate their competence contingent on the teacher's judgement; (3) those whose ratings are congruent with the teacher's judgement. It

was estimated that both underraters and overraters would select easier tasks thereby challenging themselves less. Bierer's hypotheses were confirmed. He found that both underraters and overraters chose tasks that were less challenging than students whose ratings were congruent with the teacher's ratings. Furthermore, a literature review by Phillips (1984) suggested that "the perception of reality rather than actual reality, is the more powerful predictor of achievement motivation and behavior." Similarly, Langer's (1979) study discussed the tendency of a group of highly competent children to neglect to perceive their abilities positively. Langer ascribed this to the "illusion of incompetence." One explanation given suggests that the inability to assimilate new tasks into an individual's repertoire inevitably results in feelings of incompetence. Harter (1983) supported this phenomenon by finding that competent children who disregarded their abilities aspired to less challenging accomplishments than their actual abilities would predict.

Phillips (1987) addressed the concept of "illusion of incompetence" in order to assess if it existed in younger children. Results indicated that children with low perceived competence felt inferior to their peers, held lower expectations for future success in school, and found schoolwork more difficult. They also estimated that their

parents considered their abilities as less favorable and expected less of them with respect to achievement.

Harter (1983) denotes that there is evidently a relationship between competence and self-worth, although other factors contribute to the children's overall sense of worth as a person. Additional factors are discussed by Mack (1983) who states that "the complexity of self-esteem development derives from its initial dependence upon two separate but interrelated domains, the phenomenon of mastery and the arena of human relationships." (p. 29)

#### SUMMARY AND INTEGRATION OF THE LITERATURE

The literature has thus denoted that child-rearing practices can affect self-esteem. Furthermore, positive acceptance by parents has been found to increase self-esteem and parental rejection has been found to diminish self-concept. Moreover, the propensity for child-rearing practices and scholastic achievement to be correlated with self-concept has also been noted. With respect to self-efficacy, Multon, Brown, and Lent (1991) postulate that, "Research undertaken primarily with elementary school children and appearing largely in educational psychology journals, has generally supported the hypothesized links among children's self-efficacy, motivation and performance" (p.30).

With respect to sex differences in this area, the



literature revealed that girls were more likely than boys to underestimate their abilities and to have lower expectations for future performance. The literature findings regarding racial differences in children's competence has found that blacks expect to achieve notably less than whites. These differences were even more prominent in the higher grades. Finally, it has also been suggested by Phillips (1984) that, the perception of reality rather than actual reality is the more powerful predictor of achievement motivation.

In summary, the data suggest that perceived competence, self-esteem, and child-rearing are associated. Based on this literature, the following is hypothesized:

- 1) Perception of scholastic competence will be accounted for by self-esteem, parental acceptance, psychological autonomy, and actual scholastic performance. Exploratory analysis of the role of induction, lax control, firm control, psychological control, rejection, and power assertion will also be conducted.

- 2) Based on the literature, it is expected that perceived competence, self-esteem, parental acceptance, and psychological autonomy will account for the largest variance in actual performance. Exploratory analysis of the role of induction, firm control, psychological control, rejection, lax control and power assertion will also be conducted.

- 3) As supported by previous findings, positive parental

factors (parental acceptance, psychological autonomy, induction) will account for most of the variance in children's self-worth. Exploratory analysis of the role of psychological control, parental rejection, lax control, firm control, and power assertion will also be conducted.

4) In addition, previous studies have suggested that gender and ethnicity may mediate the relationship between competence, self-esteem and child-rearing. It is therefore hypothesized that:

a) Girls will perceive themselves to be less competent than boys.

b) Minority students will be less likely than white students to reflect congruence between their perceived and actual scholastic competence.

c) Exploratory analysis will also be conducted to determine whether factors which predict perception of competence differ in boys versus girls and in white versus Latino students.

## METHOD

### Subjects

The study took place in three schools in San Bernardino, California. Letters were distributed by teachers to parents requesting participation in the study (see Appendix A). Of these, 70 were returned (15% return rate), thus creating sample bias due to the small sample size. The sample included fourth, fifth and sixth-grade students (41 girls and 29 boys). The ethnic groups were 36 whites, 26 Latinos and 4 black students. These children ranged in age from 9 to 12 years with a mean age of 10.8.

### Measures

A questionnaire which included an informed consent form, The Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985), The Parent-Child Relationship Questionnaire (Hower & Edwards, 1978), and a demographic sheet was administered. The demographics form was placed between the two instruments to prevent cognitive sets in filling out the two instruments (see Appendix B).

The Self-Perception Profile includes six separate subscales: a) scholastic competence, b) social acceptance, c) athletic competence, d) physical appearance, e) behavioral conduct and f) global self-worth. Since this study was aimed at acquiring information about children's perception of their scholastic competence and their

self-esteem, only the scholastic competence and global self-worth subscales were utilized. The scholastic competence subscale contains six items tapping the child's perception of his/her scholastic performance (e.g. difficulty figuring out answers in school). The global self-worth subscale includes six items that target the degree to which the child likes him/herself as a person and is happy the way he/she is leading his/her life (Harter, 1985). Tests for internal consistency revealed reliability values of .85 for scholastic competence and .78 for global self-worth.

Actual scholastic competence was determined by retrieving national percentages on basic skills tests (The Iowa and the Independent Basic Skills Tests) that were given in the schools during the past year. Percentages for math and reading (which include problem-solving and reading comprehension scores) were utilized. Permission was received from parents and the schools to obtain the test scores.

In order to determine how children's perception of their child-rearing practices correlated with their perceived scholastic competence and their self-esteem, the Parent-Child Relationship Questionnaire was administered. This 40-item questionnaire was modeled after items from the Roe and Siegelman (1963) questionnaire and from the Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory by Schaefer

(1965). Items were taken from these two instruments to measure a) parental acceptance, b) rejection, c) firm control, d) lax control, e) power assertion, f) psychological control, g) psychological autonomy, and h) induction (Hower & Edwards, 1978). Each subscale consists of five items which tap the children's perceptions of parental childrearing practices. The parental acceptance subscale has items regarding how accepting parents are of their children's decision-making. Parental rejection items tap the extent to which parents are viewed as controlling and rejecting. Firm control and lax control inquire as to how demanding versus how casual the parents are in disciplining their child. Power assertion evaluates parental control through force. Psychological control taps parental control through guilt and obligation. Psychological autonomy implies that the child is allowed to hold their own viewpoint independent from the parent. Finally, psychological induction conveys parent's respect for the child as an individual as exemplified by the parent providing explanations for their children.

The demographic data sheet included gender, racial/ethnic background, family living arrangements and whether the child was fluent in a second language.

### Procedure

Parent permission slips were sent home to 4th, 5th and

6th grade parents from three schools in the San Bernardino area requesting their child's participation in the study (see Appendix A). The children who returned signed permission slips were included in the study.

The researchers administered the questionnaires at the schools. The informed consent which was kept separate from the questionnaire packet to ensure anonymity was administered first. Subsequently, the students were given the questionnaire packets in small groups with each group supervised by a research assistant. The research assistants carefully read the directions to the children and were available to answer questions. The participants spent approximately 45 minutes completing the questionnaires.

Following completion of the study the researchers debriefed the participants by reviewing the purpose of the study and any questions that the participants had were answered at this time. The students were thanked for their participation.

## RESULTS

In order to determine the extent to which self-worth and parental child-rearing practices account for perceived and actual scholastic competence, a series of regressions were run. Two t-tests were also calculated to determine if boys and girls differed with respect to their perceived and actual scholastic competence. Correlations were run to determine gender and ethnic differences with respect to congruence between perceived and actual scholastic competence. Subsequently,  $r$  scores were converted to  $z$  scores using Fisher's  $r$ - $z$  conversion,  $z$  scores were then tested for significance. All variables approximated normal distributions. The means and standard deviations for these variables can be seen in Table 1. Intercorrelations for all of the variables were also calculated and are presented in Table 2.

### PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE

A regression was run to evaluate the extent to which self-worth, psychological autonomy, parental acceptance, induction, lax control, firm control, psychological control, parental rejection, and power assertion predicted perceived competence. The results indicated that self-worth accounted for 36% of the variance ( $r = .603$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and actual scholastic performance explained an additional 7% of the variance ( $r = .656$ ,  $p < .01$ ). These scores are presented in

TABLE 1

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE  
SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE, THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP  
QUESTIONNAIRE AND ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE

	MEANS	(STANDARD DEVIATIONS)
PERCEIVED COMPETENCE	16.657	(3.171)
SELF-WORTH	17.486	(2.770)
ACTUAL COMPETENCE	56.700	(24.950)
ACCEPTANCE	19.057	(3.761)
PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTONOMY	15.871	(4.075)
INDUCTION	16.214	(4.340)
REJECTION	8.643	(3.596)
PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL	9.243	(2.921)
LAX CONTROL	13.071	(3.085)
FIRM CONTROL	16.071	(3.861)
POWER ASSERTION	10.729	(3.897)



TABLE 2

INTERCORRELATIONS FOR THE SELF-PERCEPTION  
PROFILE, THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE,  
AND ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE

	SCHOL COM	SELF- WRT	PSYCH AUT	ACCPT	REJCT	POWER ASSRT	ACT COM	LAX CNL
SCHOL COM	1.0	.60***	.32**	.33**	-.13	-.08	.29**	.19
SELF WRT		1.0	.27**	.38**	-.18	-.16	.06	.30*
PSCY AUT			1.0	.48***	-.11	-.11	.34**	.29*
ACCPT				1.0	-.32*	-.15	.24*	.11
REJCT					1.0	.31**	-.34*	.28*
POWER ASSRT						1.0	-.23*	.04
ACT COM							1.0	-.21*
LAX CNL								1.0

---

p < .05\*

p < .01\*\*

p < .001\*\*\*

Table 3.

#### ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE

A regression was run to evaluate the extent to which self-worth, psychological autonomy, parental acceptance, induction, lax control, firm control, psychological control, parental rejection, and power assertion predicted actual scholastic competence. The findings indicated that three factors accounted for 27% of the variance with psychological autonomy accounting for 12% ( $r = .343$ ,  $p < .01$ ), lax control accounted for an additional 10% ( $r = .468$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and perceived scholastic competence an additional 5% ( $r = .521$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These scores are presented in Table 4.

#### CHILD-REARING AND SELF-ESTEEM

A regression was run to assess the relationship between child-rearing practices (parental acceptance, psychological autonomy, induction, psychological control, rejection, power assertion, lax control firm control) and self-esteem. The findings indicated that three parental factors accounted for 27% of the variance with, parental acceptance accounting for 18% ( $r = .426$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), lax control an additional 5% ( $r = .486$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and psychological control an additional 4% ( $r = .529$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These scores are presented in Table 5.

#### GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED AND ACTUAL COMPETENCE

Two t-tests were performed to determine if boys and girls differed in their perceptions of their scholastic

TABLE 3

PREDICTORS OF PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC  
COMPETENCE IN CHILDREN

<u>STEP</u>	<u>BETA</u>	<u>R SQUARE</u>	<u>R SQUARE CHANGE</u>
1) SELF-WORTH	.588	.364***	-----
2) ACTUAL COMPETENCE	.259	.431***	.067**

---

p <.05\*  
p <.01\*\*  
p <.001\*\*\*

TABLE 4

PREDICTORS OF ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE IN CHILDREN

STEP	BETA	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE
1) PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTONOMY	.366	.118**	-----
2) LAX CONTROL	.360	.219***	.101**
3) PERCEIVED COMPETENCE	.245	.272***	.053*

---

p <.05\*  
 p <.01\*\*  
 p <.001\*\*\*

TABLE 5

PREDICTORS OF GLOBAL SELF-WORTH IN CHILDREN

<u>STEP</u>	<u>BETA</u>	<u>R SQUARE</u>	<u>R SQUARE CHANGE</u>
1) PARENTAL ACCEPTANCE	.426	.182***	-----
2) LAX CONTROL	.415	.236***	.054*
3) PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL	.400	.279***	.044*

---

p <.05\*

p <.01\*\*

p <.001\*\*\*

competence and in actual competence. The results showed that girls and boys did not differ significantly with respect to perceived ( $t = .95$ , NS) or actual competence ( $t = -1.63$ , NS). However, as can be seen in Table 6, girls tended to have higher actual scholastic competence scores. Correlations were also run to assess congruence between perceived and actual scholastic competence for the genders. Subsequently, the scores for boys ( $r = .304$ , NS) and girls ( $r = .360$ , NS) were converted to  $z$  scores using Fisher's  $r$ - $z$  conversion,  $z$  scores were then tested for significance ( $z = 1.08$ , NS).

#### CORRELATES OF PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE BY GENDER

Correlations were performed to assess which factors were most strongly related to perceived and actual scholastic competence for boys and girls.

Actual scholastic performance, self-worth, psychological autonomy, parental acceptance, induction, lax control, firm control, psychological control, parental rejection, and power assertion were correlated with perceived scholastic competence in boys and girls. The findings demonstrated that for both boys and girls, self-worth was positively correlated with perception of scholastic competence, and with the correlation between self-worth and perception of competence for boys ( $r = .711$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) being stronger than that for girls ( $r = .456$ ,  $p < .01$ ). These findings are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 6

MEAN SCORES FOR THE SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE  
AND ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

	<u>BOYS</u>		<u>GIRLS</u>	
	MEAN	(STD DEV)	MEAN	(STD DEV)
ACTUAL COMPETENCE	50.81	(21.40)	60.87	(26.65)
PERCEIVED COMPETENCE	17.07	(3.87)	16.37	(2.58)
GLOBAL SELF-WORTH	17.97	(3.09)	17.15	(2.51)

TABLE 7

CORRELATIONS FOR PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC  
COMPETENCE BY GENDER

<u>VARIABLES</u>	<u>PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE</u>	
	<u>BOYS</u>	<u>GIRLS</u>
	<u>CORRELATION</u>	<u>CORRELATION</u>
SELF-WORTH	.711***	.456**
ACTUAL COMPETENCE	.285	.389**
PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL	-.127	-.030
PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTONOMY	.235	.418**
FIRM CONTROL	.282	-.005
LAX CONTROL	.211	.149
ACCEPTANCE	.466**	.198
REJECTION	-.099	-.211
POWER ASSERTION	-.075	-.173
INDUCTION	-.019	.180

---

p <.05\*  
p <.01\*\*  
p <.001\*\*\*



#### CORRELATES OF ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE BY GENDER

A correlation was conducted to assess actual scholastic competence in boys and girls. The variables included: perceived scholastic competence, self-worth, psychological autonomy, acceptance, induction, lax control, firm control, psychological control, rejection, and power assertion. For boys, psychological autonomy was positively correlated with actual scholastic competence ( $r = .423, p < .05$ ). For girls, parental rejection was negatively correlated with actual scholastic competence ( $r = -.400, p < .01$ ). These scores are presented in Table 8.

#### ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED AND ACTUAL COMPETENCE

A correlation was run to evaluate congruence between perceived and actual scholastic competence for the white ( $r = .212, NS$ ) and Latino ( $r = .265, NS$ ) subsamples. The  $r$  scores were converted to  $z$  scores using Fisher's  $r-z$  conversion,  $z$  scores were then tested for significance ( $z = .935, NS$ ). The sample for black students was too small to be included in the analysis.

#### CORRELATES OF PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE BY ETHNICITY

Correlations were also performed to assess which factors were significantly related to perception of scholastic competence in white and Latino children. Correlations between actual scholastic performance, self-worth, psychological autonomy, parental acceptance, induction, lax

TABLE 8

CORRELATIONS FOR ACTUAL SCHOLASTIC  
COMPETENCE BY GENDER

<u>VARIABLES</u>	<u>PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE</u>	
	<u>BOYS</u>	<u>GIRLS</u>
	<u>CORRELATION</u>	<u>CORRELATION</u>
PERCEIVED COMPETENCE	.285	.390**
SELF-WORTH	.220	.009
PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL	-.045	-.296*
PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTONOMY	.423	-.345*
FIRM CONTROL	-.058	-.019
LAX CONTROL	-.077	-.258
ACCEPTANCE	-.151	.311
REJECTION	-.195	-.400**
POWER ASSERTION	-.151	-.208
INDUCTION	-.010	.070

---

p <.05\*

p <.01\*\*

p <.001\*\*\*

control, firm control, psychological control, parental rejection, power assertion, and perception of competence were evaluated. The findings for white students indicated that self-worth was significantly related to perceived scholastic competence

( $r = .492, p < .01$ ). Similarly, for the Latino students self-worth was strongly correlated with perceived scholastic competence ( $r = .725, p < .0001$ ) too. These findings are presented in Table 9.

TABLE 9

CORRELATIONS FOR PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC  
COMPETENCE BY ETHNICITY

<u>VARIABLES</u>	<u>PERCEIVED SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE</u>	
	<u>WHITES</u>	<u>LATINOS</u>
	<u>CORRELATION</u>	<u>CORRELATION</u>
SELF-WORTH	.492**	.725**
ACTUAL COMPETENCE	.239	.266
PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTROL	.135	-.348*
PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTONOMY	.133	.491**
FIRM CONTROL	.209	-.054
LAX CONTROL	.237	.282
ACCEPTANCE	.239	.512
REJECTION	-.029	-.166
POWER ASSERTION	.150	-.293
INDUCTION	-.064	-.035

---

p < .05\*

p < .01\*\*

p < .001\*\*\*

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which self-esteem and child-rearing practices predict children's perceived and actual scholastic competence. As was expected, self-esteem was found to contribute significantly to how children felt about their schoolwork. In addition, child-rearing practices were found to contribute significantly to children's actual school performance. In this study, students who perceived their parents as accepting of their decision-making abilities; allowing them to hold their own points of view and providing them with explanations when setting rules, reported themselves to be more academically competent. However, evaluation of sex differences indicated that for boys, the most important factor influencing their actual performance was how much autonomy they received from parents while for girls it was the quality of the relationship with the parent and how much time parents spent with them. Perhaps this is indicative of the sex-role stereotypes that are often utilized in socializing children. The results thus support previous studies which suggest that high self-esteem contributes meaningfully to children's self-perceptions of their schoolwork and positive childrearing practices contribute to actual performance (Coopersmith, 1981; Harter, 1983 & 1986; Covington, 1984; Phillips, 1984 & 1987; Pope,

McHale, & Craighead, 1988; Hodge & McSheffrey, 1990).

In a previous study, Coopersmith (1981) found that competence was a major component in self-esteem. Similarly, Harter (1983) viewed competence as one of the major dimensions of self-worth. Harter (1986), in a study on children's perceptions of their schoolwork and their general self-esteem, found that these were highly correlated. Further support for this association is provided by Covington (1984), who suggests that factors such as performance level and perception of ability affect one's sense of worth and adequacy. Two studies by Phillips (1984, 1987), also support the findings of a relationship between children's perception of cognitive competence and their achievement. In the first study she found that children with lower perceived competence aimed for lower levels of academic performance than their peers and felt that their lack of ability was a cause of their low grades. In a subsequent study, she found that children with low perceived competence viewed themselves lower in rank than their peers. Other researchers have also noted a strong relationship between self-esteem and children's evaluations of themselves (Pope, McHale, & Craighead 1988; Hodge & McSheffrey, 1990).

Contrary to expectations, parental factors were not found to be significant predictors of children's perceptions of their schoolwork. Parental factors were, however,

positively related to children's self-esteem. It may be that parental factors indirectly influence school performance by their association with self-esteem. These findings only partially support Phillips' (1987) proposal that parents directly affect their children's developing perception of competence.

As expected, a tendency for parents to allow their children their own point of view and to make independent decisions was found to be strongly related to actual school performance. These child-rearing practices may enhance the development of critical thinking skills in children through the allowance of independent problem-solving. In addition, children whose parents used less punishment and rule setting had higher performance. Congruent with previous studies, children's beliefs about their ability to do schoolwork were related to their actual school performance (Belskey, 1984; Goodnow, 1984; McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 1985; Phillips, 1987; Steinburg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Wein, Kurasaki, & Jason, 1990). For example, Belskey (1984) suggested that intellectual competence is enhanced through parents' ability to facilitate autonomy in children. Goodnow (1984) also discussed the propensity for parental child-rearing practices to lead to developmental outcomes in children's achievement. Additionally, McGillicuddy-De Lisi (1985) provided empirical data to support the view that parental

beliefs affect children's behaviors including school performance. Other researchers also suggest that parental beliefs about their children's abilities are associated with their children's drive to take on challenging tasks, future goals and expectations, and school performance (Phillips, 1987). Phillips suggests that children's achievement attitudes and behaviors are heavily influenced by parents and that parents provide feedback children can utilize to formulate their self-perceptions. In another study, Steinberg, Elmen, and Mounts (1989) discussed parental factors with respect to school performance in children. They found three factors, 1) parental acceptance, 2) allowing children their own points of view, and 3) cognizance of their children's whereabouts contributed positively to children's school achievement. Similarly, Wein, Kurasaki, and Jason (1990) found parental involvement to promote children's academic achievement.

The findings of the present study linking children's perception of their schoolwork to their actual school performance are supported by several previous studies (Harter, 1982 & 1983; Dweck & Elliot, 1983; Phillips, 1984; Pekrun, 1990). For example, Harter (1982) suggested that there is an association between children's perceived and actual competence in school. She found that the relationship between these two factors rises steadily through the



elementary school years. In a follow-up study, Harter (1983) found competent children who disregarded their abilities aspired to less challenging accomplishments than their actual abilities would predict. She interpreted this as evidence of the inherent role of positive perceptions of competence for sustained achievement motivation. Dweck and Elliot (1983), in a study on children's self-perception about their schoolwork, supported Harter's results by reporting that positive self-perception is a significant motivational factor influencing children's intellectual performance and achievement. They further noted that self-perception can affect a child's motivation to seek and master skills that they are potentially able to master. These findings are consistent with Phillips (1984) who reported that children who perceived themselves as having low levels of academic performance intentionally aimed for lower academic levels. In a more recent study, Pekrun (1990) also found a correlation between achievement and self-concept of ability.

As expected, the present study found parental display of acceptance toward their child was associated with higher self-esteem in children. These current findings are consistent with several studies (Coopersmith, 1981; Hazzard, Christensen, & Margolin, 1983; Givelber, 1983; Pekrun, 1990). For instance, Coopersmith (1981) investigated

child-rearing practices and children's self-esteem. He proposed that parental acceptance increases self-esteem and parental rejection diminishes self-esteem. Coopersmith found that children with high self-esteem were less inclined to perceive their parents as negative or destructive.

Similarly, Hazzard, Christensen, and Margolin (1983) evaluated the relationship between perceived parental behavior and children's self-esteem and behavior problems. They found that children who perceived their parents as exhibiting more positive behaviors toward them were more satisfied with themselves and how they were leading their lives. Givelber (1983) suggests that positive self-esteem in children derives from parents' ability to, "accept the child's being, his current level of functioning, while encouraging the child's becoming more mature" (p. 165). Givelber stated that allowing the child to be psychologically separate from the parent contributes to self-esteem. Further support is provided by Pekrun's (1990) study, which found that general self-esteem was influenced most strongly by parental acceptance.

The current study also evaluated gender differences in perceived and actual competence. It was proposed that girls would report less competence in their schoolwork than boys regardless of their actual performance in school. While this relationship was not found to be statistically significant,

the results were in the expected direction. Thus, girls' scholastic performance scores were higher than boys but, their perceived scores were lower. Perhaps a larger sample would make these findings more salient. These findings may also be reflective of the particular academic subjects that were being discussed. For instance, Licht, Stader and Swenson (1989) found that girls only evaluated themselves as significantly less intelligent than boys in areas such as social studies and science. These researchers suggested that the difficulty of an academic area effects the confidence level of girls more so than boys. Thus, girls express as much certainty as boys when the tasks are familiar and when they have received adequate feedback concerning their performance.

These findings highlight the importance of assessing which factors are correlated with boys' and girls' perceived and actual performance in school. In this study, self-esteem was highly correlated with perception of school performance for both boys and girls. The relationship was twice as strong for boys than for girls. This suggests that boys' perception of their schoolwork is based more strongly on their self-esteem. These findings may be reflective of the way boys and girls are socialized. Girls may be socialized to view attractiveness as an important component of their self-esteem, while boys may be reared to view academic

performance as a strong factor in their self-esteem. Another possible explanation for the differences in self-esteem between boys and girls may be because the girls' report experiencing less positive parenting and may therefore receive less feedback and encouragement than boys. This speculation is supported by previous research (Hazzard, Christensen, & Margolin (1983; Licht, Stader, & 1989) which found that boys reported their parents as exhibiting more positive behaviors such as feedback, than did girls.

In this study, it seemed that boys' and girl's actual school performance was associated with different parental behaviors. For example, actual performance in school for boys was strongly related to their parents' ability to encourage them to hold their own points of view. For girls, however, actual school performance was associated with whether they felt their parents were too busy for them or viewed their ideas as foolish.

Ethnic differences, as related to perceived and actual school performance were also evaluated. For both ethnic groups self-esteem was found to be positively correlated with their perception of their schoolwork. This coincides with previous research relating self-esteem to perception of competence in children (Coopersmith, 1981; Harter, 1983). However, this is inconsistent with Stevenson, Chen, and Uttal (1990), who examined school achievement among black,

white and Hispanic children, and found that black and Hispanic children held a less realistic concept of how well they were doing in school. This inconsistency may be due to methodological differences including differences in the children's ages and in the tasks being evaluated. Clearly, additional research is needed to further clarify the role of self-esteem in perception of competence in minority children.

The results of the current study are significant and provide information that is relevant to the development of intervention programs with children. Since self-esteem was found to be an essential link between perceived and actual school performance, it is important to identify ways to enhance this. Bandura (1977) suggests that a sense of self-efficacy can be built and strengthened through modeling. Schunk (1983) suggests that attributional feedback can promote problem-solving, self-efficacy and achievement in children. Schunk found that when children do not receive attributional feedback (e.g. feedback about how the child's schoolwork is perceived), doubt may be created in the child despite their actual performance. As discussed in the current study, this can result in a phenomenon referred to as the "illusion of incompetence", which is the tendency of competent children to neglect to perceive their abilities positively (Langer, 1979). These findings suggest that

parents and teachers can enhance children's sense of self-efficacy and reduce the likelihood that children will negate their actual school performance by providing appropriate feedback and modeling.

Positive parental factors were found to be important contributors to the children's self-esteem in the present study. Children's perceptions of acceptance by their parents despite the outcomes of their endeavors as well as their ability to have independent points of view seemed to be crucial factors in the development of self-esteem in these children. This suggests that parent-training courses which emphasize these particular factors may assist parents who want to facilitate and enhance their children's school performance.

This study is limited by the low return rate of parent permission slips possibly resulting in a biased sample. While this limits the generalizability of the findings, the consistency between many of the findings of this study and previous studies is impressive.

This is a growing and significant area of research with a number of issues that need further exploration. The association between effort and motivation in school performance and children's self-esteem, and the mediating role gender and race may play in this relationship are important areas needing further exploration. Longitudinal

studies would be extremely helpful in elucidating the outcome for children who continually negate their school performance as a result of faulty self-perceptions. Understanding these processes will increase parents' and teachers' ability to enhance children's academic performance.

APPENDIX A

PARENT PERMISSION FORM

Dear Parent,

My name is Christina Castro and I am a graduate student at California State University, San Bernardino. I am conducting research as part of a research team for my master's thesis in Counseling Psychology.

We realize that many parents would like to help their children increase their self-esteem and their sense of competence. We are conducting a study focusing on parents' and children's attitudes concerning children's competence. As parents you are concerned with how your children are functioning in the school setting. These issues of competence are important. Therefore, we are looking at beliefs, expectations and perceptions in the area of competence and how they may be influenced by parents and children. Through this study, we are hoping to be able to understand how children's beliefs influence their competence. In order to pursue this task, we would like your help. We are writing to seek permission for your child to participate in this study. The researchers will be available at the schools to administer the questionnaires to your children.

The children will be asked questions about how they perceive their scholastic competence and global self-worth. They will also be asked questions about how they perceive their parent's approach to child-rearing. A brief demographics sheet will be included which will inquire about gender, age, racial/ethnic background, and household living arrangements. The children have the option to discontinue the experiment at any time. We would also like to have a record of your child's actual grades. All of the information will be kept completely confidential. No identifying information will be used. Results of the study will be available upon completion of the study.

If you have any questions concerning this project, you may call me at (714) 737-1369. You may also call Dr. Faith McClure (880-5598) or Dr. David Chavez (880-5572). If you are willing to let your child participate, please sign the next page and have your child return this form to school at their earliest convenience.

Thank you,  
Christina Castro



Yes, I am willing to let my child \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

participate in your study concerning children's  
perceptions and I also grant permission for my child's  
current grades to be accessed by the researchers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRE PACKET

I am a graduate student at California State University, San Bernardino and I am currently conducting research for my master's thesis in counseling psychology. I am interested in how student's beliefs concerning their competence and their perception of their child-rearing reflect their actual competence and their self-esteem. The purpose of this study is to find out about students' beliefs about their abilities and their parenting experiences.

In this study you will be asked questions about how you perceive your: Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth. You will also be asked questions about your parent's approach to parenting. A brief demographics sheet will be included which will ask about gender, age, racial/ethnic background, and living arrangements at home.

Please answer these questions as openly and honestly as possible. Your names will not be known and your answers will be kept private. You are free to stop participating at any time. Thank you for your participation in this study. Please sign and date this form before you begin. If you wish to find out about the results of the study, please contact Dr. Faith McClure (880-5598) or Dr. David Chavez (880-5572).

If you have read the above information and agree to participate in this study, please sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

DEMOGRAPHICS

Circle the answer that most closely fits you

1) What is your sex?

- 1) boy                    2) girl

2) How old are you?

- 1) 9yrs      2) 10yrs      3) 11yrs      4) 12yrs  
5) other \_\_\_\_\_

3) What is your race?

- 1) white      2) black      3) Mexican/Mexican American  
4) other Hispanic      5) Asian/Asian American  
6) other \_\_\_\_\_

4) Who do you live with? (circle all that apply)

- 1) mother      2) father      3) grandmother  
4) grandfather 5) aunt      6) uncle      7) nonrelated  
   adults:  
   how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
8) sisters                      9) brothers                      10) cousins  
    how many? \_\_\_\_\_      how many? \_\_\_\_\_      how many? \_\_\_\_\_

5) Do you speak more than one language?

- 1) yes                      2) no

if yes, write which language, other than English, on  
the space provided

\_\_\_\_\_

## Parent-Child Relationship Questionnaire

Below are a series of questions on how your parent(s) acted toward you during elementary school. Please answer the questions by circling the number that corresponds to the answer that most closely describes your parent(s). For example, if the statement was never true of your parent(s), you would circle 1.

My Parent(s)	Never	While	Only Once in a Times	Some- Often	Very Often
1.felt hurt when I didn't follow their advice	1	2	3	4	5
2.spanked me as punishment	1	2	3	4	5
3.let me know what was expected	1	2	3	4	5
4.spent a lot of time with me	1	2	3	4	5
5.set very few rules	1	2	3	4	5
6.was too busy to answer my questions	1	2	3	4	5
7.explained why they punished me	1	2	3	4	5
8.allowed me to hold my point of view	1	2	3	4	5
9.wanted to know how I spent my time away from home	1	2	3	4	5
10.had difficulty being strict	1	2	3	4	5
11.still supported me when I made a poor decision	1	2	3	4	5

My Parent(s)	Never	Only Once in a While	Some- Times	Often	Very Often
12. tried to reason with me when they thought I was wrong	1	2	3	4	5
13. acted distant from me if I disappointed them	1	2	3	4	5
14. complained about me	1	2	3	4	5
15. used force to make me follow directions	1	2	3	4	5
16. would allow me to decide for myself on important matters without interfering	1	2	3	4	5
17. made it easy for me to confide in them	1	2	3	4	5
18. expected a lot from me	1	2	3	4	5
19. acted as though I was in the way	1	2	3	4	5
20. would explain the reasons for their rules	1	2	3	4	5
21. punished me	1	2	3	4	5
22. made me feel bad if I didn't spend time with the family	1	2	3	4	5
23. thought my ideas were foolish	1	2	3	4	5
24. made me feel as though my behavior reflected on them as parent(s)	1	2	3	4	5

My Parent(s)	Never	Only Once in a While	Some- Times	Often	Very Often
25. would physically restrict or punish me to make me obey	1	2	3	4	5
26. made me feel that what I did was important	1	2	3	4	5
27. would say "Just because I said so," when I questioned his/her rules	1	2	3	4	5
28. let me do pretty much as I wanted to	1	2	3	4	5
29. allowed me to have secrets from them	1	2	3	4	5
30. made it clear who was boss	1	2	3	4	5
31. kept my point of view in mind when making rules	1	2	3	4	5
32. would force me to obey by taking away privileges	1	2	3	4	5
33. let me decide for myself what is right and wrong	1	2	3	4	5
34. let me off easy when I did something wrong	1	2	3	4	5
35. punished me by making me feel guilty and ashamed	1	2	3	4	5
36. explained how my actions made others feel	1	2	3	4	5

My Parent(s)	Never	Only Once in a While	Some- Times	Often	Very Often
37.was strict	1	2	3	4	5
38.encouraged me to explore new ideas	1	2	3	4	5
39.seemed annoyed with me	1	2	3	4	5
40.made me stay in my room as punishment	1	2	3	4	5

SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE FOR CHILDREN

WHAT AM I LIKE

- | Really True for me   | Sort of True for me |     | Sort of True for me  | Really True for me |
|--|---------------------|-----|--|--------------------|
| 1. Some kids feel that they are very good at their school work |                     | BUT | Other kids worry about whether they can do the school work assigned to them. |                    |
| _____  | _____               |     | _____  | _____              |
| 2. Some kids find it hard to make friends                      |                     | BUT | Other kids find it's pretty easy to make friends.                            |                    |
| _____  | _____               |     | _____  | _____              |
| 3. Some kids do very well at all kinds of sports               |                     | BUT | Other kids don't feel that they are very good when it comes to sports.       |                    |
| _____  | _____               |     | _____  | _____              |
| 4. Some kids are happy with the way they look                  |                     | BUT | Other kids are not happy with the way they look.                             |                    |
| _____  | _____               |     | _____  | _____              |
| 5. Some kids often do not like the way they behave             |                     | BUT | Other kids usually like the way they behave.                                 |                    |
| _____  | _____               |     | _____  | _____              |
| 6. Some kids are often unhappy with themselves                 |                     | BUT | Other kids are pretty pleased with themselves.                               |                    |
| _____  | _____               |     | _____  | _____              |



- |   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| 7. Some kids feel like they are just as smart as other kids their age | BUT | Other kids aren't so sure and wonder if they are as smart. |
| _____   |     | _____  |
| 8. Some kids have alot of friends                                     | BUT | Other kids don't have very many friends.                   |
| _____   |     | _____  |
| 9. Some kids wish they could be alot better at sports                 | BUT | Other kids feel they are good enough at sports.            |
| _____   |     | _____  |
| 10. Some kids are happy with their height and weight                  | BUT | Other kids wish their height or weight were different.     |
| _____   |     | _____  |
| 11. Some kids usually do the right thing                              | BUT | Other kids often don't do the right thing.                 |
| _____   |     | _____  |
| 12. Some kids don't like the way they they are leading their life     | BUT | Other kids do like the way they are leading their life.    |
| _____   |     | _____  |
| 13. Some kids are pretty slow in finishing their school work          | BUT | Other kids can do their school work quickly.               |
| _____   |     | _____  |
| 14. Some kids would like to have alot more friends                    | BUT | Other kids have as many friends as they want.              |
| _____   |     | _____  |

15. Some kids think they could do well at just about any new sports activity they haven't tried before

BUT

Other kids are afraid they might not do well at sports they haven't ever tried.

16. Some kids wish their body was different.

BUT

Other kids like their body the way it is.

17. Some kids usually act the way they know they are supposed to

BUT

Other kids often don't act the way they are supposed to.

18. Some kids are happy with themselves as a person

BUT

Other kids are often not happy with themselves.

19. Some kids often forget what they learn

BUT

Other kids can remember things easily.

20. Some kids are always doing things with alot of kids

BUT

Other kids usually do things by themselves.

21. Some kids feel that they are better than others their age

BUT

Other kids don't feel they can play as well at sports.

22. Some kids wish their physical appearance (how they look) was different

BUT

Other kids like their physical appearance the way they it is.

23. Some kids usually  
get in trouble because  
of the things they do

BUT

Other kids usually  
don't do things  
that get them in  
trouble.

24. Some kids like the kind  
of person they are

BUT

Others often wish  
they were someone  
else.

25. Some kids do very well  
at their class work

BUT

Other kids don't do  
very well at their  
work.

26. Some kids wish that more  
kids their age liked them

BUT

Other kids feel  
that most kids  
their age.

27. In games and sports  
some kids usually  
watch instead of play

BUT

Other kids usually  
play rather than  
just watch.

28. Some kids wish  
something about their  
face or hair looked  
different

BUT

Other kids like  
their face and hair  
the way they are.

29. Some kids do things  
they know they  
shouldn't do

BUT

Other kids hardly  
ever do things they  
know they shouldn't  
do.

30. Some kids are very  
happy being the way  
they are

BUT

Other kids wish they  
were different.

31. Some kids have trouble  
figuring out the answers  
in school

BUT

Other kids almost  
always can figure  
out the answers.

32. Some kids are popular  
with others their age

BUT

Other kids are not  
very popular.

33. Some don't do well at  
new outdoor games

BUT

Other kids are good  
at new games right  
away.

34. Some kids think that  
they are good looking

BUT

Other kids think  
that they are not  
very good looking.

35. Some kids behave  
themselves very well

BUT

Other kids often  
find it hard to  
behave themselves.

36. Some kids are not very  
happy with the way they  
do alot of things

BUT

Other kids think the  
way they do things  
is fine.

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