The Relationship between Self-Esteem and Academic Performance of Children Aged Between Nine and Twelve

By

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To my past... to the gift of NOW-My Present.... to my future...

To the ones who loved me to the best of their abilities and knowledge...

To the One whose Love for me is Unconditional...
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“If you will know the truth

And the truth shall set you free”

John 8:32
The Relationship between Self-Esteem and Academic Performance of Children Aged Between Nine and Twelve

Juliana Munir Saridar

ABSTRACT

Since the literature is indecisive about the correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement, this study aimed at trying to clarify and further investigate the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance within the Lebanese context. The proposed correlational study tried to determine whether the level of children’s self-esteem is significantly related to academic performance. Consequently, it is a quantitative method of research in which there were two quantitative variables to be assessed: Self-Esteem and Academic Achievement. Non-random, purposive sampling was used for this study. Participants were students enrolled in a private academic institution from grades 4, 5, and 6. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) was administered to all students; each one had a personal confidential ID, and had to enter his/her ID on line so he/she can complete the Rosenberg survey. Results showed consistency in the percentages of self-esteem scale and academic performance. Students with high academic performance scored high on the RSE. Students with medium academic performance scored medium on RSE. However, data showed insignificant results regarding low academic averages with comparison/correlation to high, medium, and low self-esteem.

Keywords: Self-Esteem, Self-Regard, Self-Perception, Academic Achievement, Academic Performance, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Students.
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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who believed that having magical abilities would allow her to wonder about God, life, nature, animals, and people. And as soon as she entered school, those questions were silenced by the stress of performing/achieving according to certain standards. With time, this girl lost her sparkles, her zest for living, and her passion for asking and wondering; and as she was not able to achieve, she stopped believing in her abilities. She felt that she mattered, only if she was able to score high. And one day at the age of 10, she realized that she’s missed her sparkles, she’s missed her magical abilities, and she’s simply missed her-self! She decided to take back control over her life and over her-self. She started studying, focusing, and achieving, and she went back to asking and wondering and searching. All she wanted was to gain back her self-respect and to achieve happiness. This girl from the past is “Me”. I am currently a school counselor and a graduate student, and I have promised myself one day to help as many students as I can in developing and maintaining a solid self-esteem while working on their academics to their utmost capabilities without losing their inner joy. As a school counselor, in order for me to efficiently help students, I decided to conduct this current study and to research more the impact of self-esteem on academic performance.
The term self-esteem is one of the oldest terms in the field of psychology. An American Psychologist and Philosopher W. James developed it in 1890 and defined it as “a personal judgment of worth living along a dimension with positive and negative ends” (as cited in Fleming & Courtney, 1984).

Self-esteem is how we assess ourselves. It is how we identify our worth to the world, and how valuable we think we are to others. Self-esteem impacts our trust in others, our relationships, our work, our academic performance, and almost every part of our lives. Positive self-esteem allows being in control of our lives and perceiving mistakes as a learning opportunity to grow, without the fear of being rejected. Negative self-esteem invades us with feelings of unworthiness, incapability, and incompetency.

Academic performance is key for children’s development. In our fast changing society and world, with the development of science and technology, humans have reached a significant level of education and have set high goals for their children. Nowadays, it seems that, in many life’s transitions, academic record is required as it speaks for the individual himself, as an example: for scholarship and for further studies, good academic result is the main recommendation.

There is a considerable amount of research studying the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance in children’s lives. Research assumed that self-esteem is highly correlated with academic performance in such a way that low self-esteem correlates positively with low academic achievement, and high self-esteem correlates positively with high academic achievement (Gaskin-Butler & Tucker, 1995; Hale, 2001; Osborne, 1997; Osborne & Walker, 2006). However, much of the research
has been inconsistent on whether positive self-esteem improved academic achievement or vice versa (Gaskin-Butler & Tucker, 1995).
1.2 The Statement of the Study

Directionality of self-esteem’s influence, if any, is a point of contention amongst researchers. The role of self-esteem in an academic setting has been especially influential in American schools, according to Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, and Vohs (2003), under the assumption that increasing self-esteem will lead to improvement in academic performance (p. 10). Baumeister et al. (2003) find that this is a plausible assumption to make, albeit contentious in its causal determination. It is reasonable, they state, that people with higher self-esteem are more willing to engage in the learning process and have the confidence to take on tasks even in the face of failures or setbacks. Despite many studies that illustrate a positive correlation between self-esteem levels and academic achievement, without establishing causality, they “generally point to a weak and ambiguous relationship between them” that requires stronger evidence (p. 11). In a subsequent article for Scientific American, Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, and Vohs (2005) take a harsher stand, declaring that the “myth” of enhancing self-esteem for the sake of improving academic performance or vice-versa has been exploded due to a lack of supporting research. All does not hold this view. Branden (1994), for example, states that “self-esteem has profound consequences for every aspect of our existence”, and Patching and Hinduja (2007) find that poor relationships in school affect a child’s self-esteem which in turn impacts their academic performance (as cited in Yousef & Bellany, 2015, p. 468).

In a three-wave study of students in the 8th to 12th grade, Ross and Broh (2000) find that previous academic achievement impacts self-esteem as well as perceptions of self-control. Notably, however, Ross and Broh (2000) find that while sense of personal
control has a positive influence on subsequent academic achievement, higher self-esteem has no influence one way or the other. This contrasts with the research of Booth and Gerard (2011), who find that higher self-esteem is an indicator of better academic achievement in the near future. In a study involving 172 6th grade students equally divided between the UK and North America, Booth and Gerard (2011) find that higher self-esteem at the beginning of the scholastic year is demonstrably linked to higher achievement at the end of the following term. A notable consideration made by the researchers in the aforementioned study is that, while the work of Baumeister et al. (2003) expose the inconclusive results of studies on the directional influence of self-esteem, research on the impact of self-esteem on behavior is confounded by comparing results across cultures, which are divergent in their interpretations of self-esteem. Comparing the results of studies from different cultures is further complicated by the varying definitions of self-esteem amongst academics themselves, along with the extent to which self-efficacy is related to esteem in their studies.

Since the literature is indecisive about the correlation between self-esteem and academic performance, the current study aims at trying to clarify and further investigate the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance within the Lebanese context.
1.3 Purpose of the Study

The proposed correlational study determines whether the level of children’s self-esteem is significantly related to academic performance — within the context of a Lebanese educational institution.

The existing body of recent work by Sarouphim (2011), Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007), Ayyash-Abdo and Sanchez-Ruiz (2012), and El-Hassan (2004) has laid the groundwork for study on constructs of self within a Lebanese educational and cultural context. Fairly comparing their conclusions by way of review is obstructed by divergence in focus, age groups and tools of measurement. Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007) test for subjective well being within university student populations, while Sarouphim’s (2011) study of early adolescents examines self-esteem and depression comparisons between gifted and ungifted students, and finally El-Hassan’s (2004) study of school students focuses on self-concept across a wider age group (10-20 years old). This divergence does, however, allow for furthering the existing literature by filling gaps in the research while acknowledging beforehand the cultural specificities highlighted in their work.

With the divergence of studies in mind and the disparity in their findings, the proposed study looks to build on the point of convergence: That higher self-esteem is a desirable and necessary trait for human development that is fostered within the classroom environment. From this point, a study into the correlation between self-esteem and aggregated academic achievement is to be quantifiably assessed within a Lebanese educational institution in order to address the discrepant findings of existing literature.

The proposed study is aiming at
- Examining the different key factors that link self-esteem to academic performance,
- and exploring mechanisms that are responsible for students’ success and failure.

Consequently, the study aims at answering the following research questions:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and academic performance in Lebanon?

RQ2: If self-esteem and academic performance are strongly related, how is this relationship defined?
1.4 Research Context

The current study took place within the context of a Lebanese educational institution. Brumana High School (BHS), founded in 1873, is located in Bumana, Metn area, Mount Lebanon. BHS is a private Lebanese British High school that offers Lebanese Program (LP), International Program (IP) and International Baccalaureate (IB). BHS is a Quaker coeducational day and boarding school that seeks excellence in character building, sports, arts and academics. The moto of the school is ‘I Serve’ coming from the Quaker philosophy that greatness starts when serving others. The school is considered to be a child-centered community where the child is the primary focus and educators seek to empower children towards becoming independent learners, critical thinkers and knowledge seekers. The school caters for around 1,200 students aged between 3-18 years, with 46 different nationalities. There are 113 staff who teach, giving a staff student ratio of 1:10. The school has a solid policy of accepting staff and students on the basis of merit, regardless of religion, nationality, race or gender, and the staff and students are of different religious creeds, mainly Christian or Muslim. The school gives primary focus on differentiated learning being well aware that children come from different backgrounds, have different capacities and multiple intelligences. Thus, they learn differently. The school believes in exhausting its resources to cater for different students’ needs and scaffold them until they become independent.
1.5 Significance of the Study

Teachers, parents, and therapists have focused efforts on boosting self-esteem, on the assumption that high self-esteem will cause many positive outcomes and benefits—an assumption that is critically questioned here. Baumeister et al. (2003) state that self-esteem is literally defined by how much value individuals place on themselves and is, therefore, a self-assigned perception that does not carry any definitional requirement of accuracy (p. 2). Given the subjective reality in self-reporting levels of self-esteem, it is therefore only relevant to research if one can demonstrate that the perceptions individuals hold regarding their self-worth have consequences on future behavior or outcomes.

Despite existing literature being inconclusive as to the influence of self-esteem on academic achievement, as is indeed true of the directionality of that influence, researchers and policy makers do agree on the desirability of positive self-esteem as a student attribute, and promote programs attuning teachers to enforcing an environment that enhances both academic achievement as well as a positive sense of self (Booth & Gerard, 2011; Helm, 2007). Thomson (2012) states that an effective educator needs to be aware of the “simple fact that children go to school for a living. School is their job, their livelihood, their identity” (p. 164), and that, therefore, special recognition of school’s critical role in shaping a person’s self-concept is mandated.
1.6 Thesis Division

The thesis is composed of six main chapters, each with its respective headings and subheadings. Chapter one, titled the introduction, incorporates the background, statement, the purpose, and significance of the proposed study. A definition of self-esteem and its distinction from other incorrectly interchangeable words is provided in chapter two, which is the literature review. Chapter two also includes tools for measuring self-esteem, an elaborated section of the tool used in this study, and self-esteem in educational settings. After completing those sections, academic achievement is introduced and a review of correlational studies conducted between self-esteem and academic achievement was provided. Chapter two concludes with a section on Lebanon as a culture. Chapter three, the methodology section, guides the readers into detailed descriptions of sampling, instruments, data analysis, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations. Chapter four displays the findings of the study, and chapter five provides the discussion of those findings. Finally, chapter six, the conclusion, incorporates a general conclusion, limitations, suggestions for future research, and recommendations for parents and educators on enhancing children’s self-esteem.

In summary, this chapter includes a background of the study whereby I drew upon my personal experience, statement of the study, which points out to the indecisiveness of research on the actual relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement, and the purpose of the study, which is whether the level of children’s self-esteem is significantly related to academic performance in Lebanese educational systems. Finally, it included the significance of the study’s results.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

Having completed the introduction, where the background, purpose, statement, and significance of the study were highlighted, the following section reviewed the literature about various aspects included in this study, beginning with an extended definition of self-esteem, the different tools of measuring it, and a review that discusses self-esteem in academic settings. Academic achievement was then defined. After those key terms have been established, a correlation between them based on different resources was presented; concluding with the Lebanese context pertaining to self-esteem.
2.1 Self Esteem

2.1.1 Definition

Self-esteem is about a personal conclusion that every individual makes regarding his aptitude to face life's challenges, his ability to understand and solve problems, and his right to pursue happiness and earn respect. Self-esteem is a crucial significant predictor of many outcomes, such as academic performance and behavior. According to Branden (1994), “self-esteem is the sum of self-confidence and self-respect”. Personal experiences in someone's life are major contributors in self-esteem development. Positive and negative experiences in life develop certain attitudes toward the “self”, which can be either favorable by developing positive feelings of self-worth, or unfavorable by developing negative feelings of self-worth.

According to Rosenberg (1965), self-esteem refers to feeling worthy in general terms, to the evaluative aspects of a person's self-concept, and it is defined by Rosenberg (1965) as "a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self” (p. 15). As a psychosocial quality, self-esteem impacts our trust in others, capacity to foster meaningful relationships, and occupational performance when faced with environmental stressors or peer evaluation (Eisenbarth, 2012). People with high self-esteem claim to be particularly popular (Battistich, Solomon, & Delucchi, 1993). They also rate their interpersonal relationships as being of higher quality compared with people with low self-esteem (Keefe & Berndt, 1996, as cited in Baumeister et al. 2003, p.17).

It is important to note that the term self-esteem includes self-worth, self-regard, self-respect, and self-integrity.
In Maslow’s ubiquitous pyramidal hierarchy of needs, self-esteem is depicted as a primary human motivator. To Maslow, personal growth and self-actualization necessitate the existence of inner self-respect as well as esteem from significant others (Tay & Diener, 2011, p. 365). Branden (1994) affords self-esteem a similar importance as a basic human need, and assigns three intrinsic qualities to it:

- As a basic human need, self-esteem is essential to not only healthy development, but survival itself.
- Self-esteem is an inherent phenomenon that automatically arises from within an individual’s consciousness and belief system.
- A person’s thoughts, behaviors and emotions occur in parallel to developing self-esteem.

Self-esteem is the degree to which our “value” as a person is assessed. It is both a trait and a state (Davey, 2005). As a trait, self-esteem has many levels and is different from one person to another. As a state, it varies based on different situations and circumstances (Davey, 2005). Self-esteem is defined as the judgment a person has about him/herself, the job he/she does, and his/her achievements. It is how a person thinks others view him/her and it is the purpose he/she has in life (Obidigbo, 2006). Emler (2001) stated that self-esteem includes a person’s strengths and weakness, social status, and how that person relates to others, as well as his/her ability to be resilient. In the words of Coleman (2006), self-esteem is a person’s opinion about him/herself, which can be positive (favorable or high), neutral or negative (unfavorable or low). It is
important to note that everyone has a perception of his/her self-worth (which can be accurate/rerealistic or inaccurate/unrealistic).

Self-esteem varies with accomplishment. Coopersmith (1967) stated that self-esteem affects the way we think and feel about ourselves. Lefton (2007) proposed that people who have an unstable, inconsistent self-esteem are more prone to be affected by positive and negative life situations than people with more stable and secure self-esteem. Self-esteem is also related to how people approach their day-to-day lives (Obidigbo, 2006). Therefore, people who feel positive about themselves are more likely to be happy, healthy, successful, and productive. They are more likely to handle stressful tasks; they tend to sleep better at night and tend to have less health problems (Obidigbo, 2006; Onyekuru & Obidigbo, 2012). Low self-esteem impacts negatively people’s perception towards their lives; it makes people dreadful and unrealistic about goals and risks. Low self-esteem distorts people’s self-image and leads to low academic and work performance (Emler, 2001). Symptoms of low self-esteem can include feeling tired most of the time, lacking motivation to accomplish things, being bored and unsatisfied with life, perceiving yourself as having little or no abilities and/or possible opportunities, focusing on the negatives, resigning and giving up easily, setting unrealistic expectations, fearing change, among others (Emler, 2001).

Subsequently, when you feel worthless, helpless and unable to do anything to change your state you start developing feelings of self-pity, which provide you with an excuse to avoid taking on any responsibility for your life. You often feel a lack of assertiveness and feel the constant need to be in a relation in order to be worthy. This is the attitude of a typical underachiever. According to Feldman (2009), people with high self-esteem are healthy and happy individuals. They tend to have better intelligence, so
they produce better because they feel good about themselves. Someone with low self-esteem can put on a “show” by over compensating. That person always appears happy; he/she is a highly competitive perfectionist who repeatedly reminds others of his/her successes. However, deep down inside that person lives in fear, anxious that his/her true identity will be exposed. That person suffers from strong identity problems and inclines to be “burnt out”. That person could go to the other extreme and act as though he/she simply “doesn’t care”. Finally, that person tends to blame everyone else for his/her own problems (Onyekuru, 2009).

Self-esteem is self-belief in one’s ability to think; it’s the assurance of one’s ability to manage basic difficulties of life; it’s one’s confidence in the right to be successful and happy; self-esteem is one’s perception of being worthy, deserving, and having full right claiming his/her needs and wants, accomplishing his/her values, and enjoying the outcomes of his/her efforts (Hooks, 2003). Self-esteem embraces all these traits. However, and most importantly, self-esteem is a private perception/judgment of one’s self and a feeling of significance based upon externally imposed criteria (Alford, 1997), such as societal perceptions or assumptions, family values, and/or previous experiences of success or failures in different aspects of life. Self-esteem can include a positive or negative inclination toward oneself. Rosenberg (1965) described self-esteem as “a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self”.

Self-esteem is heterogeneous in its categorization and often combined with related terms of self-worth. The terms self-efficacy, self-concept and self-esteem are commonly used interchangeably or are incorrectly confused with each other. Bandura’s (1997) authoritative definition of self-efficacy is the level of confidence an individual has in their ability to execute certain tasks or achieve specific outcomes (as cited in Lane
et al., 2004, p. 247). Self-concept is the “overarching view of oneself as a physical, social, spiritual, or moral being” (Snow & Anderson, 1987, as cited in Woods & Jeffrey, 2002).
2.1.2 Differentiation (self-esteem and other terms)

The capacity for combining relatable terms, such as self-efficacy and self-concept, in the study of self-esteem leads to disparity amongst researchers attempting to quantifiably analyze its influence. A clearer line between self-efficacy and self-esteem can be illustrated by differentiating the type of data researchers look to measure. Studies into self-efficacy look to measure the confidence individuals have in their own completion of tasks, as opposed to self-esteem that would encompass a comparative examination of how individuals rate their own abilities to those of others (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 1996). Studies highlighted that students’ need for achievement and recognition, is related to different cultural and societal attributions (Graham & Weiner, 1996; Weiner, 1986). Those attributions can be categorized into three scopes:

1) **Source/Locus of control**: Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic. For example, if a student says that he/she did well on a test because he/she is “good in math”, he/she is attributing their success to an internal ability. However, if the student attributes his/her success in the test because the teacher was flexible, then, he/she is associating their success to an external factor – the teacher.

2) **Stability**: Some attributions are related to either a specific task performed in a specific time or series of tasks performed throughout a longer period of time. An unstable attribution will be related to the students’ lack of effort. A stable attribution will be related to an external factor outside the student ability to perform.
3) **Controllability:** a) It is when a student believes the challenging task was responsible for his/her own failure (uncontrollable factor); b) when the student believes that his/her own failure are related to a factor that they can control.

Moreover, most people assume that self-esteem is the same as self-confidence. Despite the fact that self-esteem and self-confidence are related, they are not the same. Self-confidence may appear on a specific task, and it disappears as soon as the task is over; however, low-self-esteem becomes more of a character trait. In Latin, esteem actually means ‘to estimate’. So self-esteem means how you estimate yourself. A person with low self-esteem finds it difficult to answer yes to the following questions:

- Do I feel I deserve to be loved?
- Do I think I’m a good person?
- Do I deserve to be happy?

Consequently, it is invaluable to understand the distinction between self-esteem and other mistakenly, interchangeable words in order to fully comprehend the purpose of this study.
2.1.3 Tools for measuring self esteem

Different tools exist to measure self-esteem depending on the sample and the context. In some instances, self-esteem can be measured as the introduced self, which is the conduct displayed to others according to certain evaluations. In other instances, self-esteem can be measured as the experienced/accomplished self, which is the self as experienced by the individual (Savin-Williams & Jaquish, 1981). Essentially all present instruments of self-regard, regardless of whether by definition or of methodological comfort, expect that self-assessment is a private, subjective matter, not open to estimation by outer conduct or through surmising made by others (Savin-Williams & Jaquish, 1981).

Due to the fact that this study focuses on the experienced self, only tools that measure this category will be explored.

According to Hosogi, Okada, Fujii, Noguchi, and Watanabe (2012), an assortment of techniques is utilized for assessing experienced self-regard. However, looking at criteria utilized is imperative when translating the aftereffects of research on self-regard.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Janis-Field Feeling of Inadequacy Scale are used for grown-ups, cases. However, these scales are for the most part dynamic and present challenges when utilized for youthful youngsters. On the other hand, evaluation techniques are produced for more youthful youngsters, which incorporate Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, Pope's 5-Scale Test of Self-Esteem for kids, and Kid-KINDL (Hosogi et al., 2012).

Below is a brief explanation of three instruments/scales that can be utilized in measuring self-esteem.
First, Coopersmith self-esteem inventory characterized self-esteem as positive and negative mentalities toward oneself. The inventory views self-regard as a declaration of endorsement or objection to one-self, and a measure of the degree to which one trusts that he/she is gifted, effective, and that his/her life has significance and esteem.

Second, Pope's 5-scale trial of self-regard for kids characterized self-regard as the evaluative sentiments one holds for oneself, and the feeling that one has essential worth. It stated that self-regard is assessed as the contrast between the real self and the perfect self. Self-regard is high when the real self and perfect self are in understanding, and self-regard is low when real self and perfect self are discrepant. Pope's 5-Scale Test of Self-Esteem for Children consists of 60 items and they both assess self-regard on a 5 grade scale measurement: Global Scale, academic scale, body scale, family scale, and social scale. The test contains 24 questions covering six zones: Physical wellbeing, passionate prosperity, self-regard, family, companions, and school (Hosogi et al., 2012).

Third, Ziller social self-regard scale trusted that self-regard is the individual's impression of his value, which comes to fruition from a content of self-other introduction. The scale called attention to a few issues with past investigates concerning self-regard, including the truths that 1) the social way of the self-framework was not adequately underlined, 2) they were of an expressive sort, and 3) they, to a great extent, included a verbal self-report (Hosogi et al., 2012).

There are innumerable self-regard measures but then no firm group of proof with which to legitimize them (Demo, 1985). In order to assess those methods, Demo (1985) executed a primary paradigm utilized to assess a solid relationship among them. An examination of the cases demonstrates that the methods and standard deviations on
every self-regard are not fundamentally the same. However, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE) along with the Coopersmith Self-Esteem inventory (SEI) demonstrated noteworthy convergent legitimacy (Demo, 1985). In addition, Rosenberg self-esteem scale was the first to join surveys into research on self-esteem (Savin-Williams & Jaquish, 1981).

Consequently, for the purposes of this study, the RSE is going to be administered in order to measure the experienced self-esteem demonstrated by the participants.
2.1.4 More about RSE

In this section, the terms self-esteem, self-regard, and self-respect are being used interchangeably.

An ordinarily acknowledged meaning of self-regard is Rosenberg's (1965) origination of a worldwide self-regard: "the assessment which the individual makes and generally keeps up with respect to himself; it communicates a state of mind of endorsement or dissatisfaction". To best evaluate these mentalities of self-respect he developed the self-report Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a standout amongst the most every now and again utilized measures of self-regard (Wells & Marwell, 1976). Rosenberg's self-esteem scale involves inquiries regarding 10 unique items, and evaluations are made utilizing a four-level scale (Hosogi et al., 2012).

According to Huang and Dong (2012), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) was initially developed to provide a one-dimensional self-evaluation record to assess comprehensive self-esteem in adolescents. However, it has also been passed on to other age groups because of its confirmed success and usefulness. According to Gray-Little, Williams, and Hancock (1997), the main advantages of the RSE are:

- The language is simple, grade 5 reading level
- The scale can be completed in few minutes
- The content of the RSE scale is related to the construct
- The RSE has been translated to many languages, and adapted to different cultures (p.444).

Participants of the RSE are asked to rate 5 positive and 5 negative statement-items on a Likert scale: example of a positive statement: “I feel I have a number of good
qualities”; example of a negative statement “At times I think I am no good at all.” High RSE scores reflect high self-esteem. The RSE can strike positive and negative aspects of self-esteem based on the positive and the negative statement- items. Research has recorded the impact of wording on the dimensionality of the RSE. The most suitable model of RSE was the one with a global self-esteem factor, a factor linked with positive and negative statement-items (Huang & Dong, 2012).
2.1.5 Self-esteem in educational settings

In the world we live in, we tend to compare ourselves to those around us, which leads to shed light on our insecurities and imperfections. This often makes us feel negative towards ourselves as we lose sight of the worth of our own individuality and then feel inadequate and unsatisfied (Onyekuru & Obidigbo, 2010).

Early years are crucial in founding our self-esteem and our family is a major key player in the development of our self-esteem. Parents with high self-esteem can positively nurture and impact their children’s self-esteem. People develop their self-esteem during their school years. This period is an important factor in their sense of worth, because if they get to develop high self-esteem during this time. They are generally less likely to engage in self-damaging behaviors such as alcohol (drug) abuse and crime. Our own usual personality and the messages that we receive from everyone around us about how we should act and feel have a great impact on our self-esteem (Kokenes, 1978).

According to Hosogi et al. (2012), the development of a youngster's self-regard is intensely affected by the environment in which he or she is raised. Parents of youngsters with low self-regard were portrayed as well by such features as low self-esteem and emotional instability; in addition, they impacted negatively their child’s environment physically, emotionally and mentally, showing little care towards their child, and responded to him/her in an extreme manner.

Zakeri and Karimpour (2011) elaborate on how “acceptance-involvement” and “psychological autonomy-granting” styles are important positive tellers of the self-esteem. Parents who deal with their children with more tolerance and acceptance and use
less control, help their children develop high self-esteem. Those parents are usually warm, affectionate, supportive, and involved in their children’s day to day life.

Utilizing Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, Kokenes (1978) directed an examination of youngsters from grades four to eight and found that self-regard is most reduced in grade six. As children grow, contrasts are likewise liable to emerge in the variables that contain self-regard and the importance doled out to each of these components.

Hosogi et al. (2012) also claim that many reviews show a connection between low self-regard and an assortment of psychological and emotional issues in the lives of grown-ups. A conceivable clarification is that those adults were not able create satisfactory self-regard as youngsters, which kept them from embracing a compelling methodology for managing stress, prompting to the onset of mental issues.

Self-regard can be enhanced if schools cooperate to make a shelter outside of the home where children feel acknowledged.

According to research, parenting styles are an important external factor that can influence children’s self-esteem.

Self-esteem impacts children’s motivation in order to be successful at school, especially in certain areas of instruction such as physical education. Educators have the role of facilitating the development of children’s self-esteem at schools as it may after all be a very important educational goal. Self-esteem is a multidimensional aim of education. Other aims, such as achievement, are important; however, helping children develop a healthy self-esteem is a total moral education for building good character traits and qualities (Bruno & Njoku, 2014).
Helping children to build their self-esteem is a primary educational priority, and, by not doing so, educators risk to put those children in failing situations. Low self-esteem is truly an obstacle to achievement; it certainly is something to be overcome if not cured. If so, educators should make every effort to create a school environment in which the social bases of self-esteem are readily available to all children (Ferkany, 2008).

Finally, according to Zakeri and Karimpour (2011), it is important to note that how a teacher and a parent behave with a child in certain situations will directly impact whether or not a child will develop a healthy self-esteem.

It is therefore the duty of the teacher/parent to note the following: early years are important in developing one’s self-esteem, and family is a crucial factor in the development of individual self-esteem. Parents who have high self-esteem will positively impact the development of their children’s self-image. Moreover, how children build their self-esteem during their time at school will define their sense of worth. Children, who develop high self-esteem during this time, are mostly less likely to be involved in destructive behavior, such as alcohol, drug abuse, and crime. As a result, our own character, the perception society has about us, and societal expectations from us about how we should act and feel can affect our self-esteem (Zakeri & Karimpour, 2011).
2.2 Academic Achievement:

Presently, as teachers, we frequently review students’ work using invalid criteria like how we were evaluated. Lacking education in legitimate appraisal and reviewing standards and practices is a reason why numerous educators keep on invalidly evaluating students’ work (Allen, 2005).

Estimations of academic achievement, found all through the literature research, are displayed as per the introduced model of academic achievement (York, Gibson & Rankin, 2005). The model proposed by York, Gibson and Rankin (2005) elucidates that academic achievement, which is a term used interchangeably with academic success and student success is defined as a combination of fulfillment, procurement of aptitudes and abilities, industriousness, fulfillment of learning targets, and vocation achievement.

These discoveries propose that regardless of reports that have supported for more nitty-gritty perspectives of the term, the greater part of distributed experts proceed to barely measure academic accomplishment as school accomplishment; all the more particularly, operationalized as evaluations or potentially GPA (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006).

Therefore, York et al. (2005), obviously, found that academic success same as academic achievement, including learning goals, and obtaining of abilities and capabilities were much of the time measured as components of academic success.

Nonacademic variables are frequently utilized as criteria for doling out evaluations since a few educators consider the results of evaluations more vital than the estimation of clear correspondence of data and the interpretability of the evaluations (Brookhart, 1993).
Notwithstanding direction on the most proficient method to survey and grade utilizing sound standards of estimation, research suggests that pre-service instructors require hands-on involvement in evaluating understudies and how to function with coordinating educators who survey and grade in routes not the same as those scholarly by the pre-service educators (Barnes 1985; Lomax 1996).

According to Allen (2005), as instructor teachers, we have to provide reviews to our students that precisely convey students' accomplishment of substance information learned in our courses, and not how hard they work or how regularly they go to our classes.
2.3 Correlation between Self Esteem & Academic Achievement

Literature has been indecisive on the correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement. This section presents a summary of prominent research done in this regard.

In their review of causal relationships between self-esteem and positive outcomes, Baumeister et al. (2003) claim that subjective experience of being told that one is competent/attractive/lovable or not creates the impression that self-esteem rises when one excels at an activity or gains acceptance to a social group, while dropping when one fails (p. 2). Baumeister et al. (2003) go on to say that the ubiquitous manner in which we all experience this phenomenon in our lives subjectively strengthens the assumed impression that one’s level of self-esteem is not only a result of the outcome, but that the correlation of this impression is bidirectional in that our levels of self-esteem then cause life’s successes and failures.

In a recent study, Bandura (1997) finds that students scoring high on self-efficacy tests with respect to both task ability as well as “managing peer pressure for detrimental conduct” are more likely to attain higher academic achievement and engage in socially rewarding experiences (p. 1206). High self-esteem, on the other hand, offers up a wider spectrum. Baumeister et al. (2003) conduct an in depth review of the various assumed benefits of boosting self-esteem, pointing to the inconsistent means with which it is measured, and its heterogeneous categorization; whereby respondents include those who “frankly accept their good qualities along with narcissistic, defensive, and conceited individuals” (p. 1).
McCabe, Blankstein and Mills (1999) find that high interpersonal sensitivity — whereby students with lower peer-integration suffer from separation anxiety and fragile inner-selves — is strongly linked to the maladaptive development of social problem solving; with both factors associated with social and academic self-esteem and strong predictors of depressive symptomatology (p. 600). In another study of 687 Turkish undergraduates, Koruklu (2014) finds that self-esteem is positively correlated with social-problem solving (p. 486). Studies pointing to an impact of self-esteem on social integration add a new dimension to the relevance of validating this subjective construct (Korukly, 2014; McCabe et al., 2007). That is to say that, even if correlational studies contentiously fail to find links between self-esteem and academic achievement, self-esteem is worthy of study in its own right as literature supports its role in the mental health of people as societal beings. According to Jagacinski and Strickland (2000), social comparisons are greatly important to performance-focused students, as they depend on comparing their achievements to others in order to distinguish whether they are successful or not (as cited in Kandemir, 2014, p. 92). It could then be argued that poor social development at the school level would translate negatively in terms of occupational success, but again the literature diverges. For example, self-esteem is significantly related to organizational citizenship behavior — the social and psychological context that serves as a catalyst for task activities and processes, such as helping others with their work or endorsing organizational objectives — but not to academic performance, according to Khaola (2014, p. 128).

Thomas and Gadbois (2007) posit that students with low self-esteem are more likely to develop self-handicapping as a proactive strategy in order to externalize failure
and internalize success. Following on Jagacinski and Strickland’s (2000) findings that students compare their achievements to their peers by way of evaluating their own self-worth, students with low self-esteem take a conscious decision to engage in self-handicapping in order to shield themselves from expected poor achievements by comparison (as cited in Thomas & Gadbois, 2007, p. 102). An example of externalizing failure would be to blame sickness on poor results, while commending oneself on being smart for doing well without studying for an exam is an example of internalizing success (p. 103). In either case, Thomas and Gadbois (2007) assert that this conscious preemptive measure is intended to mask their own abilities to others as a manner of coping with their own negative self-evaluation. Midgley et al. (1996), as cited in Thomas & Gadbois, 2007, p. 119, find that, by the eighth grade, students employ self-handicapping strategies when their focus is on demonstrating ability compared to other students, as opposed to those whose focus is on developing competence; with the former group strongly correlated with poor academic grades.

If unaddressed, such defensive strategies continue to fester post-adolescence, such that individuals do not develop healthy coping mechanisms when faced with stressors ubiquitous within a society where “individuals are widely considered to be only as worthy as their ability to achieve” (Convington, 2000, p. 181). In a study of 507 students in two Turkish universities, Yazuver (2015) finds that female students possess higher self-handicapping tendencies than their male counterparts. An unexpected result since Yazuver (2015) cites the Western studies of Kimble, Kimble and Croy (1998) and Rhodewalt and Davidson (1986), which claim male students are more likely to resort to self-handicapping (p. 886). Tan and Tan (2014) find that even “high-ability” female
students in Singapore have lower self-esteem than their male counterparts and “put ceilings on their own achievements having internalized the gender stereotypical view that their achievements are less important than to boys” (p. 619). While the relation of self-esteem to self-handicapping is not the focus of my proposed study, highlighting its disparity across literature is indicative of culture-specific gender differences between Western and Eastern populations as pertains to self-esteem; suggesting that self-esteem can throw up correlations that will vary from those deemed insignificant by Baumeister et al. (2003; 2005).

Both Sarouphim (2011) and Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007) point to cultural differences between Lebanese and Western study population, be it either on the grounds of gender-equality or collectivist orientation respectively. A comparable result is found in Alkhatteeb and Abushijab’s (2014) study on 2nd generation Arab-American elementary students in the United States. While it is worth mentioning that their study indicates a strong positive and statistical correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement, the more pertinent finding is that scores closely matched those of Caucasian counterparts and “sex-differences were not statistically significant” (p. 807). By contrast, El-Hassan’s (2004) study on 392 Lebanese school students finds that there are no statistically significant differences on total self-concept (herein differentiated from self-esteem) scores between genders. Cross-culture research is not in agreement, with Samuels and Griffere (1979) asserting that there are contradictions between studies of sex-related differences in self-esteem. In that, some research has found no difference between male and female respondents, while other studies have found for higher levels of self-esteem in one gender or the other (p. 33).
The development of self-esteem is by no means limited to peer relationships in school, with both parents and educators playing a role in its enforcement. Demirbilek and Otrar (2014) find that students, who were part of a complete family unit, exhibited higher levels of self-esteem than those who lived with a single or divorced parent. Differential treatment by teachers towards high-performing students may play a role in the development of self-esteem, considering that self-worth is affected by individuals’ perception of how they are evaluated by others (Coopersmith, 1967; Thomas & Gadbois, 2007). Teachers may afford more attention to students they deem more promising, while controlling for the perceived negative attitudes of low-performance students. However, Prihadi and Hairul (2011) control for the potential impact of deferential treatment by conducting a study on schools that only enrolled students with high-performance. In their study of 800 high-school students, the researchers find that, when students are treated with the same “perceived teachers’ expectancy”, internalized “locus of control” plays a dominant role in developing students’ self-esteem (p. 118). While Prihadi and Hairul (2011) maintain that perceived teachers’ expectancy does play a role in forming the self-esteem of students subjected to differential treatment, their work also acknowledges an internalized component to the development of self-worth.

The correlation between stress, depression and self-esteem is not surprising. Besides acting as a positive force in the maintenance of meaningful relationships, recent literature also finds that self-esteem acts as a protective buffer to the individual; whereby those with high self-esteem are more likely to develop coping strategies when faced with stressful events, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to display symptoms of depression and stressor-avoidance when faced with the same challenges (Eisenbarth,
2012; Tan & Tan, 2014, p. 150). Sarouphim (2011) accounts for an expected gender difference in scores by citing Lebanon’s patriarchal societal reality; whereby gender inequalities persist and puberty signals more freedom for males within the community while impacting females in the opposite direction (p. 27). If self-esteem is found to correlate with academic performance, the impact of gender inequality should be of national concern, considering that there are more female students than male counterparts within academic establishments at both the school and university level (World Bank, 2013).

A gender component is relevant to findings and ties into divergence of results found in cross-cultural studies. Whereas Booth and Gerard’s (2011) cross-Atlantic research does not find for gender disparity, a study by Joshi and Srivastava (2009) of 400 adolescent Indian students reflects differences in self-esteem attribution between eastern and western cultures. Specifically, Joshi and Srivastava’s (2009) comparative study of urban and rural students yielded no significant differences with regard to self-esteem when controlling for socio-economic factors, whereas higher achievement predictably favored urban students. More pertinent is the finding that there exist significant differences between genders from both communities. While female respondents from either communities scored far lower than their male counterparts in terms of self-esteem, girls significantly outscored boys on academic achievement. The confusion over the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement may be due to the context in which the connection is viewed (Sanders-Phillips, 1989). That is to say that, while self-esteem is often related to self-efficacy, it variably includes other components vested in socio-economy, cultural expectations of gender roles, and
reinforcement of peers towards their societal contribution. In the case of female adolescent students in India, it could be argued that while they have low self-esteem tied into their cultural background, their higher valuation of academic studies results in higher self-efficacy.

Given the anecdotally promoted image of Lebanon as a bridge between Eastern and Western civilization, due attention to the role of gender on self-esteem’s directional influence on actual achievement must be given.
2.4 Lebanon as a culture

In a 2011, pioneering study investigating gender differences in self-esteem amongst 242 gifted and non-gifted students in Lebanon, Sarouphim (2011) finds that Lebanese adolescents (aged 12-14) demonstrate an average degree of global self-esteem and self-concept when tested with the Rosenberg Scale that are similar to scores in developed Western countries (p. 36). Sarouphim’s results are consistent with those of Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007, p. 278). It is important to note that both studies and data collection took place during periods of instability and distress in the country. Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007) suggested that Lebanese youth had acquired “buffer mechanisms” (as cited in Sarouphim, 2011, p. 37), and internalized traits such as resilience, which will help them overcome challenging times while keeping their sanity and emotional stability. An unexpected result of Sarouphim’s (2011) study is the inconsistency of differences found between gifted and non-gifted students (p. 37); and further study is warranted. As to the impact of gender on valuation of self-worth, Sarouphim (2011) finds that “analyses indicated that boys had significantly higher scores on RSE” (p. 35), with significantly higher reported levels of stress and depressive tendencies in females.

As a broad statement, Lebanese culture orientation is collectivist, aligning itself more with east Asian countries than Western counterparts where a wealth of studies exist on the correlation of self-esteem and social/academic/occupational performance (Ayyash-Abdo & Alamuddin, 2007, p. 268). There is a need for more data across cultures to validate generalizable empirical findings trending in Western countries, on account of cultural dimensions “mediating the process and the outcome of subjective
well-being” (p. 266). In their study of 689 Lebanese university students, Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007) find that respondents who report being bilingual score significantly higher on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale than those who use Arabic only; suggesting that the monolingual respondents are more typically aligned with Lebanese collectivist cultural identity than those exposed to another language that “shapes people’s social inference and value judgements” (p. 280). In a subsequent article, Ayyash-Abdo and Sanchez-Ruiz (2012) also affirm that studies point to bilingualism and tri-lingualism as being associated “with better communication skills, self-image, creative abilities, curriculum achievement, and employment opportunities” (p. 194).

Moreover, Baumeister et al. (2003) contend that, in order for levels of self-esteem to be properly corresponded with varying outcomes, researchers should not limit themselves to specific outcomes (p. 6). By way of example, it is insufficient to simply measure self-reported esteem scores against a particular academic subject such as mathematics. Many individuals may consider mathematics irrelevant to their self-worth evaluation or be disinterested in the topic. Baumeister et al. (2003) instead suggest that studies should either identify specific fields on interest with which to correlate performance and self-esteem levels, or aggregate respondents’ performance or behaviors into bundles; combining all academic subjects into one score for example.

In conclusion, there exists a gap in literature when it comes to self-esteem and academic achievement in the Lebanese context. Very few sources exist. Subsequently, this study will try to examine the correlational relationship between self-esteem and overall academic performance of children aged nine to twelve, hoping to highlight key factors that could be responsible for one’s success or failure.
Having presented the literature review, which assimilated different research on academic achievement and self-esteem, with definitions, common misconceptions, tools for measurement, correlations, and context, the following section discusses the methodology.
Chapter Three

Methodology

After providing a review of the literature, it is empirical to present the methodology of the study. This chapter covers the methodology section, which is a step-by-step guide justification and explanation of how the study was carried out. Starting with the method, a justification of the type of research was provided. Then the sampling process was presented, as well as the instrument used to carry out the study. The methodology also includes a section on data analysis and one for reliability and validity. Finally, ethical considerations taken to perform this study are mentioned.
3.1 Method

This correlational study is a quantitative method of research in which there were two quantitative variables from the same group of subjects. In a correlational study, we try to determine if there is a relationship between the two variables, which in this case are academic performance and self-esteem. Consequently, a correlational research, as causal-near research, is a case of what is now and then called associational research. In associational research, the connections between at least two quantitative factors are considered with no control of factors by utilizing a relationship coefficient (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). A noteworthy motivation behind using correlational research in this study is to clear up our comprehension of essential marvels by recognizing connections among factors (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Those factors are academic achievement and self-esteem.
3.2 Sampling

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), the specimen for a correlational review, as in a review, ought to be chosen deliberately and, if conceivable, haphazardly. Therefore, the initial phase in choosing a specimen, obviously, is to recognize a suitable populous, one that is significant and from which information on each of the factors of intrigue can be gathered. The base satisfactory specimen measure for a correlational review is considered by most specialists to be no fewer than 30. Information got from a specimen less than 30 may give a wrong gauge of the level of relationship. Tests bigger than 30, are a great deal more inclined to give significant outcomes (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). For that reason, for the purposes of this study, the sample chosen was 199 students from elementary grades 4, 5, and 6 from a Lebanese British school located in Lebanon.

Non-random, purposive sampling was used for this study. A purposive sample consists of individuals who have special qualifications of some sort or are deemed representative on the basis of prior evidence (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). For the current study, students’ special qualifications were the fact that they belonged to grades 4, 5, and 6. Any students in that particular age group or grade level participated in this study regardless of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, level of self-esteem, or level of academic performance.
3.2.1 Justifying the age group

The proposed study intends to examine the correlation of self-esteem with academic performance amongst 4th to 6th graders, an age group that is less studied in the existing literature compared to pubescent and adolescent populations. The choice of age group is justified by recent studies that find for self-esteem’s significant role at an early academic stage.

As part of a University of Washington study, Cvencek, Greenald and Meltzoff (2016) have developed a test The Preschool Implicit Association Test (PSIAT) assessing 234 5-year old children in order to ascertain whether self-esteem is established strongly enough to be measured within such a young age group (p. 51). The necessity to develop their own PSIAT instrument falls down to the dependence of existing self-esteem tests on the respondents’ cognitive and verbal sophistication to understand concepts of ‘self’ when being assessed by adult researchers (p. 50). Cvencek et al.’s (2016) study not only finds that self-esteem is strongly established in children by the age of 5, but is more “systematically related to other fundamental parts of children’s personality, such as ingroup preferences and gender identity” (p. 56). In a study involving 172 6th grade students equally divided between the UK and North America, Booth and Gerard’s (2011) find that higher self-esteem at the beginning of the scholastic year is demonstrably linked to higher achievement at the end of the following term; by which age students have already developed a sense of self.

Considerations towards gender are also taken into account when selecting respondents. In a study of 4000 students between the grades of 6-to-8 in rural United States, Smokowski, Evans, Cotter, and Guo (2013) find that being female was associated
with lower levels of self-esteem. Their research accounts for this by way of the “maturational deviance hypothesis”: that early puberty is a deviation from the norm and the ensuing stress leads to internalized disorder (p. 510). Since girls go through puberty earlier than boys, a period that coincides with the age group, Smokowski et al. (2013) surveyed puberty amounts to a confounded variable in their study. Sarouphim’s (2011) study of 12-14 year olds similarly accounts for expected gender difference in her scores by citing Lebanese society’s patriarchal nature; whereby puberty translates to more freedom for males within the community while impacting females in the opposite direction (p. 27). Contrastingly, Samuels and Griffore’s (1979) study of multi-ethnic preschoolers between the ages of 4 and 5 in Michigan finds that there are no differences in self-esteem levels between genders at this age. This may either be explained as absence of fully developed gender identity at this young age or by the unsuitability of the measurement tool itself used (Coopersmith BRF in this case) for the age group, as posited by the aforementioned work of Cvencek et al. (2016).

Thus, it is important to measure self-esteem at an age when students do have the cognitive and verbal sophistication to understand the concept of self, as well as being at an age when social and gender identities are more established. In selecting an age group that is old enough to possess cognitive and verbal acuity in identifying matters of self-concept, while mitigating for gender exacerbation that become prominent during ages of puberty for one gender and not the other at an older age, it is the intention of my research to study on the relevance of self-esteem to students younger than the age that the available literature has studied.
3.2.2 Some insights on the group who took the test

The whole purpose of this study is not only to find the correlation between self-esteem and academic performance but also to highlight the importance of a solid self-esteem in academic performance related to a critical age group (9-12) where social relationships, self-image, self-efficacy become a complex operation. Students age 9 are surely capable to answer the survey as the questions are very simply written, and I will definitely be on site when they are filling the survey on-line ready to answer and/or clarify any question.

The questions will surely not have any negative impact on the students as they are used to discuss those kinds of questions in depth through the character education program implemented at school as part of their curriculum. The students discuss with their advisor three times a week during advisory program topics related to their self-image, how they perceive others, standing for what they believe is right, and the importance of the process as opposed to results.
3.3 Instruments

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (refer to Appendix A)

Description of Measure:

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a broadly used self-report tool for assessing individual self-esteem. It is a 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is believed to be uni-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In this study, students will fill in the Rosenberg Scale online and an average will be given to each student based on their answers. “Strongly Disagree” 1 point, “Disagree” 2 points, “Agree” 3 points, and “Strongly Agree” 4 points. There will be a total score for all ten items. Scores will be on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem. Scores will be compared to students’ overall academic averages. The school provided the academic averages of the students in grades 4, 5, and 6.

I was able to employ the RSE in the Lebanese context, as the statements incorporated in the scale are very simple and reflective. Moreover, the scale is not culturally biased because it does not include any cultural statements that render this idea.
3.4 Data analysis

Testing took place in June 2016 in one day.

Students had each one a personal confidential ID. Each student had to enter his/her ID on line so he/she can complete the Rosenberg survey. Students came to the computer lab one class after the other, each student had a computer, and I read each question out loud to make sure there in no misunderstanding in any of the statements/sentences. Once students were done, they exited the survey and left the computer lab. The on-line program does not keep record of the IDs. Once all students filled the survey, it was automatically sent to Question-Pro for data collection and clustering according to the following criteria:

- How many students scored high on the Rosenberg Scale (above 80)
- How many students scored average on the Rosenberg scale (between 60 and 79)
- How many students scored low on the Rosenberg scale (below 59)

It is important to note that the Rosenberg scale score was converted to 100 along with students’ general averages in order to be able to compare academic score and Rosenberg scores.

In order to reach a conclusion on whether there is a connection between self-esteem and academic performance, quantitative data was collected from both: The Rosenberg Scale and the general average of each student. The data helped in building a strong platform based on which an objective conclusion can be drawn. The results were presented in the form of a written report where it was noted whether the correlation between the two variables is significant or not.
The data collected was displayed on an Excel Spreadsheet to show the following: the correlation between Self-Esteem and Academic performance, which was calculated. Data was analyzed along with a chart and a graph that will show the different percentages and correlations between those two variables.

The following is a demonstration of the ranges decided for high, medium, and low academic achievement and for high, medium, and low self-esteem:

- If students scored 80 and above on academic averages and the self-esteem scale, they were categorized as having high academic achievement/self-esteem
- If students scored between 60 and 79 on academic averages and the self-esteem scale, they were categorized as having medium academic achievement/self-esteem
- If students scored less than 59 on academic averages and the self-esteem scale, they were categorized as having low academic achievement/self-esteem
3.5 Reliability and Validity

The nature of the instruments utilized, as a part of research is extremely vital, for the decisions specialists make are in view of the data they acquire utilizing these instruments (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). In like manner, analysts utilize various systems to guarantee that the inductions they draw, in light of the information they gather, are legitimate and solid. Legitimacy alludes to the propriety, significance, rightness, and helpfulness of the derivations a scientist makes. Unwavering quality alludes to the consistency of scores or replies from one organization of an instrument then onto the next, and starting with one arrangement of things then onto the next. Both ideas are imperative to consider when it goes to the determination or outline of the instruments a specialist plans to utilize (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009).

According to Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2011), reliability is the consistency in results when a specific instrument is used; whereas, validity is when the instruments are effective in measuring what they are actually meant to measure.

In order to ensure validity and reliability in this proposed study, the RSE scale was quantified into a score over 100. Yearly academic averages were also over 100. As a result, a comparison between the both was conducted, as both variables were out of 100.

Moreover, students sat in a computer lab to complete the surveys. Students had codes that were given to them as soon as they entered the lab and were seated. Students used these codes as IDs to access the surveys. Subsequently, students were not subjected to peer pressure.
As a researcher, I read aloud the survey questions to ensure that students comprehend what was asked of them. Students were also briefed about the purpose of the study.
3.6 Ethical considerations

In order to maintain ethical considerations for the study, I completed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) web-based training course titled “Protecting Human Research Participants.” From this course, the researched earned a certificate of completion (refer to Appendix B). In addition, I sought the approval of the International Review Board at the Lebanese American University in order to conduct the study. Approval was attained (refer to Appendix C). Once approved, a proposal was sent to the school for consent to perform research on its campus with its students (refer to Appendix D). Upon the school’s consent, I devised letters of consent to be sent to parents to allow their children to participate in the study, noting that the children are under-age (refer to Appendix E). Consequently, participation in the study was not obligatory. Students who wished to withdraw from the study were able to do so at their own leisure. Confidentiality was maintained, whereby students were assigned codes, that acted as IDs, to complete the survey. Codes were given on site. As a result, none of the students’ names were used in the study itself.

After presenting the methodology section, which covered the method, sample, instruments, data analysis, reliability and validity, and ethical considerations, the next chapter displays the findings of the study.
Chapter Four

Findings

The previous section covered the methodology of the current study, whereby method, sample, instruments, data analysis, reliability and validity, and ethical considerations were provided. This chapter, Findings, utilized tables, charts, and graphs to display the findings of the proposed study. Microsoft Excel was employed to draw and graph the figures presented. A brief of how findings were calculated was also presented.
4.1 Percentages of self-esteem and academic achievement

As aforementioned, students scoring above 80 on the RSE were classified as having high self-esteem. Students scoring between 60 and 79 on the RSE were classified as having medium self-esteem. Students scoring less than 59 on the RSE were classified as having low self-esteem.

Out of the proposed sample, which were 199 students spread over grades 4 to 6, 147 of them scored high on the self-esteem scale, 43 of them scored medium of the self-esteem scale, and only 9 of them scored low. To find the percentages, the numbers were multiplied by a hundred and divided by the sample size. The following table summarizes the percentages of each range of self-esteem.

Table 1 - Percentage of students with high, medium, and low self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Self-Esteem</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>73.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>21.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4.52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above results are translated into the following pie chart:
Figure 1 - Percentage of students with high, medium, and low self-esteem
As aforementioned, as well, students scoring above 80 on the academic averages were classified as having high achievement. Students scoring between 60 and 79 on the academic averages were classified as having medium achievement. Students scoring less than 59 on the academic averages were classified as having low academic achievement.

Out of the proposed sample, which were 199 students spread over grades 4 to 6, 106 scored a high average on academic achievement, 92 scored a medium average on academic achievement, and only one participant scored low average on academic achievement. To find the percentages, the numbers were multiplied by a hundred and divided by the sample size. The following table summarizes the percentages of each range of academic achievement.

Table 2 - Percentage of students with high, medium, and low academic achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Academic Achievement</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53.27%</td>
<td>46.23%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above results are translated into the following pie chart:
Figure 2 - Percentage of students with high, medium, and low academic achievement
4.2 High self-esteem in relation to academic achievement

Out of the 147 students who scored high on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, 85 participants had high academic achievement, 61 had medium academic achievement, and only one participant scored low on academic achievement. Percentages of the above data were calculated by multiplying the number of participants who either scored high, medium, or low on academic achievement by 100 or then divided by 147, which is the number of participants with high self-esteem. A table was drawn and translated to a graph. The following table summarizes the percentages of students who scored high on the RSE scale as a variation of academic achievement:

Table 3 Students with high self-esteem as a variation of academic achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Average</th>
<th>Medium Average</th>
<th>Low Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students with High SE</td>
<td>57.82%</td>
<td>41.50%</td>
<td>0.68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above results are translated into the following graph:
In short, the graph above shows the percentage of students with high self-esteem as a variation of the range of academic averages. For students with high self-esteem, 57.82% had high averages, 41.50% had medium averages and only 0.68% had low averages.
4.3 Medium self-esteem in relation to academic achievement

Out of the 43 students who scored medium on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, 17 participants had high academic achievement, 26 had medium academic achievement, and none scored low. Percentages of the above data were calculated by multiplying the number of participants who either scored high, medium, or low on academic achievement by 100 or then divided by 43, which is the number of participants with medium self-esteem. A table was drawn and translated to a graph. The following table summarizes the percentages of students who scored medium on the RSE scale as a variation of academic achievement:

Table 4 Students with medium self-esteem as a variation of academic achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students with Medium SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above results are translated into the following graph:
Figure 4: Students with medium self-esteem as a variation of academic achievement

In short, the graph above shows the percentage of students with medium self-esteem as a variation of the range of academic averages. For students with medium self-esteem, 39.53% had high averages and 61.90% had medium averages; however, 0% scored low averages.
4.4 Low self-esteem in relation to academic achievement

Out of the 9 students who scored low on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, 4 participants had high academic achievement, 5 had medium academic achievement, and none scored low. Percentages of the above data were calculated by multiplying the number of participants who either scored high, medium, or low on academic achievement by 100 or then divided by 9, which is the number of participants with low self-esteem. A table was drawn and translated to a graph. The following table summarizes the percentages of students who scored low on the RSE scale as a variation of academic achievement:

Table 5 Students with low self-esteem as a variation of academic achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Average</th>
<th>Medium Average</th>
<th>Low Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td>55.55%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above results are translated into the following graph:
In short, the graph above shows the variation of students with low self-esteem as a function of academic averages. For students with low self-esteem, 44.44% scored high averages and 55.55% scored medium averages; however, just like students with medium self-esteem, there weren’t any students who scored low averages, resulting with a 0% for this category.
4.5 Analysis

For convenience purposes, the three, previously displayed bar graphs, were presented again for the following analysis.

Students with high self-esteem:

Students with medium self-esteem:

Students with low self-esteem:
There was a consistency in the percentages of self-esteem scale and academic performance. Students with high academic performance scored high on the RSE. Students with medium academic performance scored medium on RSE. However, it is important to note that in graph 3, students with low academic performance scored high and medium on the RSE. 44.44% of those students had high averages, whereas 55.55% scored medium averages.

Consequently, the three graphs had insignificant results regarding low academic averages with comparison to high, medium, and low self-esteem.

For high self-esteem, the majority of students had a high academic achievement. For medium self-esteem, the majority of students had medium academic achievement. Conversely, for low self-esteem, the majority of students had medium academic achievement. Nonetheless, there is an unexplained significance of the variation of percentages, as there is no evidence of clear-cut pattern on whether self-esteem is consistent variable in measuring academic performance, and vice-versa. To demonstrate, in graph 1, 41.50% of students with medium average scored high on the RSE. In graph 2, 39.53% of students with high average scored medium on the RSE. In graph 3, for students with low self-esteem, 44.44% and 55.55% students scored high and medium academic achievement scores, respectively.

Having presented the findings of the study using tables and graphs, the following section entailed a discussion of what those findings mean and what do they imply.
Chapter Five

Discussion

The previous chapter demonstrated the findings of the study, using graphs and tables to display the quantitative results. This chapter discussed the findings. After the discussion, a synthesis, which answers the research questions, was provided.

Directionality of self-esteem's impact, assuming any, is a state of conflict among analysts. The part of self-esteem in an academic setting has been particularly persuasive in American schools, as indicated by Baumeister et al. (2003), under the suspicion that expanding self-esteem will prompt to change in academic performance (p. 10). Baumeister et al. (2003) find this is a conceivable suspicion to make, though combative in its causal assurance. It is sensible, they express, that individuals with higher self-regard are additionally eager to take part in the learning procedure and have the certainty to go up against undertakings even notwithstanding disappointments or difficulties. In spite of many reviews that illustrate a positive connection between self-esteem levels and academic accomplishment, without building up causality, they "by and large indicate a feeble and uncertain connection between them" that requires more grounded proof (p. 11). In a resulting article for Scientific American, Baumeister et al. (2005) take a harsher stand, announcing that the "myth" of upgrading self-regard for enhancing academic performance or the other way around has been detonated because of an absence of supporting examination. This view is not held by all, nonetheless: Branden (1994), for instance, expresses that "self-esteem has significant outcomes for each part
of our reality", and Patching and Hinduja (2007) locate that poor connections at school influence children's self-esteem which thus impacts their academic performance (as cited in Yousef & Bellany, 2015, p. 468). In a three-wave investigation of understudies in the eighth to twelfth grade, Ross and Broh (2000) locate that past academic accomplishment impacts self-esteem and in addition view of discretion.

Thus, it is important to note that the school, the field where the experiment took place, works remarkably on the sense of belongingness of the students to their community. In that regard, the school’s motto is “I serve;” accordingly, they work with the students on fulfilling this motto. In order to achieve such standard, the school takes part in many community activities, such as community service, scouts, and spring festivals. Students are required to be active members in those activities. To illustrate, in the spring festivals, students have to perform dances, songs, and/or any talent to the audience. Students are assigned roles in serving the community attending those types of festivals. The outcome of such activities is usually to help students who are at a financial disadvantage. Consequently, funds raised from those events are paid as tuition fees for those students. The school, therefore, places a lot of emphasis on the sense of belonging to a greater cause rather than just achieving academically. As a result, the school assigns great importance to the advisory program that it implements. In this program, students discuss with their advisors day-to-day concerns that they have, which go beyond academic achievement and grades. The purpose of the program is to help students develop more solid self-esteem coping skills and strategies. It is good to note, according to literature, that self-esteem acts as a protective buffer to the individual; subsequently, a student who has high self-esteem is more likely to develop coping strategies when faced with stressful events, whereas a student with low self-esteem is more prone to display
symptoms of depression and stress-avoidance (Eisenbarth, 2012; Tan & Tan, 2014, p. 150). As a result, students’ self-esteem is impacted more on belongingness than academic achievement. This in turns plays an essential role in developing student self-esteem.

This discussion justifies the fact that there is no significant existence of low self-esteem and low averages in the graphs. Because of the school’s philosophy to develop and create citizens whose mission is to serve others, they do not have a clear-cut look at academic averages, and students with low self-esteem are very scarce. In other words, if a student is not excelling in academics, the school educators keep on scaffolding him/her. They work more on containing their students rather than asking them to leave. They consider themselves as a child-centered community. Furthermore, the three graphs had insignificant results regarding low academic averages with comparison to high, medium, and low self-esteem. This is also due to the fact that the school supports students’ learning, making sure not to leave anyone behind.

Additionally, as previously discussed, the sense of belonging that students feel when in school plays an important role in increasing students’ self-esteem rates. This comes in alliance with what Baumeister et al. (2003) claim, a child’s self-esteem rises when told that he is loved, and he belongs to his community.

There is a consistency in the percentages of self-esteem scale and academic performance. Students with high academic performance scored high self-esteem on the RSE. This consistency is justified by the philosophy of “Positive Discipline” by Jane Nelsen that states the following: when a student feels better, he performs better, and
vice-versa; and that children are “hardwired” from their birth to connect, and children who have sense of belongingness are less likely to have considerable/serious emotional concerns/low self-esteem (Positive Discipline).

Students with medium academic performance scored medium on RSE, meaning average, which is still within the range of positive/realistic self-image.

There is a lack of consistency in finding correlational patterns of self-esteem and academic achievement, as self-esteem is specific to each individual, as a whole, and how that individual is rooted within his community, family, school, and/or friends, and how that individual deals with different circumstances in different times and different places.

For high self-esteem, the majority of students had a high academic achievement. For medium self-esteem, the majority of students had medium academic achievement. Conversely, for low self-esteem, the majority of students had medium academic achievement. Nonetheless, there is an unexplained significance of the variation of percentages, as there is no evidence of clear-cut pattern on whether self-esteem is consistent variable in measuring academic performance, or vice-versa.

Answering the Research Questions:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and academic performance in Lebanon?

Research has been indecisive on the correlation between self-esteem and academic performance. Baumeister et al. (2003) suggest that when an individual is surrounded by positive/supportive environment, self-esteem will consequently rise and will impact the individual’s activities including academic achievement. Bandura (1997) finds that students with high self-esteem and a solid ability to manage peer pressure are
more likely to attain higher academic achievement and engage in socially rewarding experiences.

El-Hassan’s (2004) study on 392 Lebanese school students finds that there are no statistically significant differences on total self-concept (herein differentiated from self-esteem) scores between genders. Studies pointing to an impact of self-esteem on social integration add a new dimension to the relevance of validating this subjective construct (Korukly, 2014; McCabe et al., 2007). That is to say that, even if correlational studies contentiously fail to find links between self-esteem and academic achievement, self-esteem is worthy of study in its own right as literature supports its role in the mental health of people as societal beings.

El Hassan’s (2004), McCabe et al.’s (2007), and Korukly’s (2014) findings are in accordance with the current research findings, as there is no significant correlation between self-esteem and academic performance. There might be more than one component, other than academic performance, affecting self-esteem positively or negatively, such as parenting component, schooling component, and peer pressure, among others.

RQ2: If self-esteem and academic performance are strongly related, how is this relationship defined?

According to Jagacinski and Strickland (2000), social comparisons are greatly important to performance-focused students, as they depend on comparing their achievements to others in order to distinguish whether they are successful or not (as cited in Kandemir, 2014, p. 92). It could then be argued that poor social development at
the school level would translate negatively in terms of occupational success, but again the literature diverges. For example, self-esteem is significantly related to organizational citizenship behavior — the social and psychological context that serves as a catalyst for task activities and processes, such as helping others with their work or endorsing organizational objectives — but not to academic performance, according to Khaola (2014, p. 128).

The development of self-esteem is by no means limited to peer relationships in school, with both parents and educators playing a role in its enforcement. Demirbilek and Otrar (2014) find that students, who were part of a complete family unit, exhibited higher levels of self-esteem than those who lived with a single or divorced parent. Differential treatment by teachers towards high-performing students may play a role in the development of self-esteem, considering that self-worth is affected by individuals’ perception of how they are evaluated by others (Coopersmith, 1967; Thomas & Gadbois, 2007). Teachers may afford more attention to students they deem more promising, while controlling for the perceived negative attitudes of low-performance students. However, Prihadi and Hairul (2011) control for the potential impact of deferential treatment by conducting a study on schools that only enrolled high-performance students.

Therefore, if an individual is rooted in a supportive environment, where positive relationships with parents, educators, and peers is evident, the academic performance variable might not be of an important/main variable to define self-esteem level of that individual.
Self-esteem is about a personal conclusion that each individual makes with respect to his fitness to face life's difficulties, his capacity to comprehend and take care of issues, and his entitlement to seek after joy and gain respect. Self-esteem is a critical huge indicator of numerous results, for example, academic performance and behavior. As indicated by Branden (1994), "self-esteem is the sum of self-confidence and self-respect". Individual encounters throughout somebody's life are real benefactors in self-esteem advancement. Positive and negative encounters in life build up specific states of mind toward the "self" which can be either great by creating positive sentiments of self-esteem; or ominous by creating negative sentiments of self-esteem.

Self-esteem alludes to feeling commendable (Rosenberg, 1965). To the evaluative parts of a man's self-idea, and it is characterized by Rosenberg (1965) as "a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards the self" (p. 15). As a psychosocial quality, self-esteem impacts our trust in others, ability to cultivate significant connections, and word related execution when confronted with ecological stressors or associate assessment (Eisenbarth, 2012). Individuals with high self-regard claim to be especially famous (Battistich et al., 1993). They additionally rate their interpersonal connections as being of higher quality contrasted and individuals with low self-regard (Keefe & Berndt, 1996, as cited in Baumeister et al. 2003, p.17). Subsequently, the term self-esteem incorporates self-regard, self-respect, self-confidence, and self-integrity.

In short, the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance cannot exist in an isolated setting; it is surely shaped by variables other than the academic performance, as aforementioned. In other words, a student with low self-esteem often faces problems that go beyond academic performance to his/her relationship with his/her surrounding.
This chapter provided a discussion for the findings and a synthesis, which aimed at answering the research questions of the proposed study. The following chapter was the final chapter of the thesis. It incorporated a general conclusion for the study, limitations of the study, suggestions for future research, and recommendations for parents and educators to enhance self-esteem in students.
Chapter Six

Conclusion

Being the final chapter in the thesis, this chapter, titled Conclusion, presented a general conclusion, which recaps the main aspects of the proposed study, limitations to the study, suggestions for future research, and recommendations for educators and parents in enhancing student self-esteem.
6.1 General Conclusion

Many researches shed light on the connection between self-esteem and academic performance in youngsters' lives. According to Osborne and Walker (2006), research considers that self-esteem is exceptionally connected with academic performance in a manner that low self-esteem corresponds emphatically with low academic accomplishment, and high self-esteem relates decidedly with high academic accomplishment (Gaskin-Butler & Tucker, 1995; Hale, 2001; Osborne, 1997). However, a great part of the research has been conflicting on whether positive self-esteem enhanced academic accomplishment or the other way around (Gaskin-Butler & Tucker, 1995).

The current correlational study aimed at trying to determine whether the level of children’s self-esteem is significantly related to academic performance — within the context of a Lebanese educational institution. Therefore, in this current study, I tried examining the following:

- The different key factors that link self-esteem to academic performance
- Mechanisms that are responsible for students’ success and failure

A normally recognized significance of self-esteem is Rosenberg's (1965) beginning of an overall self-esteem: "the evaluation which the individual makes and for the most part stays aware of regard to himself; it imparts a perspective of support or disappointment". To best assess these attitudes of sense of pride he built up the self-report Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a champion among the practically occasionally used measures of self-respect (Wells & Marwell, 1976). Rosenberg's self-regard scale includes request with respect to 10 unique items, and assessments are made using a four-
level scale (Hosogi et al., 2012). As indicated by Huang and Dong (2012), the
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) was at first created to give a one-dimensional self-
assessment record to evaluate complete self-regard in young people. Be that as it may, it
has likewise been passed on to other age bunches in view of its affirmed achievement
and convenience. As indicated by Gray-Little, Williams, and Hancock (1997), the focal
points of the RSE are: the language is basic, grade 5 reading level, the scale can be
completed in couple of minutes, the content of the RSE scale is identified with the build,
and the RSE has been translated to many languages, and adapted to different cultures (p.
444).

Day after day, as instructors, we assess understudies' work in invalid courses like
how we were assessed. Lacking instruction in real examination and exploring
benchmarks and practices is a motivation behind why various instructors continue
invalidly assessing understudies' work (Allen, 2005). Estimations of academic
achievement discovered all through literature review, are shown according to the
presented model of academic achievement (York, Gibson and Rankin, 2005). The model
proposed by York et al. (2005) illustrates that academic accomplishment, which is a
term utilized conversely with academic achievement and student achievement is
characterized as a combination of fulfillment, acquirement of aptitudes and capacities,
productivity, satisfaction of learning targets, and livelihood accomplishment.

Consequently, this correlational study is a quantitative method of research in
which there were two quantitative variables (the Rosenberg’s Self-esteem Scale and
academic achievement) from the same group of subjects. In this correlational
quantitative study I tried to determine if there is a relationship between the two
variables: academic performance and self-esteem.
The sample chosen was 199 students from a Lebanese British School, elementary grades 4, 5, and 6, a non-random purposive sampling in the sense that students’ special qualifications were the fact that they belonged to grades 4, 5, and 6. Any students in that particular age group or grade level participated in this study regardless of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, level of self-esteem, or level of academic performance.

The proposed study intended to examine the correlation of self-esteem with academic performance amongst 4th to 6th graders, an age group that is less studied in the existing literature compared to pubescent and adolescent populations. In the findings, there was a consistency in the percentages of self-esteem scale and academic performance. Students with high academic performance scored high on the RSE. Students with medium academic performance scored medium on RSE.

Similar to El Hassan’s (2004), McCabe et al.’s (2007), and Korukly’s (2014) discussions, this current study found no significant correlation between self-esteem and academic performance. There might be more than one key factor, other than academic performance, impacting self-esteem favorably or unfavorably, such as parents, school and peer pressure, among others.
6.2 Limitations

Upon conducting the study, I came across two limitations, which are the following:

1) The study was conducted in one school, with one group and a limited number of students. Had it been that the study was conducted in more than one school with a greater number of students; results would have shown more or less correlation between self-esteem and academic performance. Additionally, results might have been generalizable.

2) The fact that the school works remarkably on the sense of belongingness of students to their community impacted the scores in a way that we couldn’t find significant correlation between self-esteem and academic performance. The school gives high importance to community activities, such as community service and scouts. The school’s primary focus is to help/coach students to belong to a greater cause first, than achieving academically. Therefore, the school assigns great importance to the advisory program, where students discuss daily with their advisors the day-to-day concerns that go beyond academic achievement and grades. As a result, students’ self-esteem is impacted more by belongingness than academic achievement. This in turns plays an essential role in developing student self-esteem. Because of the school’s philosophy to develop and create citizens whose mission is to serve others, they do not have a clear-cut look at academic averages. Therefore, it is important to wonder whether results could have been different had it been a different school that is competitive, and that assigns primary attention to academic success.
6.3 Suggestions for Future Research

King (1997) suggests that self-esteem is positively connected to personal, social and mental health in young peoples’ lives, discussing that if students do not acquire most favorable levels of self-esteem by the age of puberty, they are more likely to adopt unhealthy behaviors in their later teenage years such as abusing drugs or inducing pregnancy. (p. 247). Over time, accumulated failure leads to low self-esteem, which then is reflected in lower ability to cope with academia (Peleg, 2009). It is therefore important to study self-esteem at an age when students have the cognitive and verbal complexity to understand the concept of self, an age when social and gender identities are established, and prior to the age of 13 when poorly established levels of self-esteem are likely to have more destructive and permanent consequences on the lives of students.

The presented existing literature is divided on whether there is a significant correlation between self-esteem, a subject self-evaluation, and academic performance.

Consequently, it is important for future research to explore and shed light on the different environmental factors that can be strongly and closely related to self-esteem. Those factors are the following: Parental environment, school environment, friends and peer pressure, and genetic predisposition to health and mental health problems.
6.4 Recommendations for parents and educators on building self-esteem

According to Joseph Campbell, as cited in Cummins et al. (2005), “the job of an educator is to teach students to see vitality in themselves”, how is it practically possible for parents and educators to help children perceive themselves as important, meaningful and capable human beings?

1. Step back

Things being what they are, there are better approaches to build self-esteem—beginning with helping them get to be distinctly skillful. To do as such, however, Parents and teachers need to figure out how to back out and let the child go take risks, settle on decisions, tackle issues, and stick to what they start.

2. Over-praising kids does more harm than good

Self-esteem originates from feeling loved and secure, and from developing competence, and despite the fact that guardians/teachers tend to frequently give their children the initial two components, skill—turning out to be great at things—requires significant investment and exertion.

3. Parents and educators need to let children take healthy risks

Parents and educators need to force themselves to stand back while children take healthy risks.

4. Let kids make their own choices
When kids make their own age-appropriate choices, they feel more powerful, in fact, kids as young as two can start considering the consequences of their decisions.

5. Involve children in helping around

In building self-esteem, kids also need opportunities to demonstrate their competence and feel that their contribution is meaningful. This means that parents and educators need to involve children by asking them, even when they’re toddlers, to help with daily chores at home and at school.

6. Encourage children to pursue their interests

Another surefire approach to lift trust in children is to urge them to go up against undertakings they indicate enthusiasm for, then ensure they finish to completion. It doesn't make a difference what the errand—it could be anything from swimming laps to beating levels in computer games. The fact of the matter is for them to stay with what they begin, so they feel that hit of achievement toward the end.

7. When children struggle or fail, parents and educators should never give up on them

Parents and educators tend to think that struggles and failures will hurt children’s self-esteem, but it’s actually a golden opportunity to help them build it.

8. Parents and educators have to make clear that their love towards their children is unconditional

Children need to know that their parents and educators’ love towards them never fails even when they (children) fail or make bad decisions. If all parents and educators talk
about is performance, children will think that they are only loved for their good grades, report-cards and good performance.

**9. Make sure children’s goals are within reach, at a level appropriate for their abilities**

Parents and educators need to scaffold their children, leading them within realistic expectations to what they are able/capable to accomplish and seizing every opportunity to encourage the effort that is being done.

**10. Offer encouragement vs. praise**

Praise is often used instead of encouragement. Praise seeks end results not taking into consideration the effort that children put in their tasks. Encouragement is used to empower children’s effort in their tasks; it is a valuable self-esteem builder.

Finally To every child in the world, a cry-out from the heart, Never Be Afraid to:

“Be who you are

Because those who mind don’t matter

And those who matter

Don’t mind”

Dr. Seuss
References


Appendices

Appendix A

The ROSENBERG SCALE

Dear Participant,

My name is Juliana Saridar. I am a Masters student at Lebanese American University. I am inviting you to participate in our survey “Self-Esteem and Academic Performance”. In this survey there is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no known risks involved in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you can skip that question, you can also withdraw from the survey at any point. Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and your information will be coded and will remain anonymous.

Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Continue button below.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

2. At times I think I am no good at all.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

24 MAY 2016
APPROVED
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

6. I certainly feel useless at times.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly, Disagree
Appendix B

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Juliana Saridar successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 05/20/2016.

Certification Number: 2078823.
NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL

To: Ms. Julianne Sadik
Advisor: Dr. Mahmoud Natouf
School of Arts and Sciences

Date: May 26, 2016
RE: IRB #: LAU.SAS.MIN.24/May/2016
Protocol Title: Impact of Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Of Children Aged Between Nine And Twelve Years Old

The above referenced research project has been approved by the Lebanese American University, Institutional Review Board (LAU IRB). This approval is limited to the activities described in the Approved Research Protocol and all submitted documents listed on page 2 of this letter. Enclosed with this letter are the stamped approved documents that must be used.

APPROVAL CONDITIONS FOR ALL LAU APPROVED HUMAN RESEARCH PROTOCOLS

LAU RESEARCH POLICIES: All individuals engaged in the research project must adhere to the approved protocol and all applicable LAU IRB Research Policies. PARTICIPANTS must NOT be involved in any research related activity prior to IRB approval date or after the expiration date.

PROTOCOL EXPIRATION: The LAU IRB approval expiry date is listed above. The IRB Office will send an email at least 45 days prior to protocol approval expiry - Request for Continuing Review - in order to avoid any temporary hold on the initial protocol approval. It is your responsibility to apply for continuing review and receive continuing approval for the duration of the research project. Failure to send request for Continuation before the expiry date will result in suspension of the approval of this research project on the expiration date.

MODIFICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS: All protocol modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

NOTIFICATION OF PROJECT COMPLETION: A notification of research project closure and a summary of findings must be sent to the IRB office upon completion. Study files must be retained for a period of 3 years from the date of notification of project completion.

IN THE EVENT OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ABOVE CONDITIONS, THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR SHOULD MEET WITH THE IRB ADMINISTRATORS IN ORDER TO RESOLVE SUCH CONDITIONS. IRB APPROVAL CANNOT BE GRANTED UNTIL NON-COMPLIANT ISSUES HAVE BEEN RESOLVED.

If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact the IRB office by email at christine.chahroudy@lau.edu.lb
The IRB operates in compliance with international guidelines of Good Clinical Practice, the US Federal Regulations (45CFR46) and (21CFR56) of the Food and Drug Administration. LAU IRB Identifier: FWA00014723 and IRB Registration # IRB00006954 LAUIRB#1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED:</th>
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<tr>
<td>IRB Initial Protocol Application</td>
<td>Received 20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>Received 20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to Broumana High School</td>
<td>Received 20 May 2016, Modified 20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Consent</td>
<td>Received 20 May 2016, Modified 20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ROSENBERG SCALE and Assent</td>
<td>Received 20 May 2016, Modified 20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification email from IRB sent 23 May 2016</td>
<td>Response from PI 24 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH Training – Mahmoud Natout</td>
<td>Cert. # 1992404 Dated (6 February 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH Training – Juliana Saridar</td>
<td>Cert.# 2078823 Dated (20 May 2016)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix D

To: Brummans High School Principal
Brummans
Min, Lebanon

May 23, 2016

Object: Consent to collect data for an LAU research study entitled Relationship between Self-Esteem and academic Performance

Dear Dr. Khoury,

I am writing to request your permission for my student, Ms. Juliana Saridar, to be able to collect data from Students in grade 4, 5, and 6 for her MA project at the Lebanese American University. She will be completing a research project related to Self-Esteem and Academic Performance.

The data collected, which is based on an on-line questionnaire (attached to this letter) will be kept anonymous and will not be used for any other purposes.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any additional information.

If you have any questions about this study, or you want to talk to someone outside the research, please contact the: IRB Office, Lebanese American University 3rd Floor, Dorm A, Byblos Campus. Tel: 00 961 1 786456 ext. (2546)

Acknowledgement
Name:
Signature:
Date:

Dr. Wadad Fares, Advisor
Juliana Saridar, Principal Investigator
Graduate Student,
School of Social Sciences
Department of Education
Tel. 03 494 269
Appendix E

Dear Parents,

My name is Juliana Saridar and I am a graduate student at the Lebanese American University. I would like to inform you that we will be collecting data for an LAU research study entitled Relationship between Self-Esteem and academic Performance. Grade 4, 5, and 6 students are invited to participate in the survey “Self-Esteem and Academic Performance”. In this survey there is a list of statements dealing with their general feelings about themselves. They will indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Students’ participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if they feel uncomfortable answering any questions, they can skip that question and they can also withdraw from the survey at any point.

Your child’s name will not be written on any document or be kept in any other records. The survey responses will be strictly confidential and information will be coded and will remain anonymous.

If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedure, you may contact Juliana Saridar 03 494 269

If you have any questions about your child’s rights as a participant in this study, or you want to talk to someone outside the research, please contact the:
IRB Office,
Lebanese American University
3rd Floor, Dorm A, Byblos Campus; Tel: 00 961 1 786456 ext. (2546)

Thank you in advance for your cooperation; your child’s participation is highly appreciated.

If you do not want your child to participate please sign this form and send it back with your child.

☐ I do not want my child to be in the class that is being observed.

Printed Name of Child

__________________________
Signature of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian             Date

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