## Chapter 15 The Effect of Self-Esteem on Student Achievement

Serdar Körük

#### 15.1 Introduction

Self-esteem is defined as the set of positive or negative evaluations of individuals about their own selves (Rosenberg 1965). Self and self-esteem constitute two different dimensions of personality. The self represents the cognitive part of the personality, whereas self-esteem represents the affective and psychologic dimension. The personality traits of the individuals, their physical features, abilities, skills, social relations, feelings and their ideas about their academic or professional performance and the satisfaction they feel as a result of these ideas, are included in the concept of self-esteem (Yılmaz 2000; İzgiç et al. 2001). A high level of perceived satisfaction indicates that the individual has high self-esteem, whereas a low level of satisfaction indicates low self-esteem. Özkan (1994) defined people with high self-esteem as individuals who are successful in academic and professional areas, who can handle stress, who can establish social and close relations and who have a high level of vitality and enjoyment. At the same time, he defined people with low self-esteem as individuals who have a low level of vitality and enjoyment, who are not self-confident, who feel shame and feelings of worthlessness and who feel inadequate in terms of successes and skills.

The formation of self-image in individuals starts in their babyhood and early childhood periods through the verbal and non-verbal signals that they receive from their parents who are the primary objects of connection (Demiriz and Öğretir 2007). Towards the early childhood period, when the cognitive level is developed, the baby starts to create his or her self-esteem by evaluating his or her physical properties, abilities, strengths and weaknesses. Nine months old babies start to realize that they are mentally different from each other, and they develop their verbal self when they are eighteen months old. The progress of infants' cognitive

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E. Karadağ (ed.), The Factors Effecting Student Achievement,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-56083-0\_15

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