

Donovan, Margaret, 2006, *A Comparative Study into Aspects of Children's Self-esteem in Different School Settings.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The Revised Primary School Curriculum requires that students be provided with intrinsically rewarding experiences that lead both to knowledge and access to the skills of self-knowledge. Such a concept challenges educationalists to study self-esteem as a source of understanding the educational, psychological, philosophical and sociological themes that permeate children's lives and learning outcomes.

This study aims to explore, measure and compare specific aspects of children's self-esteem in different school settings and to incorporate in its findings the variables of gender and socio-economic status. It initially examines definitions of self-esteem and includes a comprehensive review of the relevant literature outlining theories as postulated by established commentators such as Hailer, Lawrence, Humphreys, Primeravera and Piers.

The study then presents the findings of the research process, which centred on the dispersal of over one hundred questionnaires and incorporated quantitative as well as qualitative information. The dissertation revealed a number of interesting findings, amongst which the essential conclusion that the labelling of children with special educational needs does not proportionately affect their self-esteem is of particular significance in the Irish context. Reflecting on the findings of the study, the dissertation concludes with a number of appropriate recommendations for educational practice, which include the introduction of a whole school programme of self-esteem enhancement as an integral part of school policy coupled with an adequate in-service training process.

This challenge requires educationalists to undertake the task of promoting a positive school environment where learning conducive to the enhancement of children's self-esteem can take place and where all pupils are empowered to achieve their full potential and to assume responsibility for their own happiness.