A Mixed-Method Study on Student's Self-Esteem Skills

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This study thereby aimed to determine the students' self-esteem skills and examine them within the framework of different variables. The study was executed with a mixed methods design where quantitative and qualitative research models were used together. Survey Analysis was used for the purpose of quantitative analysis of the study, the sample was determined using the simple random sampling and 330 students participated in the survey population. Data were collected using the "Self-Esteem Questionnaire" as a data collection tool. The data were further analyzed with the SPSS statistical program; the percentage and mean values of the research data were examined, and independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance ANOVA were used to reveal the relation between different variables. Case Study was then used for the purpose of qualitative analysis of the study, the study group was determined with the convenience sampling method of the purposive sampling methods and 29 students participated in the interview. A semi-structured questionnaire was used as a data collection tool and the data were analyzed through content analysis. In accordance with the results of the research, it was concluded that the overall self-esteem level of the students was high, the self-esteem levels were higher in favor of female students however the self-esteem levels of the students did not differ based on the educational background and occupation of their parents. Furthermore, students explained the concept of self-esteem as self-respect, personal care, being organized, self-confidence and establishing good relationships with people.

Introduction

Deficiencies in self-esteem lie at the root of incompatibilities, conflicts, social and psychological problems in society, family and school. As a matter of fact, the results in the literature review (Lazarevic, Lazarevic & Orlic, 2017; Riley, 1995; Sevim & Artan, 2021; Yıldız & Çapar, 2010) may help to argue that people with higher levels of self-esteem have healthier mental development, they feel happier when they spend time for themselves, and

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they tend to get social and feel valued by participating in society. Children who exhibit negative attitudes and behaviors in coping with problems encountered in life may have lower self-esteem. When parents adopt an authoritarian attitude and move away from tolerance, love and respect, it can lead to loss of self-esteem in children. Children who receive a good education and feel the support of their families may develop positive self-esteem. The environment of respect, love and tolerance that children who feel the support of their families experience in their families can make the child feel valuable and belong to their family, as well as positively affect their academic success at school (Avcı, 2010; Leary & Kowalski, 1995; Yusufoğlu & Cerev, 2019). Prior studies in the literature (Alparslan et al., 2019; Balkıs and Duru, 2010; Çetinceli and Acar, 2022; Coopersmith, 1967; Plummer, 2001; Rosenthal et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2009) revealed that the academic success of the children increase their levels of self-confidence, improve their sense of worthiness and have a positive impact on their self-esteem. Children with poorer academic success may feel themselves worthless and lost as they fail to meet their families' expectations and achieve their goals. (Belen & Demir, 2023; Erdoğdu, 2006; Soyer, 2019). In this sense, it is highly important to allow for and tolerate children when they make mistakes, to avoid destructive criticism and judgments, and to support them by highlighting their strengths in order to ensure them to build their self-esteem.

It is only possible for individuals with higher levels of self-esteem and self-confidence to establish and maintain healthy relationships in their social life. For this reason, the individual's level of self-esteem has recently gained significance in family and academic life. In the Turkish Language Association dictionary, the concept of self-respect is defined as self-respect, honor, dignity, and honor (TDK, 2011). In English, on the other hand, the concepts of self-respect, self-esteem, self-regard and self-confidence refer to self-respect or self-esteem (Kımter, 2013). Self-esteem has generally (Daghfous, Petrof & Pons, 1999; Doğan & Eryılmaz, 2013; Duffy et al., 2014; Kılıçcı, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2006; Mckay & Mbuva 2017; Ragnar Ingi Adalsteinsson et al., 2014; Rosenberg, 1965; Yiğit and Yılmaz, 2011) been defined as a positive personal characteristic.

Literature review on self-esteem revealed that self-esteem gives different results depending on gender. There are studies arguing that girls have higher levels of self-esteem (Bosacki, 2007; Makelele, 2024; Marsh et al., 2002) whereas there are other studies where the results are in favor of boys (Bleidorn et al., 2016; Gabay, 1996; Govander and Moodley, 2004; Polat and Akşin, 2015). In addition, there were studies that reveal no difference in self-esteem when evaluated in terms of gender (Ceylan, 2013; Crocker, Eklund, and Kowalski, 2000; Kuru-Turaşlı, 2006; YeniDünya, 2005; Yidana and Arthur, 2024). Considering the literature review results, it is possible to argue that self-esteem reveals different results when evaluated in terms of gender and gender does not have any effect on self-esteem. Everything and everyone around the child including friends, family, mass media etc. affect the child's self-esteem and self-efficacy (Leyens et al., 2000). Students' levels of self-esteem further mediate their interpersonal relationships (Aslan and Demir, 2023). Significant relationship was determined between social comparison and interpersonal problems among students and their levels of self-esteem and difficulty in regulating their emotions (Aslan, 2023). The explanations further suggest that there are differences in students' self-esteem levels based on their parents' educational background and democratic attitudes and that these variables may affect their self-esteem levels. In this regard teachers are expected to know their students in general and

make efforts to improve students' self-esteem in accordance with their developmental characteristics.

This study aims to investigate, examine and discuss whether there are differences between students' self-esteem levels and various variables (gender, mother's education, father's education, mother's profession, father's profession). The study is also significant as it was further supported by qualitative data collected by asking students' opinions about self-esteem. Qualitative analysis reveals the examination and evaluation of students' knowledge on self-esteem and their levels of self-esteem and their respect for environment. Literature review revealed that there is no mixed-methods study explaining in depth the primary school students' self-esteem in which quantitative and qualitative methods are used together. For this reason, conducting this research is important in terms of determining the self-esteem levels of students and revealing the self-esteem status of primary school students according to different variables (gender, parents' education, parents' occupation). This study is also expected to guide further studies on self-esteem and to contribute to the relevant literature in this regard.

Method
Research Model

In this study, For the purpose of this study examining the self-esteem skills of 4th grade primary school students, quantitative and qualitative analysis methods were used together and the study was designed using the explanatory-sequential mixed methods. This is a method in which both qualitative and quantitative data are collected and both types of data are used in the research (Creswell, 2020). Mixed methods design, in which quantitative and qualitative analysis methods complement each other in the same study (Christensen et al., 2015), was preferred as it allows achieving strong evidence by comparing data (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In this study, students' self-esteem levels were examined in the quantitative dimension of the explanatory sequential system, and a focus group interview was conducted in the qualitative part.

Study Group

The population of the quantitative analysis consists of fourth grade students studying in Sincan district of Ankara. The sample consists of 330 fourth grade students selected by simple random sampling from five different schools in Sincan district center. There are around 1200 fourth grade students in total in these schools. This sampling method ensures that each student has the same probability of being included in the sample. This sampling method provides the same probability of each student being included in the sample (Özdoğru and Aydın, 2012). Accordingly, the selection of each participant in the population does not affect the other, the probability of being selected is independent and equal (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Demographic characteristics of the sample from which the quantitative data of the study was collected are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of the sample from which the quantitative data of the study was collected

Grade	Girls		Boys		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
4. Grade	179	55	151	45	330	100

The table 1 reveals that 55% of the students in the study group consisted of boys while 45% were girls. The study was conducted with a total of 330 students. The study group of the

qualitative analysis consisted of students studying in a primary school in Ankara. Study group was constituted by using convenience sampling, which is one of the purposive sampling methods, and the opinions of 29 students selected in accordance with the sampling criteria were sought. The advantage of the convenience purposive sampling method is that it facilitates the study in terms of time, place, budget and location (Merriam, 2018). It is also a frequently referred method as it provides ease and practicality in the research implementation process (Patton, 2014). Demographic characteristics of the study group from which the qualitative data of the study was collected are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2 Demographic characteristics of the sample from which the qualitative data of the study was collected

Grade	Girls		Boys		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
4.Grade	19	66	10	34	29	100

Pursuant to Table 2, the study group from which qualitative data was collected consists of a total of 29 students, 19 of whom are girls (66%) and 10 of whom are boys (34%). All participants are 4th grade primary school students.

Data Collection Tools

Quantitative data of the study were collected using the "Self-Esteem Questionnaire". The author referred to other studies on self-esteem available in the literature to create the items of this questionnaire. Accordingly, a draft survey consisting of 39 items was developed to be used as a self-esteem questionnaire. Draft survey was administered to 217 individuals and 12 inappropriate items were removed from the questionnaire. 27-item "Self-Esteem Questionnaire" was finalized after the necessary corrections were made. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of this questionnaire was calculated as 0.78. Data were analyzed using SPSS 22 program. Analyzes such as frequency, percentage, mean, t-test and analysis of variance were used for analysis purposes.

An interview form including 3 questions was used to collect research data. Semi-structured interview technique was used while preparing the questions in the interview form. This technique provides the author some flexibility by allowing to develop options according to the reactions and answers in the participant's opinions (Tanrıöğren, 2009), thus ensures the the author to get down to the roots of the issue and to establish effective communication (Creswell, 2020). A literature review was conducted before preparing the interview questions.

The opinions of a senior educator, a classroom teacher and a faculty member were sought while preparing the questions regarding students' self-esteem levels. In line with the expert opinions, the number of questions was increased from two to three; thereby the semi-structured interview questions were finalized. Utmost care was taken to ensure that the questions were adequate in scope, clear and understandable; thus, their content validity and reliability were confirmed. In this context, the questionnaire was administered to three primary school students outside the study group and the interview questions were finalized in line with the answers received from the students.

Ethics permission was obtained from the scientific research and publication ethics committee of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (Meeting Decision No: 2023.14.316) in order to use

the data collection tool and conduct the research and the permission was shared with the participants. To collect the qualitative findings of the study, semi-structured interview questions were prepared, and the following questions were asked to the students to examine their levels of self-esteem:

(1) How would you define self-esteem? Please specify?
(2) Do you respect yourself? Could you explain us the reason?
(3) Do the people around you respect themselves? Could you explain us the reason behind your opinion?

Data Collection and Analysis

This study was conducted in two stages; quantitative data were collected in the first stage; qualitative data were collected in the second stage and then these data were statistically analyzed. For this purpose, explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used. This is significant for clarifying the findings and conclusions of the study (Creswell, 2020). Quantitative data of the study were collected from primary school students studying in Ankara via a survey. While collecting the research data, the purpose of the research was explained and the necessary information about the survey was provided to the participating students. The significance of providing sincere and accurate information/answers to the questions in the survey was emphasized. Research data was collected from a total of 330 students. The scores corresponding to the students' responses to the items in the questionnaire used for the research were coded and analyzed in computer environment.

Quantitative data were analyzed with the statistical program SPSS 22 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Percentage and mean values of the students' demographic characteristics (gender, parents' educational background, parents' profession) were examined; independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance (One-way ANOVA) were performed to reveal the differences in line with the purposes of the research. Items included in the questionnaire were measured on the basis of a 3-Point Likert Scale where the answers were scored as 1- Never, 2- Sometimes, 3- Always. The results obtained were distributed over a range (spread) of 3.00-1.00=2.00 points. By dividing this spread value by three, levels to help determine the cut-off points of the scale were assigned. When assigning the score equivalents of the answers given to the items in the scale, the criteria were set as "high" within the range of 2.34-3.00, as "medium" within a range of 1.67-2.33 and as "low" within a range of 1.00-1.66.

Verbal permission was obtained from the school administration before administering the survey at school and the data of volunteering students were collected at the students' convenience. Students were encouraged to answer the questions sincerely and correctly and they were asked to read each question in the survey carefully and choose the appropriate one out of three options when answering the questions. Participants were informed that the collected data will be used exclusively for the purposes of a scientific research and that it is essential to answer the questions sincerely and accurately in order for the research to reach healthy results. After the questionnaire was distributed, students were provided sufficient time to answer the questions and the questionnaire were collected back from the students when they finished.

The qualitative data of the study were collected using the interview method. The interview is conducted in accordance with a plan; the interviewer's cooperation with the participant and the qualifications of the interviewer are fundamental elements for the success of this method. In order to obtain objective data during the interview, the interviewer should adopt an

impartial approach with regard to the participant's specific characteristics (Creswell, 2020). Verbal permission was obtained from the school administration before collecting the qualitative data of the research and the qualitative data were collected from 29 students who volunteered to participate in the study.

The interviews were held personally while the students were convenient throughout the times such as lunch breaks and long breaks at school, each interview lasted between 15-20 minutes and all data were collected within a two-week term. Before the interview, participating student was duly informed about the purpose of the study and the points to be taken into consideration during the interview. Students were asked to answer the questions accurately and sincerely after confirming that their names would be kept confidential. Students were further assured that assistance would be provided with any difficult issues regarding the interview questions. In challenging questions, supportive and guiding questions were asked to the students to ensure the credibility of the research based on the feeling of mutual trust. Students were given sufficient time to answer the questions in detail. The answers given by the student were recorded by the author by taking notes on the interview form. Finally, the accuracy of the answers was confirmed by asking the student to review and check the recorded interview forms. Checking the consistency of the research data in terms of representability and obtaining participant's approval improves the credibility of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data collected via the interview form were coded (Student1: S1, Student2: S2, …..., Student29: S29) by anonymizing the identities of the participants, hence the confidentiality was ensured. Data collected during the research were analyzed using the content analysis method. For the purpose of this method, collected data are explained through conceptual relationships (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018); they are categorized under certain codes and themes and analyzed accordingly (Berg and Lune, 2019). It is essential for the research process to be clear enough for the data to be valid and reliable (Czernek-Marszałek & McCabe, 2022). Furthermore, Miles and Huberman's coder reliability formula (Reliability Percentage = Agreement / Disagreement x 100) was used to test the reliability of the content analysis used in the research. Reliability Percentage was calculated as .90. This reliability percentage is expected to be at least .70 (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It is necessary for the interviews to be held face to face (Forrester & Sullivan, 2018), the author to be directly involved in the research (Braun & Clarke, 2013), the participant's opinions to be directly included in the study and the data to be analyzed in detail (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018) for ensuring the credibility of the results. It is also expected that the research data will be confirmed and verified by the participant (Merriam, 2018). Main purpose of ensuring the confirmation of the participant is to ensure the consistency between the author's impartial view and the internal view expressed by the participant (Tutar, 2022).

Results

This study thereby aimed to determine the students' self-esteem skills and examine them within the framework of different variables. Results regarding the students' self-esteem levels were presented in Table 3. Table 3 indicates that self-esteem levels of fourth grade primary school students are quite high in all items of the survey. When Table 3 was examined, it was determined that the highest values of the students in terms of self-esteem were "I know what I like to do, I do not damage other people's belongings, I agree that the

differences between me and my friends are quite outgrowth, I understand that there may be differences between games".

Table 3 Students' self-esteem levels

Phrases	Always	Sometimes	Never	Mean
I know what I like to do	93%	6%	1%	2.93
I decide on what I can do to ensure my personal care.	81%	17%	2%	2.83
I can notice my similarities with my friends	75%	23%	2%	2.74
I can notice my differences with my friends	76%	21%	3%	2.74
I can develop a positive body image from my physical characteristics	75%	22%	3%	2.73
I observe how much my family attaches importance to ethical and moral values	80%	16%	4%	2.77
I observe the rules set within the family	77%	20%	3%	2.74
I tolerate the mistakes made by others	57%	35%	7%	2.50
I may personally make mistakes and I agree that this is quite outgrowth	76%	20%	4%	2.73
I do not damage other people's belongings	86%	9%	5%	2.91
I notice the changes in my physical appearance over time	77%	20%	3%	2.75
I try to understand people first, then I want to be understood	78%	18%	4%	2.75
I can compare the differences between the games I used to play when I was a kid and the games I play now.	76%	19%	5%	2.72
I understand that there may be differences between games	84%	14%	2%	2.82
I agree that the differences between me and my friends are quite outgrowth	85%	14%	1%	2.85
I agree that my friend's body is valuable	83%	13%	4%	2.81
I realize how my feelings affect me	82%	16%	2%	2.84
I realize how my feelings affect my friends	71%	24%	5%	2.68
I recognize my strengths at school	77%	20%	3%	2.74
I recognize my friends' strengths at school	67%	27%	6%	2.62
I can compare the behaviors I can perform now with those I could not perform in previous years	83%	14%	3%	2.82
I can recognize how my behavior changes over time	81%	16%	3%	2.79
I can comprehend the mutual relationships between the individual, society and environment	81%	17%	2%	2.80
I can explain the mutual relationships between the individual, society and environment by giving examples	70%	25%	5%	2.66
I avoid making judgments about people	70%	24%	6%	2.64
I can forgive myself when I make a mistake	67%	26%	7%	2.60
I can bear the consequences of my wrong choices	80%	16%	4%	2.72

This finding shows that students are proficient in self-knowledge, aware of what they like and dislike, are sensitive about not damaging other people's belongings, and conscious about respecting each other. In a different finding obtained from Table 3, it was seen that the lowest values of the students in terms of self-esteem were "I tolerate the mistakes made by others, I can forgive myself when I make a mistake, I recognize my friends' strengths at school". This finding shows that students' tolerance for mistakes is not sufficient.

Similarly, it reveals that they have a very low perception of forgiving themselves when they make mistakes. Moreover, it was determined that they did not feel competent in recognizing the strengths of their friends at school. Results on students' self-esteem scores based on

gender are presented in Table 4:

Table 4 T-test results indicating students' self-esteem scores based on gender

Gender	N	X	SD	sd	t	p
Boys	151	2.68	.24	328	-3.694	.00
Girls	179	2.78	.24			

*p < .01

Table 4 reveals that there are significant differences between the self-esteem scores of fourth grade primary school students of different genders. t(328) = -3.694, p < .01. In other words, it was determined that the self-esteem of girls (X = 2.78) was higher than that of boys (X = 2.68). Results on students' self-esteem scores based on their parents' educational background are presented in Table 5 and Table 6:

Table 5 ANOVA results on students' self-esteem scores based on the mother's educational background

Mother's Educational Background	N	X	SD	sd	F	p
Primary School	132	2.72	.25	2	.261	.77
High School	126	2.74	.25	327		
University	72	2.75	.24			

Table 5 reveals that there is no significant difference between the students' self-esteem levels based on their mothers' educational background F(2.327) =.261, p > .05. Mean item scores indicate that the self-esteem (X = 2.75) levels of students whose mothers are university graduates are higher than other students. Mean scores further indicate that the self-esteem (X = 2.74) levels of students whose mothers are high school graduates are higher than students whose mothers are primary school graduates (X=2.72).
Table 5 reveals that there is no significant difference between the students' self-esteem levels based on their mothers' educational background F(2.327) =.261, p > .05. Mean item scores indicate that the self-esteem (X = 2.75) levels of students whose mothers are university graduates are higher than other students. Mean scores further indicate that the self-esteem (X = 2.74) levels of students whose mothers are high school graduates are higher than students whose mothers are primary school graduates (X=2.72).

Table 6 ANOVA results on students' self-esteem scores based on the father's educational background

Father's Educational Background	N	X	SD	sd	F	p
Primary School	63	2.74	.24	2	.016	.98
High School	139	2.73	.25	327		
University	128	2.73	.24			

Table 6 reveals that there is no significant difference in the students' self-esteem levels based on their father's educational background F(2.327)=.016, p < .05. It was determined that self-esteem levels of students whose fathers were primary school graduates (X=2.74) were higher compared to students whose fathers were high school graduates (X=2.73) and university graduates (X=2.73). Results on students' self-esteem scores based on their parents' profession are presented in Table 7 and Table 8:

Table 7 ANOVA results on students' self-esteem scores based on the mother's profession

Professions	N	X	SD	sd	F	p
Housewife	276	2.73	.24	3	.133	.94
Laborer	17	2.71	.28	326		
Civil Servant	21	2.75	.25			
Tradesman	16	2.71	.21			

Table 7 reveals that there is no significant difference between the fourth grade students' self-esteem levels based on their fathers' profession F(3.326) =.133, p > .05. Mean scores indicate that the self-esteem levels of students whose mothers were civil servants (X = 2.75) were higher compared to other students, although this difference is not significant. It was further determined that the self-esteem scores of students whose mothers were housewives (X=2.73) were higher, although not significant, compared to students whose mothers were laborers or tradesmen (X=2.71).

Table 8 ANOVA results on students' self-esteem scores based on the father's profession

Professions	N	X	SD	sd	F	p
Farmer	12	2.71	.23	3	.280	.84
Laborer	161	2.74	.25	326		
Civil Servant	78	2.74	.25			
Tradesman	79	2.71	.23			

Table 8 reveals that there is no significant difference between the students' self-esteem levels based on their fathers' profession F(3.326) =.280, p > .05. Mean scores indicate that the self-esteem levels of students whose fathers were laborers and civil servants (X = 2.74) were higher compared to students whose fathers were farmers and tradesmen (X = 2.71), although this difference is not significant. Results regarding the students' definitions on the concept of self-esteem were presented in Table 9:

Table 9 Results regarding the students' definition of the concept of self-esteem

Themes	Codes
Self-respect	19 students
Personal care	17 students
Being organized	11 students
Self-confidence	4 students
Building strong relationships with people	2 students

Pursuant to Table 9, primary school students' opinions on the definition of the self-esteem concept are grouped under 5 themes. 19 students (63%) defined the concept of self-esteem as "self-respect". 17 students (57%) defined the concept of self-esteem as "personal care", 11 students (37%) defined it as "being organized", 4 students (13%) defined it as "self-confidence" and 2 students as "building strong relationships with people". Exact answers of the students are given below:

S7. "*Self-esteem is the respect a person has for himself. For example, I dress nicely; I keep my notebook neat and tidy; I comb my hair every day and complete the tasks assigned to me.*"

Results regarding the students' views on the concept of self-esteem were presented in Table 10:

Table 10 Results regarding the students' views on the concept of self-esteem

Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Yes, I do respect myself	To be happy and peaceful	15 students
	For my own goodness	10 students
	For the goodness of my surroundings	10 students
	Because I'm worthy	7 students
	For taking care of my personal care	7 students
	To avoid sadness	4 students
	To avoid getting into trouble	4 students
	Because I love myself	2 students
	Because I undertake my duties	2 students

Second question asked to the students in the interview was "Do you respect yourself? Could you explain us the reason?". As seen in Table 10, the answers given by the students were categorized under 1 theme and 9 sub-themes. All of the students stated that they respected themselves. Students based their reasons for respecting themselves on different grounds. 15 students (52%) said that "I respect myself to be happy and peaceful". 10 students (34%) answered this question as "I respect myself for my own goodness" whereas 10 students (34%) answered this question as "I respect myself for the goodness of my surroundings". 7 students (24%) said "I respect myself because I'm worthy". 7 students (24%) answered this question as "I respect myself for taking care of my personal care". 4 students (14%) said "I respect myself to avoid sadness" while 4 others (14%) said "I respect myself to avoid getting into trouble". 2 students (12%) answered as "I respect myself because I love myself" and 2 students (12%) answered as "I respect myself because I undertake my duties" Exact answers of the students are given below:

S5. "*I do respect myself; I do my personal cleaning and comb my hair. I love myself very much and I do respect myself. I respect everyone. I love everyone, but some treat me badly. I feel bad because they treat me badly, but I still love them. I respect both myself and my friends.*"

Results regarding the students' views on the Self-respect of others are presented in Table 11.

Table 11 Results regarding the students' views on the self-respect of others

Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Yes, they do respect for themselves	- Those who do not respect themselves do not respect for anyone. - They do their personal cleaning - In order not to be excluded	S2.S3.S5.S8 … (21 student)
They sometimes respect for themselves	- Some people have no self-esteem	S6.S12. S15.S19.S11(student)
No, they do not respect for themselves	- Because they don't have self-worth, they don't respect for themselves either.	S9.S17.S26 (3 student)

Third question asked to the students in the interview was "Do people in your surrounding respect for themselves? Could you explain us the reason?". The answers given by the students were categorized under 3 themes and 5 sub-themes. Themes "Yes, they do respect for themselves; they sometimes respect for themselves; no, they do not respect for themselves". Sub-Themes "Those who do not respect themselves do not respect for anyone; they do their personal cleaning; they respect for themselves not to be excluded; some people have no self-esteem; because they don't have self-worth, they don't respect for themselves either.". Table 11 revealed that 21 students (72%) answered the question as "Yes, they do respect for themselves"; 5 students (17%) answered the question as "Some people have no self-esteem"

and 3 students (10%) answered the question as "No. They do not respect for themselves". Majority of the students stated that the people in their surroundings respected for themselves. Exact answers of the students are given below:

S14. "Yes, the people around me respect for themselves, but they do not respect for me and my friends. This makes me sad. Even though this makes me sad, I respect for them. I also respect my teacher and I love him/her very much."

Discussion and Conclusion

In line with the results of the research, it was determined that students' self-esteem levels were generally high. In other studies, with similar results supporting this research (Çetin et al., 2014; Lopes Chaves et al., 2013; Shrestha et al., 2018; Ulaş et al., 2015), it was observed that students' self-esteem levels were generally high. It was further determined that nursing students mostly have moderate to normal levels of self-esteem (Almansour, 2023; Khan et al., 2023) and Generation Z has moderate self-esteem (Ristianti, 2023). Tunç (2011) argued that self-esteem of children growing up in different environments develop positively whereas Özcan et al. (2013) argued that socio-demographic characteristics may have an impact on self-esteem. Other studies (Armağan, 2014; Güçray, 1989) indicated that the "democratic" attitude of adults is a positive factor in terms of self-esteem, that individuals' self-confidence and self-esteem improve, the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual are protected, and horizontal relationships and interactions are more frequent in democratic environments.

As a result of this research, it was further determined that gender differences provided significant results on students' self-esteem, in favor of female students. In this context, it was observed that girls' self-esteem was higher compared to boys. Literature review on studies examining the relationship between self-esteem and gender revealed significant differences in this regard. Supporting the results of this study, there are other studies (Jacob, 2002; Kurşun, 1998; Makelele, 2024; Zembat et al., 2018) arguing that girls' self-esteem level is higher than boys, that girls develop more positive relationships with their families, their individual values were higher and they were better at coping with difficult situations (Dokuyan, 2016). There are other studies indicating that men have higher self-esteem (Baldwin and Hoffmann, 2002; Bleidorn et al., 2016; Govander and Moodley, 2004; Kling et al., 1999; Quatman and Watson, 2001; Patrick M. O'Malley et al., 2011). In the literature review, there were also studies found to be indicating that there is no relationship between self-esteem and gender. It was determined that gender and self-esteem and self-efficacy do not cause differences in self-perception (Aktaş, 2020; Aydın, 2023; Demirci, 2018). It was further concluded in various studies that there is no significant difference between the self-esteem levels of high school students in terms of gender (Güngör, 1989); self-confident, principled, determined and participatory leadership styles of undergraduate students do not differ according to gender (Hüseyniklioğlu and Tüysüz, 2023) and that gender does not differentiate the impact of students' self-esteem on their academic, emotional, behavioral and cognitive participation (Yidana and Arthur, 2024). In this research, it was concluded that students' self-esteem differs significantly according to gender and this differentiation is in favor of girls. However different results were found in other studies examining self-esteem according to gender. In this context, it is argued that gender is not a determining factor on self-respect or self-esteem and that there is no consensus on this issue in the research results.

Self-esteem scores of students whose mothers are university graduates were found to be higher compared to other students, even if the difference is not significant. Furthermore, self-esteem scores of students whose mothers are high school graduates were found to be higher compared to students whose mothers are primary school graduates. On the other hand, no significant difference was determined between the self-esteem levels of the students according to the educational background of their fathers. However, self-esteem scores of students whose fathers are primary school graduates were found to be higher compared to students whose fathers are high school and university graduates, even if the difference is not significant. Self-esteem scores of students whose fathers are high school graduates and those whose fathers are university graduates were found to be equal. Considering these results of the study, it can be argued that there is no significant relationship between the educational background of the parents and the self-esteem levels of the students. The studies that provide findings parallel to the results herein present that there is no significant difference between self-esteem and the educational background of the parents (Aktaş, 2011; Sarıkaya, 2015) and that the self-confident, principled, determined and participatory leadership styles of undergraduate students do not differ according to educational background of the parents (Hüseyniklioğlu and Tüysüz, 2023).

It was further determined that pre-service teachers' self-esteem levels in decision-making did not differ according to their parents' educational background (Ulaş et al., 2015) and that leadership characteristics did not present a significant difference based on the mother's educational background (Cansoy, 2015). Contrary to the results of this study, there are other studies (Aksoy, 1992; Asıcı, 2013, Güngör, 1989; Tanrıkulu, 2013; Tunç, 2011) that concluded that higher parental educational background has positive effects on children's self-esteem. As a result, it was determined in this study that the educational background of the parents did not have a significant effect on the self-esteem of the students. However, considering other research results in the literature that reveal findings to the contrary of this study, it is argued that the educational background of the parents may have an effect on the self-esteem of the students. This finding seems to be in favor of the parents with higher education levels.

No significant difference was determined in the students' self-esteem scores according to the mother's profession. Self-esteem scores of students whose mothers are civil servants were found to be higher compared to other students, even if the difference is not significant. Furthermore, no significant difference was determined in the students' self-esteem scores according to the father's profession. Research results indicated that the self-esteem level of students whose fathers are tradesmen or civil servants is higher than those of students whose fathers are farmers or laborers, even if the difference is not significant. As a result, it is possible to argue that children whose parents are civil servants have higher self-esteem scores compared to other children, even if the difference is not significant. Similar to the results of this research, Cevher (2004) and Özcan (2012) found that the level of self-esteem did not differ significantly according to the mother's profession. Uzunkol (2014), on the other hand, suggested that there is a positive significant relationship between self-esteem and the father's educational background and profession.

Likewise, it is possible to argue that self-esteem is correlated with the educational background and profession of the parents and the communication established between the parents and the child (Kulaksızoğlu, 2007; Siyez, 2009). It was concluded that the relationship established

with the family and the social life of the children are decisive in the development of children's self-esteem (Emler, 2001; Verschueren et al., 2012). As a result, it was determined in this study that the profession of the parents did not have a significant effect on the self-esteem of the students. However, considering other research results in the literature that reveal findings to the contrary of this study, it is argued that the professions of the parents may have an effect on the self-esteem of the students.

Results regarding primary school students' views on the definition of the concept of self-esteem: It is possible to argue that students consider the concept of self-esteem as a phenomenon related to their well-being. It is further essential for the children to be aware of their own worth, to be able to take care of themselves, to get to know themselves and those in their surroundings and to be self-confident and well-organized for the development of self-esteem. Plummer (2011) concluded that internal control is important in children's development of self-esteem. A child's self-esteem is related to knowing oneself, being aware of one's own competencies, accepting oneself and others, being capable of expressing oneself and being self-confident.

Results regarding the self-respect of primary school students: It was concluded that the majority of students respect themselves in order to feel good and be happy. The level of child's self-esteem may be related to the respect and support that their surroundings provide for the child. Harter (1993) concluded that the support of parents, teachers, classmates and close friends affect the self-esteem of children. The higher the level of support provided to the child, the higher the level of the child's self-esteem.

Results regarding the self-respect of primary school students' surroundings: Majority of students stated that the people in the people in their surroundings respected themselves. Students who support this view think that they cannot be respected by those in their surroundings if they do not respect for themselves. It is argued that students pay attention to their self-care mostly because they respect for themselves. It was further determined that students had to respect for themselves in order not to be excluded. It is possible to further argue that some people with lower self-worth have lower self-esteem.

Recommendations

Following recommendations can be put forward in line with the results of the research:

(1) Teachers are recommended to observe, evaluate and analyze the self-esteem levels of students in their classroom.
(2) It may be recommended to further investigate the factors affecting the self-esteem levels of students at school and in the classroom environment.
(3) Studies may be conducted to examine the factors in the family environment affecting children's self-esteem levels in the future.

Note

This study was presented at the 15th International Classroom Teaching Symposium and published as an abstract. This study was extended with mixed design method.

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