

## A SELF-CONCEPT SCALE FOR CHILDREN

Lourdes U. Agbing  
College of Education  
University of the Philippines

To offset the observed cultural bias and expensiveness of foreign self-concept tests for children, this study sought to develop an indigenous instrument suitable for Filipino children.

The psychological dimensions to be included in the scale were determined by farming out an open-ended questionnaire to 529 school children from Manila and Quezon City, meant to generate the children's ideas of themselves and how others see them. A panel of ten experts judged the culled items to be either positive, negative or neutral and grouped them according to thirteen factors: Academic attitude; Family relations; Generosity; Helpfulness/Industry; Humility; Intellectual competency; Obedience; Physical attributes; Respectfulness; Sociability; Temperament; Trustworthiness; and Skills and Talents. The latter was dropped out of the roster after the thirteen factors were subjected to inter-correlations using the Pearson method. This last factor obtained the lowest inter-correlation coefficient.

For the pre-test, the culled items were trimmed down from 350 to 200 and administered to 145 pupils from U.P. Actual field testing was later administered to 1,050 students from eight public and private schools in Manila and Quezon City. Test-retest reliability involved the administration of the scale to the same group twice, with an interval of 25 days. Statistical analyses already suggested the stability and consistency of the scale, but even then, the items were further reduced to 120.

Each item was presented in both

Filipino and English and was immediately followed by four choices labelled PALAGI (ALWAYS); MALIMIT (OFTEN); BIHIRA (RARELY); and HINDING-HINDI (NEVER). Samples of the items under each of the twelve factors are given below:

### *I. Academic Attitude (Aca)*

1. *Ako ay maligaya sa aking pag-aaral.*

I am happy in my studies.

2. *Hindi ko ikinahihyang ipakita ang aking mga araling-pambahay.*

I am not ashamed to show my homework.

3. *Hindi ko gusto ang aking mga guro.*

I do not like my teachers.

4. *Ikinahihya ko ang aking mga gawaing-pampaaralan.*

I am ashamed of my schoolwork.

5. *Pinupuri ng aking guro ang mga gawain ko sa paaralan.*

My teacher praises my homework.

### *II. Family Relations (Fam)*

1. *Kung ako ay pinagagalitan, pabagsak kong isinasara ang pinto.*

When I am scolded, I slam the door.

2. *Ako ay masunurin sa aking mga magulang.*

I am obedient to my parents.

3. *Ayokong mamalagi sa bahay.*

I do not like to stay at home.

4. *Gusto kong ipamigay ang aking kapatid.*  
I like to give away my sister/brother.

5. *Mahal ako ng aking mga magulang.*  
My parents love me.

### III. Generosity (Gen)

1. *Ako ay nagpapahiram ng aking mga laruan.*  
I share my toys.

2. *Ako ay nagagalit kung hinihiram ang aking mga aklat.*  
I am angry when my things are borrowed.

3. *Naliligayahan akong makapagbigay ng anumang sa kapwa.*  
I feel happy when I share what I have with others.

4. *Mapagbigay ako.*  
I am generous.

5. *Maramot ako.*  
I am selfish.

### IV. Helpfulness/ Industry (Help)

1. *Kung ako ay tumutulong, naghihintay ako ng kabayaran.*  
When I help, I expect a payment.

2. *Inaayos ko ang aking higaan.*  
I arrange my bed.

3. *Hindi ako tumutulong sa bahay.*  
I do not help at home.

4. *Ako ay tumutulong sa aking mga magulang sa pagdadala ng kanilang gamit.*  
I help my parents carry their things.

5. *Ako ay hindi tumutulong kung hindi pinagsasabihan.*  
I do not help if I will not be told.

### V. Humility (Hum)

1. *Ako ay humihingi ng paumanhin kung may nagawa akong pagkakamali.*  
I say "I'm sorry" when I have done something wrong.

2. *Ako ay mayabang.*  
I am boastful.

3. *Hindi ako nahihiya kapag sinasabi ng aking mga kamag-aaral na ako ay mahirap.*  
I do not feel ashamed when my classmates say I am poor.

4. *Inaamin ko ang aking mga pagkakamali.*  
I admit my mistakes.

5. *Nagkukunwari akong mayaman.*  
I pretend to be rich.

### VI. Intellectual Competency (Int)

1. *Ako ay matalino.*  
I am intelligent.

2. *Ako ay nag-aaral ngunit hindi ako makakuha ng mataas na marka.*  
I study but I cannot get high grades.

3. *Marami akong mababang marka sa paaralan.*  
I have many low grades in school.

4. *Nag-aaral ako ngunit hindi ko maintindihan ang aking aralin.*  
I study but I cannot understand my lessons.

5. *Ako ay mahusay sa aking aralin.*  
I am good in my subjects.

### VII. Obedience (Obed)

1. *Sa bahay lang ako masunurin.*  
I am only obedient at home.

2. *Ako ay masunurin sa aking mga magulang.*

I am obedient to my parents.

3. *Ako ay masunurin.*

I am obedient.

4. *Ako ay sumusunod sa mga utos sa paaralan kahit walang nakatingin.*

I obey rules in the school even if no one is looking.

5. *Masunurin lamang ako sa mga guro na gusto ko.*

I am obedient to teachers I like.

#### *VIII. Physical Attributes (Phy)*

1. *Hindi ko gusto ang aking hitsura.*

I do not like my physical appearance.

2. *Hindi ko gusto ang kulay ng aking balat.*

I do not like the color of my skin.

3. *Ako ay maganda/ guwapo kahit na ano ang aking isuot.*

I look pretty/handsome with any clothes I wear.

4. *Pinupuri ng aking mga kaibigan ang aking kaanyuan.*

My friends praise my looks.

5. *Ang hitsura ko ay pinagtatawanan ng aking mga kamag-aral.*

My classmates laugh at my personal appearance.

#### *IX. Respectfulness (Res)*

1. *Nagsasabi ako ng pasintabi.*

I say "excuse me."

2. *Iginagalang ko ang aking mga kapwa bata.*

I respect other children.

3. *Kung may nagsasalita, tumatahimik ako.*

When someone is talking, I keep quiet.

4. *Anumang oras ay bumabati ako sa kapwa ng may paggalang.*

I greet with respect anytime of the day.

5. *Hindi ko iginagalang ang mga taong hindi ko gusto.*

I do not respect people I do not like.

#### *X. Sociability (Soc)*

1. *Marami akong kaibigan.*

I have many friends.

2. *Madali akong makipagkaibigan.*

I make friends easily.

3. *Hindi ako gusto ng aking mga kamag-aaral.*

My classmates do not like me.

4. *Masaya ako kung kasama ng aking mga kaibigan.*

I am happy when I am with my friends.

5. *Ako ay nasisiyahan sa aking grupo sa paaralan.*

I am happy in my group in school.

#### *XI. Temperament (Tem)*

1. *Kung ako ay napapagalitan, bumubulong ako.*

When I am scolded, I murmur.

2. *Ako ay hindi madaling mainis.*

I don't get bored easily.

3. *Pinagagalitan ko ang aking kapatid kahit na walang kasalanan.*

I scold my sister/brother, even without reason.

4. *Ako ay hindi pala-away.*

I am not quarrelsome.

5. *Kung ako ay pinagagalitan, dumadabog ako.*

When I am scolded, I stump my feet.

XII. *Trustworthiness (Trus)*

1. *Nagsisinungaling ako.*

I tell lies.

2. *Ako ay mapagkakatiwalaan.*

I can be trusted.

3. *Kumukuha ako ng maliliit na halaga (barya) sa bahay nang hindi nagsasabi.*

I get small amounts of money at home without permission.

4. *Ako ay gumagamit ng pag-aari ng iba ng hindi sinasabi.*

I use the things of others without telling them.

5. *Kumukuha ako ng mga bagay sa tindahan ng walang nakakaalam.*

I shoplift without anyone knowing it.

Two techniques were used to test the validity of the scale: (a) the subjects' obtained factor and overall total scores were correlated with the grade point average; and (b) teachers were asked to rate subjects as either having "high" or "low" self-concept. Positive relationship was seen to exist between the factors in the scale and GPA.

TABLE 1

*Coefficients of Correlation  
Between Grade Point Average and  
the Factors in the Self-Concept Scale*

Factors	r
Academic attitude	.29**
Family Relations	.22**
Generosity	.20*
Helpfulness/Industry	.08

Humility	.19*
Intellectual Competency	.34**
Obedience	.13
Physical Attributes	.34**
Respectfulness	.09
Sociability	.25**
Temperament	.06
Trustworthiness/ Honesty	.13
Overall Total Score	.27**

\* p < .05

\*\* p < .01

Corollarily, a general trend was seen, wherein the subjects who obtained higher mean factor scores were rated "high" by teachers and vice-versa. There was only one exception to this: subjects who were rated "low" scored higher in the factor of Tem but the difference was not significant. The t-test showed that the factors Int and Soc reached significance while the factors Trus and Obed were approaching the .05 level of significance.

Significant differences in the self-concept scores of male and female children, across grade-levels and ages and in different school environments were viewed as indicators of changes in the child's self-concept due to maturation factors and experiences. Sex, age and environment were interpreted by the researchers to provide the stimuli for alteration of the children's self-concepts.

Even as the researcher hopes that the scale be of practical use to counselors, educators, and psychologists, she also ticks off a number of things still necessary to establish its general usefulness: a) an in-depth analysis of the items to determine discrimination by sex; b) administration of the test to extreme groups like urban/rural groups and orphan/non-orphan groups, among others; c) correlation with variables like family income, parents' education, occupation, rearing practices, and family discipline; and d) administration to all grade levels from both private and public schools.