

Self-Esteem in Troubled Gifted and Non-Gifted Children and Adolescents: Comparison within a French Population

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Abstract : There is still no consensus regarding the differences between gifted and non-gifted students in relationship to their self-esteem and the impact that this might have on behavioral and emotional troubles. In fact, some studies present no difference between both groups or present gifted population having higher scores in self-esteem, while others indicate all the opposite, presenting lower self-esteem in gifted population, suggesting that self-esteem issues are probably due to the fact that gifted children who present low self-esteem might not consider their high Intellectual Quotient (IQ) as a positive characteristic, thus leading to behavioral or emotional troubles. According to the author's knowledge, there is poor evidence trying to understand self-esteem issues in troubled gifted and non-gifted students in France, also finding an important lack regarding the possible moderators that might influence self-esteem. This study aimed to validate the results of these samples, looking for age and sex moderators in order to present recent evidence for the study of self-esteem in troubled gifted students in France. This study analysed the data gathered in the past 12 years for troubled students attending to the National Centre for Assistance to High Potential of Children and Adolescents (CNAHP) in France comparing the results of gifted versus non-gifted population. Primary results showed no significant differences between the groups in global self-esteem ($t=1,15$ $p < .25$), consistent with correlation analysis that found no correlation between global self-esteem and total IQ for each of the groups ($r_{\text{gifted}}=.04$, $r_{\text{non-gifted}}=-.08$). Nevertheless, an ANOVA analysis showed an important effect of giftedness over academic self-esteem even though no significant differences were found ($t=1,8$ $p < .06$). No significant differences between sex regarding global self-esteem in any of the groups were found. Nevertheless, non-gifted population showed a significant difference in physical self-esteem, being higher for boys than for girls ($t=2.65$ $p < .01$). Sex and age moderator analyses for self-esteem will be presented and discussed.

Keywords : children and adolescents, giftedness, self-esteem, troubled children and adolescents

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