# PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF THE SPANISH VERSION OF THE SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE FOR CHILDREN[1]

NOEMÍ PEREDA AND MARIA FORNS

University of Barcelona

**Summary**.

Harter's Self-perception Profile for Children was designed to assess children's domain-specific judgments of their competence (scholastic, social, athletic, physical, and behavioral), as well as global self-worth. The psychometric properties and exploratory factor analysis of the profile for two Spanish samples of children (49% boys and 5 1% girls; M age = 11.1 yr., SD = 9.7), were examined (n = 23 from an after-school social care center in an economically deprived neighborhood and n = 120 from a private school mainly enrolling families of medium socioeconomic status). All attending children between 9 and 12 yr. old were included. Analysis showed sex differences, with girls scoring lower than boys on Athletic Competence and higher on Behavioral Conduct. Children from the economically deprived group had higher scores on Social Acceptance and lower scores on Physical Appearance. The cross-cultural analysis showed that the Spanish control group scored significantly higher than the original American control group on Global Self-worth. A Spanish validation with 9- to 12-yr.-olds clearly replicated the five-factor structure reported by Harter in 1985 and also replicated the results obtained in other European samples, showing reliable and valid psychometric properties.

[1] This study was supported in part by Grant BSO 2001-3751-C02-01 from the Spanish Department of Science and technologyn.
Adrdress correspondence to Noemi Pereda-Beltran, Departament de Personalitat, Avaluaci6 i Tractaments Psicològics, Facultat de Psicologia, Universitat de Barcelona, Passeig Vall d'Hebron, 171, 08035, Barcelona, Spain.

Researchers focusing on the effects of adverse childhood experiences have considered principles of developmental psychology, which state that exposure to a given heritable trait or to an environmental experience is moderated by a host of associated risk and protective factors (Cicchetti & Toth, 1995). While an association has been demonstrated between stressful life events and psychological adjustment, the magnitude of negative effect varies considerably, depending on different mediating factors. Mediating factors are defined in the context of the present research as those variables or conditions that either reduce or increase the effects of a risk factor.

Both the available literature and clinical experience suggest there is no direct relationship between the presence of risk factors and undesirable outcomes, psychological distress or psychopathology, since a host of mediating mechanisms and processes mediate between them and modify the risk effects. This perspective is closely related to the concept of resilience, defined

as the process by which a person successfully adapts to a situation, despite the presence of negative conditions. The concept is related to individual variations in response to risk factors (Rutter, 1990). Certain individuals exposed to serious risk situations are able to avoid maladaptive reactions (are resilient), showing that there are specific variables (protective or compensatory mechanisms) which compensate for or protect against the development of undesirable, negative, or psychopathological consequences (Steinhausen & Metzke, 2001). From a social-psychological framework, the major domains that should be considered in explaining- individual variance in mental health when the same situation is faced are personality, behavior, social and perceived environment, and biology/genetics (Jessor, 1992).

Self-esteem or self-worth, defined as the global self-regard one has for the self as a person (Harter, 1985, 1993)) is one of the mediating variables studied in relation to the

personality domain. Self-worth is considered in developmental theories to be an important mediating variable between many stressful events and individuals' adaptation, competence, and mental health (Musitu Ochoa & Román Sanchez, 1982; Kernis, 1993; Spencer, Josephs, & Steele, 1993; Del Barrio, Frias, & Mestre, 1994; Spaccarelli & Fuchs, 1997; Mruk, 1998).

The study of self-worth is a complex methodological task that has presented problems with operationalization, measurement, and instrumentation. Tests to assess self-worth have shown several problems, such as lack of theoretical basis, influence of social desirability, and weak construct validity (Van Dongen-Melman, Koot , & Verhulst , 1993 ; González Turon, & Iriarte, 1994; Mruk, 1998).

Classical tests, such as Rosenberg's Self-esteem scale (1965), Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory (1967), or Piers-Harris Self-concept Scale (1969),have been adapted and applied to the Spanish context (Brinkmann, Segure, & Solar, 1989; Fierro, 1991; Cantu, Verduzco, Acevedo, & Cortes, 1993; Verduzco, Cantu, Acevedo, & Cartes, 1994; Salgado & Iglesias, 1995; Pastor, Navarro, Tomiis, & Oliver, 1997; Atienza, Moreno, & Balaguer, 2000).

The Self-description Questionnaire developed by Marsh (1986) has also been validated (Martorell, Flores, Silva, & Navarro, 1992) and applied in different studies (González Pienda, Núnez Perez, & Valle Arias, 1992; González, et al., 1994; Núnez Perez, González Pumariega, & González Pienda, 1995). However, two Spanish scales have been used the most, the Self-concept Questionnaire (AFA) developed by Musitu, Garcia, and Gutiérrez (1991), and the Self-concept Questionnaire (AI) (Martorell & Silva, 1984), based on the theory of Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976)) which suggests that self-concept is organized since the person recodes his experiences and perceptions of himself into categories to reduce complexity; multifaceted since

particular facets reflect the categories adopted by an individual or by groups; hierarchical from individual experiences in particular situations at the base of the hierarchy to general self-concept at the apex; stable, although at the base of the hierarchy, self-concept varies greatly with situations; has a developmental aspect, since self-concept is influenced by age; has an evaluative character, since the individual develops evaluations of himself in particular situations; and is dzjrferentiable from other theoretically related constructs.

Also based on Shavelson and colleagues' theory (1976), the new Selfconcept Scale of Garcia-G6mez (2001) has recently been presented. Some of the self-esteem questionnaires, however, have been criticized for various reasons, such as imprecise definitions, the unidimensionality underlying the development, or the fact that scales tap too many different ages, ignoring the important influences age and development have on one's sense of worth. Consequently, in the Spanish context, tests to assess self-worth are std needed, particularly those translated and validated for use with Spanish children.

**The Self-perception Profile for Children**

The Self-perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985) is a self-report scale focused on children's domain-specific judgments of their competence, as well as a global perception of self-worth, from 8 to 16 years of age. It was developed to address some of the problems mentioned above.

Firstly, the scale is developed on the theoretical basis that self-concept is a construct with multiple dimensions (Harter, 1993), in contrast to other tests which were focused on self-concept as a general and unidimensional construct (such as the Piers-Harris Self-concept Scale, 1969). The author maintained that the scale would provide a rich and complete picture of a

child's self-concept, since it is possible to obtain separate measures of perceived competence in different domains, as well as an independent assessment of global self-worth, according to the theory of Shavelson and colleagues (1976). In addition, the study of children's perception of themselves in different domains would also facilitate the examination of their perceptions of the differences and relationships among these domains.

Secondly, the typical response format on self-worth measures (yes-no, true-false) such as the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory (1967) also present problems, as Coopersmith stated. This specific type of a two-choice format pulls socially desirable responding, which is avoided with the new question format developed in the Self-perception Profile for Children.

Finally, the author has also presented different parallel versions of the questionnaire to consider the influences of age and development on selfworth (Harter & Pike, 1983, 1984; Messer & Harter, 1986; Neeman & Harter, 1986; Harter, 1988).

The Self-perception Profile for Children has become widely used for measuring self-concept in various samples of children in different countries and has reliable and valid psychometric properties. This scale has been translated and adapted in Ireland (Granleese &Joseph, 1993, 1994a, 1994b), Holland (Van Dongen-Melman, et al., 1993), Belgium (Van den Bergh & Van Ranst, 1998), China (Wang, Meredith, & Tsai, 1996), Canada (Worth Gavin & Herry, 1996), and Portugal (Faria, 2001). It was not possible to find any article adapting the scale into the Spanish context. Also, it has been used with clinical populations (Veerman, ten Brink, Straathof, & Treffers, 1996), and with populations of children under specific stressors, such as bullyhictim

behavior (Austin & Joseph, 1996; Andreou, 2OOO), maltreatment (Kinard, 1995), and sexual abuse (Vondra, Barnett, & Cicchetti, 1990; Feiring, Taska, & Lewis, 1996; Tremblay, Hitbert, Pichit, 1999), and shows good clinical sensitivity. These adaptation studies have yielded similar psychometric properties, in line with those obtained by Harter (1985), providing strong confirmation for the five factors and supporting the reliability and consistency of the scale across different cultures.

The main aim of the present study was to examine the psychometric properties of the Spanish adaptation of the Self-perception Profile for Children with a nonclinical sample. Specifically, the internal structure of the questionnaire was focused on and the data compared with previous data (Harter, 1985). A second aim of the study was to observe differences in selfworth among children from different social and educational backgrounds.

Sex and social group and age differences were examined. Such data may be relevant with regard to a rapid, reliable, and valid assessment of specific mediating variables in children who report a stressful life event.

## METHOD

### Participants

The Spanish version of the Self-perception Profile for Children was applied to a nonclinical sample of 143 children, 73 girls (51%) and 70 boys (49%), ranging in age from 9 to 12 years (40.5% younger and 59.5% older than 10 years old).

Participants were recruited from two different sources, a private school mainly enrolling families of medium socioeconomic status (120 children) and an after-school social-care center situated in an economically deprived neighborhood (23 children). Both were in Barcelona (Spain). The school was located in a central district where the enrollment is

considered to be representative sample of social classes in Barcelona. The sample included children from different backgrounds and social conditions as the school does not have a specific selection process. The criteria for registration at the school are living in the neighborhood where it is located or having siblings already registered there.

The after-school social-care center is also representative of the population of deprived neighborhoods of Barcelona. All children ages 9 to 12 years and attending the center were included. The center is a place where children and young people from low economic and educational backgrounds, immigrants, unstructured families, and homeless people can access resources unavailable in their family context (such as basic hygienic facilities, meals, games, social and interactional norms, or learning reinforcement after school). These children live with their parents, go to the normal schools from their neighborhood, but during their meal and after school times, they-have access to the resources of the center. The center is run by professional educators whose job is to take care of the children's and young people's needs.

**Measures**

The Self-perception Profile for Children includes 36 items and six subscales, five designed to assess specific domains and one designed to assess global self-worth, in children of ages 8 to 12 years. The scale can be employed with older subjects; however, it does not provide a sufficiently rich and differentiated description of the adolescents' self-concept. The subscales each comprise six items. The subscales are Scholastic Competence (taps children's perception of their ability within the realm of scholastic competence), Social Acceptance (taps how well the child is accepted by peers or feels popular), Athletic Competence (taps contents relevant to sports and outdoor games), Physical Appearance (taps how much the child likes the way he looks), Behavioral Conduct (taps how much children like the way they act and behave), and Global Self-

worth (taps the extent to which the child likes self as a person, and constitutes a global judgment of personal worth).

The scale can be administered in groups as well as individually, and children respond based on a specific question format. The authors considered the tendency for socially desirable responses as a major problem in selfconcept scales. Therefore, they applied a new format where the child is first asked to decide from two sentences which kind of child is most like self.

Once the child has decided which of the two sentences describes his selfperception better, whether the sentence chosen is only sort of true or really true for self can be answered. This type of format legitimizes either choice.

Although some studies have suggested there are problems with this format (Van Dongen-Melman, et al., 1993), the statistical data obtained from the authors provides evidence with regard to the effectiveness of this type of question. The general procedures are to score each item on a 4-point scale, on which a score of 4 reflects high perceived competence and a score of 1 designates low perceived competence. Earlier data from Harter (1985) show acceptable internal consistency ranging from .80 to .85 for Scholastic Competence, from .75 to .8O for Social Acceptance, from .80 to .86 for Athletic Competence, from .76 to .81 for Physical Appearance, from .71 to .77 for Behavioral Conduct, and ranging from .78 to .84 for Global Self-worth.

Also, the factor pattern showed each of the five specific subscales defined a factor, with no cross-loadings greater than .18. Group means were calculated for the Scholastic, Social, Athletic, Appearance, Conduct, and Global Selfworth subscales.

**Procedure**

The adaptation of the Self-perception Profile for Children was carried out using back-translation by bilingual psychologists from the University of Barcelona. The final version was presented to Dr. S. Harter, who is also the copyright holder and who agreed with the Spanish version.

The study was explained to the head teacher and teachers of the school, and the manager and educators of the after-school social-care center. They agreed to participate in the study and arranged a meeting with their respective Parents' Association who also gave their consent to administer the questionnaire to the children. The questionnaire was read to children in groups of 25 to 30 from the school sample to facilitate accurate understanding and completion of the scales. Two psychologists helped students to follow instructions and fill in the questionnaires appropriately during the administration session. This administration procedure has been used in prior studies with other scales (e.g., Kaslow, Weiss, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998). With the social-care center sample, however, the questionnaire was administered individually given these children's difficulties with reading and writing. None of the samples presented special problems in understanding the type of question and response format used by the scale.

**Results**

The results showed the sample to be well matched by sex, with 49% boys and 51% girls, with a mean age of 11.1 yr. (M= 133.0 mo., SD=9.7); minimum of 111 months and maximum of 162 months. A significant sex difference was found for different socioeconomic groups ($x2 = 9.42$, $p < .01$), with significantly more boys than girls in the social-care center. Age was dichotomized into younger (from 9 to 10 yr. old) and older children (from 11 to 12 yr. old). Analysis showed no significant age difference between groups with respect to sex ($x2 = .66$, ns) or to social group ($x2 = .02$, ns). The means for the scores on every item were all above the midpoint of the scale and ranged

from 2.6 to 3.5 (with standard deviations of 1.0 and .9). The sample used all the scores (from 1 to 4) to mark every item. Descriptive data applied to the subscales are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
MEANS BY SEX, AGE, AND GROUP FOR SPANISH VERSION OF THE SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE FOR CHILDREN AND HARTER'S 1985 SAMPLE C

| Subscale | Sex | | | | Age | | | | Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Boys | | Girls | | 9 to 10 yr. | | 11 to 12 yr. | | Private School | | Social Care Center | | Harter's 1985 Sample C | |
| | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* |
| Scholastic Competence | 3.0 | .6 | 2.9 | .6 | 2.9 | .6 | 2.9 | .6 | 2.9 | .5 | 3.0 | .8 | 2.8 | .7 |
| Social Acceptance | 3.1 | .8 | 2.9 | .6 | 3.0 | .8 | 3.0 | .7 | 2.9 | .6 | 3.5 | .8 | 2.9 | .8 |
| Athletic Competence | 3.1 | .6 | 2.8 | .6 | 2.9 | .7 | 3.0 | .6 | 2.9 | .6 | 3.2 | .9 | 2.9 | .8 |
| Physical Appearance | 3.0 | .8 | 2.9 | .7 | 3.0 | .7 | 2.9 | .7 | 3.0 | .7 | 2.7 | 1.0 | 2.9 | .8 |
| Behavioral Conduct | 2.8 | .6 | 3.1 | .6 | 2.8 | .6 | 3.0 | .6 | 3.0 | .6 | 2.7 | .7 | 3.0 | .6 |
| Global Self-worth | 3.3 | .5 | 3.2 | .6 | 3.1 | .6 | 3.3 | .5 | 3.2 | .5 | 3.3 | .6 | 3.0 | .7 |
| *n* | 85 | | 83 | | 49 | | 119 | | 120 | | 23 | | 227 | |

## Differences Within and Between Groups

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test applied to the scales' scores yielded for Scholastic Competence z of 1.07 (ns), Social Acceptance z of 1.05 (ns), Athletic Competence z of 1.27 (ns), Physical Appearance z of 1.72 ($p < .01$), Behavioral Conduct z of .85 (ns), and Global Self-worth z of 1.24 (ns), so data were not normally distributed on the Physical Appearance subscale and presented a positive asymmetry. Therefore, a logarithmic conversion for that subscale's scores was carried out before subsequent analysis (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1999).

To test the differences between means, a multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted with social group and age as independent variables, the subscales as dependent variables, and sex as a covariate. The test showed significant differences between groups on Social Acceptance ($F_{6.133}=16.44$, $p < .O1$) and Physical Appearance ($F_{6.133} =5.33$, $p < .05$). Children from the social-care center presented significantly higher scores on Social Acceptance but significantly lower scores on Physical Appearance. A significant difference was also found between boys and girls on Athletic

Competence ($F_{6.133}$= 5.000, $p < .05$) and Behavioral Conduct ($F_{6.133}$= 8.09, $p < .01$), with girls scoring lower than boys on the former and higher on the latter.

**Cross-cultural Analysis**

A cross-cultural analysis was also performed, comparing the present data with those from Sample C of the original author (Harter, 1985, transcribed in Table 1). Sample C was selected from the different samples presented by the author in the questionnaire's manual because it has the same age characteristics. The comparison showed a significant mean difference between the present control group from a private school and the original control group on Global Self-worth ($t=2.49$, $p< .01$), with the present control group scoring significantly higher. No significant mean differences were found for the other subscales' scores.

**Factor Analysis**

Even though a recommended ratio of subjects to items was not available, an exploratory factor analysis of principal components with Oblimin rotation was also carried out. An oblique rotation was chosen because factors were considered to be related and a relationship between the dimensions of the self-concept was expected (Hair, et al., 1999), as the original author suggested in previous work (Harter, 1985). The minimum factorial load for each item was fixed at .30. The analysis of the correlation matrix and the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin coefficient of .724 suggested that a factorial analysis could acceptably be applied to the data. The Global Self-worth subscale was not included since the author defends that global self-worth is determined, in part, by how competent one is in those domains considered important for the individual. According to Harter (1985), it is unlikely that self-worh would emerge as a distinctive factor, since the particular domains of importance vary among individuals and, as a consequence, bear a

different relationship to self-worth for different subjects (Granleese & Joseph, 1993, 1994a; Van Dongen-Melman, et al., 1993).

Nine factors emerged in the first free solution, accounting for 66.2% of the variance (18.5%, 13.2%, 7.7%, 6.1%, 5.1%, 5.0%, 3.7%, 3.6%, and 3.3 %, respectively[2]. However, loadings in this solution were widely spread across several factors; some factors only grouped two items, and psychological consistency of the content was difficult to establish. As a result, and in line with the structure proposed by Harter, an adjusted five-factor solution was hypothesized to provide a better fit to the five subscales and was subsequently tested. The five-factor solution explained 50.7% of the variance.

The first factor accounted for 18.6% of the total variance and included the six items from Scholastic Competence. The second factor explained 13.2% of the variance and comprised the six items from the Behavioral Conduct subscale. Factor three accounted for 7.8% of the variance and reflected Physical Appearance. The fourth factor accounted for 6.1% of the variance and reflected Social Acceptance. The last factor explained 5.1% of the variance and comprised the six items from the Athletic Competence subscale.

**Reliability**

Internal consistency for the subscales was calculated using Cronbach coefficient α. Since the factor analyses showed that the distribution of items by factors corresponded exactly to the original distribution of the items by subscales, the reliability was calculated following Harter's distribution of items in the six subscales. The subscales

[2] In Document APD2004-007 are the matrix of correlations and tables of factor loadings which may be requested from the Archive for Psychological Data, P.O. Box 7922, Missoula, MT 59807-7922. Remit $20.00 to the Archive

showed moderate indices of reliability: .71 for Scholastic Competence, .77 for Social Acceptance, .72 for Athletic Competence, .81 for Physical Appearance, .78 for Behavioral Conduct, and .73 for Global Self-worth.

**Correlations Among Subscales**

Pearson correlations among the six subscales were also calculated. As can be seen in Table 3, intercorrelations were moderate but significant. In the group, every domain-specific subscale was related to Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance correlated positively with Athletic Competence, Scholastic Competence, Physical Appearance, and Global Self-worth, but not with Behavioral Conduct. The highest correlation was between Physical Appearance and Global Self-worth.

TABLE 2

PRINCIPAL COMPONENTS ANALYSIS WITH OBLIMIN ROTATION FOR FIVE-FACTOR SOLUTION ON 35 ITEMS OF SPANISH VERSION OF THE SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE FOR CHILDREN ($N = 143$)

| Item | Factor* | | | | | $h^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | I | II | III | IV | V | |
| 1. Good at schoolwork | .55 | | | | .41 | .50 |
| 7. Just as smart | .66 | | | .31 | .39 | .55 |
| 13. Do schoolwork quickly | .62 | | | | | .46 |
| 19. Remember things easily | .59 | | | | | .37 |
| 25. Do well at classwork | .58 | .36 | | | | .45 |
| 31. Can figure out answers | .52 | .47 | | | | .44 |
| 5. Like the way I behave | | .56 | | | | .37 |
| 11. Do the right thing | | .58 | | | | .39 |
| 17. Act the way supposed to | | .71 | | | | .52 |
| 23. Don't get in trouble | | .70 | | | | .52 |
| 29. Don't do things shouldn't | | .70 | | | | .57 |
| 35. Kind to others | | .73 | | | | .56 |
| 4. Happy with the way I look | | | −.72 | | | .54 |
| 10. Happy with my height and weight | | | −.77 | | | .62 |
| 16. Like my body the way it is | | | −.83 | | | .71 |
| 22. Like my physical appearance as is | | | −.82 | | | .69 |
| 28. Like my face and hair as is | | | −.69 | | | .51 |
| 34. Attractive or good-looking | .35 | | −.40 | | | .29 |
| 2. Easy to make friends | .44 | | | .49 | | .41 |
| 8. Have a lot of friends | | | | .75 | | .57 |
| 14. Easy to like | | | | .77 | | .60 |
| 20. Do things with a lot of kids | | | | .66 | | .46 |
| 26. Most kids like me | | | | .83 | | .70 |
| 32. Popular with others | .32 | −.34 | | .47 | | .42 |
| 3. Do well at sports | | | | | .69 | .57 |
| 9. Good enough at sports | | | | .38 | .64 | .51 |
| 15. Good at outdoor activity | | | | | .67 | .48 |
| 21. Better than others at sports | | | | | .71 | .52 |
| 27. Play rather than watch | | | | .35 | .47 | .47 |
| 33. Good at new outdoor games | | .32 | | | .55 | .38 |
| Eigenvalue | 5.6 | 3.9 | 2.3 | 1.8 | 1.5 | |
| Accounted variance | 18.6 | 13.2 | 7.8 | 6.1 | 5.1 | |

*I = Scholastic Competence; II = Behavioral Conduct; III = Physical Appearance; IV = Social Acceptance; V = Athletic Competence.

## DISCUSSION

This research has included psychometric properties of the Self-perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985), a scale that provides a rapid and reliable way of measuring children's perceived competence in different domains (scholastic, social, athletic, physical appearance, and behavioral) as well as an independent assessment of their global self-worth. The results show that the range of scoring described by Harter seems appropriate for this Spanish sample, since children responded using all the possible choices from the 4 -point scale.

TABLE 3
PEARSON CORRELATIONS AMONG SUBSCALE FOR SPANISH ADAPTATION OF THE SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE FOR CHILDREN

| Subscale | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Scholastic Competence | | | | | | |
| 2. Social Acceptance | .32† | | | | | |
| 3. Athletic Competence | .28† | .39† | | | | |
| 4. Physical Appearance | .37† | .31† | .16 | | | |
| 5. Behavioral Conduct | .30† | −.05 | −.15 | .23† | | |
| 6. Global Self-worth | .44† | .44† | .17* | .52† | .40† | |

*$p < .05$. †$p < .01$.

When controlling the effects of sex and age on children's scores, several significant differences appeared. Firstly, children from the after-school social- care center had a significantly higher mean score on social acceptance, with children from the school context presenting similar means to those of Harter's control group. This result can be explained by the fact that, in the social-care center, values related to social and personal acceptance are addressed, and children who have the opportunity to be there (there is a waiting list in the center) may feel more lucky than their nonaccepted peers. Educational factors, such as the acceptance values developed in the center and also the experience of being accepted and belonging to a group may explain this higher score. In this way, it is possible that children from the school group have a greater sense of independence from peers, without needing to belong to a group of friends, as noted for the social-care children.

Secondly, children from the social-care center presented a significantly lower mean score on Physical Appearance, perhaps because children from many different minority cultures enjoy the center (e.g., Gypsy, Latin-American, Moroccan, and Pakistani), and when comparing their perception of their physical selves with other groups, immigrant children are aware of the ethnic differences evident in physical features. Since, in childhood, self-representation is based predominantly on physical attributes (Huteau, 1985), children may be expressing that they are aware of these physical differences

from the majority through their low mean score for physical appearance. It would be advisable to educate children from minorities to appreciate their own ethnic physical features. Otherwise, physical self-concept can be low for these children, and this fact may interfere in the developmental step from the self based on physical features to the more abstract self based on personal qualities.

A significant difference was found between boys and girls, with girls scoring significantly lower than boys in Athletic Competence and higher in Behavioral Conduct. These results are in accord with many studies which have applied the scale to American, Irish, Dutch, and Portuguese samples (Harter, 1985; Granleese & Joseph, 1993, 1994a; Van Dongen-Melman, et al., 1993; Faria, 2001). On one hand, the result obtained on Athletic Competence (Harter, 1985; Granleese & Joseph, 1993, 1994a; Van Dongen-Melman, et al., 1993) is explained by the fact that girls, in many if not all cultures, are considered to be less interested in and poorer players of sports and outdoor games than boys. On the other hand, that girls see themselves as better behaved than boys (Harter, 1985; Faria, 2001) also illustrates social stereotypes. Data from the cross-cultural analysis showed that the control group scored significantly higher on Global Self-worth than Harter's original control group; however, the groups did not differ on the other five subscales.

This interesting result warrants further study. The reliability coefficients obtained were acceptable and similar to those reported by Harter (1985). Regarding Scholastic Competence, the Spanish coefficient was lower than the original American coefficient. It may be that the Spanish scholar system emphasizes getting good grades, which is not directly represented in the items of the scale, more than speediness at school work. In addition, four of the six items which constitute this subscale have factor loadings on

other domains different from those on scholastic attainment, which also could explain these results in part.

The moderate correlations among subscale scores for the total group indicates that these are measuring closely related constructs. It seems that social acceptance is determined, in great part, by success in sports, a good scholastic competence, and physical attractiveness, as has been shown in other studies (Harter, 1985; Granleese & Joseph, 1993, 1994a). Scores on Athletic Competence correlated with those on Social Acceptance and Scholastic Competence but were not directly correlated to Global Self-worth. This could reflect another cultural difference, since Spanish tradition does not give as much importance as other occidental cultures, e.g., the American culture, to sports within the school context. Other studies have presented these similar results (Van Dongen-Melman, et al., 1993 ; Faria, 2001). In addition, it is important that the highest correlation occurred for Physical Appearance and Global Self-worth, showing, as Harter (1993, p. 95) previously suggested,that "self-evaluations in the domain of physical appearance are inextricably linked to global self-esteem." It is possible, as hypothesized by Harter (1985), that physical appearance is a qualitatively different area from the other areas tapped by the scale, since it is an omnipresent feature of the self that can always be observed and evaluated. This result, according to Huteau's theory of infancy self-representation (1985), seems to reflect the importance that our society gives to physical attractiveness. It would be interesting if other studies with different samples provided data on the directionality of this relationship.

To conclude, this study is the first step to validate an adequate scale to measure perceptions about self-competence and self-worth of children in the Spanish culture. The psychometric properties of the Self-perception Profile for Children found in the present study clearly replicated those reported by Harter for an American sample and

also those presented by other European authors (Granleese & Joseph, 1993, 1994a; Van Dongen-Melman, et al., 1993; Worth & Herry, 1996; Faria, 2001). The scale is useful for assessing different domains of perceived self-worth, when applied to children from different cultures and contexts. Generalization of findings is limited by the fact that the present subject sample was very particular, especially the group from the after-school social-care center and also by the specific age range.

Additional research with larger samples is needed to further document the validity and utility of this scale.

**REFERENCES**

ANDREOU, E. (2000) *Bully/victim problems and their association with psychological constructs n 8- to 12-year-old Greek schoolchildren.* Aggressive Behavior, 26, 49-56.

ATIENZA, F. L., MORENO, Y., & BALAGUER, I. (2000) *Análisis de la dimensionalidad de la Escala de Autoestima de Rosenberg en una muestra de adolescentes valencianos*. Revista de Psicologia, 22, 29-42.

AUSTIN, S., & JOSEPH, S. (1996) *Assessment of bully/victim problems in 8 to 11 year-olds.* British Journal of Educational Psychology, 66, 447-456.

BRINKMANN, H., SEGURE, M. T., & SOLAR, M. (1989) *Adaptacibn, estandarizaci6n y elaboraci6n de normas para el inventario de autoestima de Coopersmith*. Revista Chilena de Psicologia, 10, 63-71.

CANTU, M. L., VERDUZCO, M. A., ACEVEDO M. C., &CORTÉS, J.( 1993) *Validez y confiabilidad del Inventario de Autoestima de Coopersmith para adultos*. Revista Latinoamericana de Psicologia, 25, 247-255.

CICCHETTI, D., & TOTH, S. L. (1995) *A developmental psychopathology perspective on child abuse and neglect.* Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 34, 541-565.

COOPERSMITH, S.( 1967) *The antecedents of self-esteem*. San Francisco, CA: Freeman.

DEL BARRIO, V., FRÍASs, D., & MESTRE, V . (1994) *Autoestima y depresión en niños*. Revista de

Psicologia General y Aplicada, 47, 471-476.

FARIA, L. (2001) *Harter's Self-perception Profile for Children adapted for use with young Portuguese students*. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 92, 7 11-720.

FEIRING, C., TASKA, L. S., & LEWIS, M. (1996) *A process model for understanding adaptation to sexual abuse, the role of shame defining stigmatization*. Child Abuse and Neglect, 20, 767- 782.

FIERRO, A. (1991) *Autoestima en adolescentes: estudios sobre su estabilidad y sus determinantes*. Estudios de Psicologia, 45, 85-107.

GARCÍA-GÓMEZ, A. (2001) *Desarrollo y validación de un cuestionario multidimensional de autoconcepto*. Revista Iberoamericana de Diagnóstico y Evaluación Psicológica, 1 1, 29 -54.

GONZALEZ, M. C., TURON, J. , & IRIARTE, C. (1994) *Autoconcepto, motivaci6n y rendimiento escolar en alumnos de 5" de EGB.* Revista de Psicología de la Educación, 14, 25-44.

GONZÁLEZ PIENDA, J. A., NÚÑEZ PEREZ, J. C., & VALLEA RIAS, A. (1992) *Procesos de comparación Externa/interna, autoconcepto y rendimiento académico*. Revista de Psicologia General y Aplicada, 45, 73 -81.

GRANLEESE, J., & JOSEPH, S. (1993) *Factor analysis of the Self-perception Profile for Children.* Personality and Individual Differences, 15, 343-345.

GRANLEESE, J., & JOSEPH, S. (1994a) *Further psychometric validation of the Self-perception Profile for Children.* Personality and Individual Differences, 16, 649-651.

GRANLEESE, J., & JOSEPH, S. (1994b) *Reliability of the Harter Self-perception Profile for Children and predictors of global self-worth.* The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 155, 487-492.

HAIR, J. F., ANDERSON ,R.E., TATHAM R. L., & BLACK W.C. (1999) *Análisis multivariante.* (5th ed.) Madrid: Prentice Hall.

HARTER, S. (1985) *Manual for the Self-perception Profile for Children.* Denver, CO: Univer. Of Denver.

HARTER, S. (1988) *Manual for the Self-perception Profile for Adolescents*. Denver, CO: Univer. of Denver.

HARTER, S. (1993) *Causes and consequences of low self-esteem in children and adolescents*. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), Self-esteem: the puzzle of low self-regard. New York: Plenum. Pp. 87-116.

HARTER, S. & PIKE, R. (1983) *Procedural manual to accompany the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children*. Denver, CO: Univer. of Denver.

HARTER, S. & PIKE, R. (1984) *The Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children*. Child Development, 55, 1969-1982.

HUTEAU, M. (1985) *Les mécanismes psychologuqes de l'evolution et des préféncencese vis-à-vis des activités professionelles.* Orientation Scolarie et Professionelle, 11, 107-125.

JESSOR, R. (1992) *Risk behavior in adolescence: a psychosocial framework for understanding and action.* Developmental Review, 12, 374-390.

KARSLOW, N. J., WEISS, B ., & NOLEN-HOEKSEMA, S. (1998) *Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire- Revised: psychometric examination.* Psychological Assessment, 10, 166-170.

KERNIS, M. H. (1993) The roles of stability and level of self-esteem in psychological functioning. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), *Self-esteem: the puzzle of low self-regard*. New York: Plenum. Pp. 167-182.

KNARD E. M. (1995) Perceived social support and competence in abused children: a longitudinal perspective. *Journal of Family Violence*, 10, 73-98.

MARSH, W. H. (1986) *The Self-description Questionnaire (SDQ): a theoretical and empirical basis for the measurement of multiple dimensions of pre-adolescent self-concept: a test manual and a research monograph. Sydney, Australia: The Univer. of Sydney*.

MARTORELL, M. C., FLORES, P., SILVA, F., & NAVARRO, A. (1992) Autoconcepto: adaptaci6n española del SDQ-I1 de Marsh y Barnes. *Revista de Psicología de la Educación,* 3, 65-88.

MARTORELL, M. C., & SILVA, F. (1984) Evaluación del autoconcepto. I Congreso de Evaluación Psicológica, Madrid.

MESSER, B., & HARTER, S. (1986) *Manual for the Adult Self-perception Profile*. Denver, CO: Univer.of Denver.

MRUK, C. (1998) *Autoestima: investigación, teoría y práctica*. Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer.

MUSITU, G., GARCIA, F., & GUTIÉRREZ, M. (1991) *Autoconcepto Forma A (AFA).* Madrid: TEA.

MUSITU, G., GARCIA, F., & ROMÁN SANCHEZ, J. M. (1982) Autoconcepto: una introducci6n a esta variable intermediaria. *Universitas Tarraconensis,* 4, 5 1-69.

NEEMAN, J. , & HARTER, S. (1986) *Manual for the Self-perception Profile for College Students.* Denver, CO: Univer. of Denver.

NÚÑEZ PÉREZ, J. C., GONZÁLEZ PUMARIEGA, S., & GONZÁLEZ PIENDA J.A. (1995) Autoconcepto en ninos con y sin dificultades de aprendizaje. *Psicothema,* 7, 587-604.

PASTOR, A., NAVARRO, E., TOMÁS, J. M., & OLIVER, A. (1997) *Efectos de método en escalas de personalidad: la escala de autoestima de Rosenberg.* Psicológica, 18, 269-283.

PIERS, E. V., & HARRIS D. B. (1969) *The Piers-Harris Children's Self-concept Scale.* Nashville, TN: Counselor Recordings & Tests.

ROSENBERG, M. (1965) *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univer. Press.

RUTTER, M. (1990) Psychosocial resilience and protective mechanisms. In J. Rolf, A. N. Masten, D. Cicchetti, K. H. Nuechterlein, & S. Weintraub (Eds.), Risk and protective factors *in development of psychopathology.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univer. Press. Pp. 179-304.

SALGADO, J.F., & IGLESIAS, M. (1995) Estructura factorial de la Escala de Autoestima de Rosenberg: un análisis factorial. *Psicológica*, 16, 441-454.

SHAVELSON, R. J., HUBNER, J. J., &S TANTON, G. C. (1976) Self-concept: validation of construct interpretations. *Review of Educational Research*, 46, 407-441.

SPACCARELLI, S., & FUCHS, C. (1997) Variability in symptom expression among sexually abused girls, developing multivariate models. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 26, 24-35.

SPENCER S. J., JOSEPHS, R. A., & STEELE, C. M. (1993) Low self-esteem, the uphill strug le for self-integrity. In R. F. Baumeister (Ed.), Self-esteem: the puzzle of low self-regard. New York: Plenum. Pp. 21-36.

STEINHAUSEN, H.C., & METZKE, C. W. (2001) Risk, compensatory, vulnerability, and protective factors influencing mental health in adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 30, 259-280.

TREMBLAY, C., HÉBERT, M., & PICHÉ, C. (1999) Coping strategies and social support as mediators of consequences in child sexual abuse victims. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 23, 929-945.

VAN DEN BERGH, B. R. H., & VAN RANST, N. (1998) Self-concept in children: equivalence of measurement and structure across gender and grade of Harter's Self-perception Profile for Children. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 70, 564-582.

VAN DONGEN-MELMAN, J. E. W., KOOT, H. M., & VERHULST, F. C. (1993) Cross-cultural validation of Harter's Self-perception Profile for Children in a Dutch sample. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 53, 73 9-753.

VEERMAN, J. W., TEN BRINK, L. T., STRAATHOF, M. A. E., & TREFFERS, A. (1996) Measuring children's self-concept with a Dutch version of the "Self-perception Profile for Children": factorial validity and invariance across a nonclinic and a clinic group. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 67, 142- 154.

VERDUZCO, M. A., CANTU, M. L., ACEVEDO, M. C., & CORTÉS, J. (1994) Validación del Inventario de Autoestima de Coopersmith para niños mexicanos. *Revista Intercontinental de Psicología y Educación,* 7, 55-64.

VONDRA, J., BARNETT, D., & CICCHETTI, D. (1990) Self-concept, motivation, and competence among preschoolers from maltreating and comparison families. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 14, 525-540.

WANG, A., MEREDITH, W. H., & TSAI, R . (1996) Comparison in three Chinese cultures of scores on Self-perception Profile for Children. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 82, 1087-1095.

WORTH GAVIN, D. A., & HERRY, Y. (1996) The French Self-perception Profile for Children: score validity and reliability. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 56, 678-700.