

275 *Identity, Self-Esteem and relationship problems among French pupils (at school and secondary school)*

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Introduction

We perfected a new version of the Nouvelle Echelle Toulousaine d'Estime de Soi (NETES) validated among 2184 adolescents (school and secondary school French pupils), from the hypothesis that self-esteem is the major aspect of personal identity and that it plays a part on the way relationships with the others are felt and assessed. We will analyse the results among this population, in particular those introducing the competences or the relationship problems (social self-esteem) and those related to the negative elements of identity (negative self-esteem).

Methodology

Taking a criticism of the classical method based on the inversion of negative items as a starting point, we maintain the negative items with no inversion and we suggest a validation of the "Nouvelle Echelle Toulousaine d'Estime de Soi" (NETES, 52 items). We take the positive or negative factors obtained from an ACP with varimax rotation into account. Three factors have a positive valency (F2, F4 and F5) (26 items) and three factors have a negative valency (F1, F3 and F6) (26 items)¹. The three positive factors get an ES+ score; the three negative factors, get an ES- score and from difference between those two scores (ES+) – (ES-) we obtain a *Differential Index of self-esteem* (DISE) (positive ES minus negative ES).

The representative sample: 2184 adolescents, girls (1194) and boys (990), from 12 to 20 years old, from second form to upper sixth form.

Results: The most important result is linked to age. The score on negative self-esteem, increases highly from 12 years old and reaches its highest point at 15 years old. Then, it decreases gradually until 20 years old. The positive self-esteem score also decreases with age but the differences are slighter. This result seems to prove that the maximum age for identity troubles is 15 years old but that at this age, the self positive image persists and resists to the *negative diffusion on the personality*.

Boys have a stronger self-esteem than girls on positive terms (ES+ and DISE) as well as on negative terms (ES-) except for tension.

¹ Total 52 items; alpha. 84; F1 (-): *standing back*, frustration and addiction, 14 items, alpha. 90; F2 (+): *Confidence* and the positive physical self, 10 items, alpha. 84; F3 (-): *socioemotional tension*, 9 items, alpha. 79; F4 (+): *school and promoted confidence*, 7 items, alpha. 71; F5 (+): *socionormative expansion*, 9 items, alpha .60 and F6 (-): *school self-accusation*. 3 items, alpha. 62.