



International Journal of Indonesian Education and Teaching
<http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/IJIET>
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

INTEGRATION OF SELF-ESTEEM ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS IN COLLEGE OUTREACH ACTIVITIES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: TOWARD A FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

Rosalyn L. Ward¹ and Rafael Ibe Santos^{2*}

¹Harris Memorial College, Philippines

²University of Asia and the Pacific, Philippines

principal@harrismemorialcollege.com¹ and rsantos@eucon.edu²

*correspondence: rsantos@eucon.edu

<https://doi.org/10.24071/ijiet.v10i2.14360>

received 4 February 2026; accepted 2 August 2026

Abstract

This study explores the development of self-esteem among individuals with physical conditions through proposed self-esteem enhancement programs by faculty and students engaged in outreach activities at a local private college in Rizal province for persons with disabilities (PWDs), who are often excluded from mainstream education. Relying on autoethnography as a research method, this qualitative work provides timely observations and reflections drawn from recorded research notes on the subject of self-esteem as it relates to individuals with physical challenges and what can be done to address their needs outside the four walls of educational institutions. Major autoethnographic findings highlight some of the best possible practices necessary in the conduct of self-esteem enhancement tasks for PWDs and how they can be implemented in places such as *Tahanang Walang Hagdanan (Home Without Stairs)*, a pioneering organization that empowers persons with disabilities by providing livelihood, skills training, and advocacy for accessibility and inclusion in the Philippines. Our autoethnographic records further point to the need to identify self-esteem enhancement strategies that can be integrated into the faculty-student community outreach endeavors designed for people with physical limitations. Observations and conclusions have implications for inclusive pedagogy and a framework for education that integrates those with disabilities in formal and non-formal education in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Education, particularly SDGs 4.3 and 4.5.

Keywords: disability support, inclusive education, outreach activities, PWD/s, self-esteem enhancement program (SEEP)

Introduction

In the Bagobo tribe in southern Philippines, to be born “blemished” or the crueller term “deformed” is considered a curse to the entire family (Chong, 2009, p. 39). Chong tells the story of a Bagobo native named James who was born with



a physical handicap. In his community, the immediate response when a handicapped baby is born is to terminate its life using hot ashes coming from the furnace. Then the dead body is wrapped and hung on a tree located some kilometers from the family's residence. "Alternatively, the family might abandon the dead baby at home and move to a place far away. In the case of James, "as soon as the *hilot* (traditional midwife) saw the newborn, she gasped, 'There is something wrong with your son, Empog (the father of James)!'. She described the baby's right leg – short and crooked" (pp 39-40).

James' mother had a different reaction. Speaking calmly, she said, "Let my son live. Jesus has taken the curse from his life." (p. 40). The Bagobo couple had been believers before James was born. Chong continues, "Growing up, James knew what it was to be very poor and to be often left at home, alone for long hours. Life was extremely difficult, and it was even harder to bring him anywhere – much less to school because he could not move as others did. Children would tease and hurl insults at him. 'Unkind words? I heard them all,' James muttered. 'Piang! Bakol! (cripple or lame),' they'd yell. Every time I heard those words, I ached and bled deep inside. I wallowed in self-pity and often cried out to God, 'Why was I ever born? Why did you let me live?' James felt very insecure, very insignificant, having so much less than children his age. But his mother would always come to his rescue and say, 'I am beside you, and God is with you'" (pp. 39-41).

The above-mentioned account is just one of the many poignant stories of real-life experiences of persons with disabilities (PWDs). Hills (2007) maintains that PWDs are prone to having low self-esteem. "Looks" or appearance can have a significant influence on an individual's perceived value (Harper & Peterson, 2001, p. 569). Low self-esteem may result from the perception of the self as less competent than others and self-categorization as a "disabled" person, with a consequent perception of stigma. Additionally, it is hard for the physically challenged to be employed because of their physical limitations. Unemployment commonly results in lower self-esteem, lessened well-being, and a lower quality of life (Henderson & Bryan, 2004). Consequently, there is a feeling of insecurity and inadequacy. There is also reluctance to engage in social interactions because of low self-esteem due to academic underachievement and unemployment (Nosek & Hughes, 2003; Nosek, Hughes, Swedlund, Taylor, & Swank, 2003). Negative self-esteem causes difficulties for a person. As a psychosocial problem, self-esteem issues are frequently focused on low self-esteem (Henderson & Bryan, 2004; Lawrence, 2006). Those with self-esteem issues avoid drawing attention to themselves, feel isolated and unlovable, and are unable to overcome their inadequacies (Ellison, 1983). Likewise, they are more likely to be subservient and dependent, more vulnerable in interpersonal relations, more likely to have their feelings hurt and feel helpless and powerless, and more concerned about what others think of them (Ellison, 1983; Turner, 2000).

Positive self-esteem can be primarily shaped and sustained through love and a positive relationship with God and others (Sprecher & Fehr, 2006; Voskuil, 1983), and may be seen in Filipino values such as a positive *pakikisama*, harmony, or smooth-interpersonal relationships, which can maintain and support *amor proprio*, love or respect of self (Arce, 2008; Teehankee, 2004). Additionally, Reinecke (1993) explains that positive self-esteem will always be in the context of

an outside relationship. Whether it is with God or with fellow human beings, it should always be viewed in the context of grace to be acted out with others. In other words, positive self-esteem is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Failure to love and failure to achieve positive self-esteem are interrelated. Moreover, positive self-esteem is anchored on humility.

In the Philippines, around 12% of Filipinos aged 15 and above experience severe disability (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2019). Worldwide, more than one billion people are estimated to live with some form of disability (World Health Organization, 2022). Hence, the World Health Organization is encouraging concrete commitments to disability inclusion. This is in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in promoting a sustainable future for all, such as reduced poverty, zero hunger, quality education, decent work and economic growth, as well as good health and well-being.

School, teachers, and the building up of self-esteem

According to Turner (2000), school climate plays a significant role in the development of the self-esteem of students. Specifically, teachers have a significant role to play. Aldridge (1993) agrees and believes that teachers can foster an environment that encourages self-esteem as students face new demands. Studies suggest that there is a correlation between a student's self-esteem and the teacher's self-esteem (Dobbins, 1996). Students of high self-esteem who are in regular contact with teachers of low self-esteem will gradually develop low self-esteem, with associated low achievement levels. On the other hand, students with low self-esteem who are in regular contact with teachers who have positive self-esteem are likely to have enhanced self-esteem. Thus, both the teacher's self-esteem and the student's self-esteem are important in the learning process (Dobbins, 1996). Teachers are in a powerful position to affect students' self-esteem and, in turn, affect their achievement and behavior Lawrence (2006). They can also enhance self-esteem in three ways: through an individual SEEP, through a systematic program of group activities, and through providing and encouraging a positive ethos in the classroom.

Some limits to the education of the physically challenged are difficult to overcome. Nevertheless, the faculty of a school is expected to do their best to make education inclusive for physically-challenged students so as to enhance their self-esteem. Educators are also expected to serve as good examples to their students in how to be inclusive and in how to deal appropriately with physically-challenged students. Oftentimes, students observe their teachers and take their cues from them (Valstar, 2008). Acceptance of physically-challenged students (as human beings and as students) entails that the teachers feel and show unreserved positive regard toward them. Genuineness, consistency, and fairness in their evaluations of them are a must. Consistency is particularly important in both teachers' feelings and actions; otherwise, a conflicting message of acceptance and rejection is construed. In such a case, teachers could be perceived as pretenders, which may result in damaged or low self-esteem on the part of physically-challenged students (Henderson & Bryan, 2004).

Teachers' expectations play a critical role in the education of physically-challenged students. On the one hand, in some cases, expectations of what these students could achieve were regarded as too low, and these could have a negative

effect on the students' self-esteem and perception of their abilities. The key to addressing low expectations of such students seems to lie in changing attitudes towards disability, not only amongst teachers but also in society as a whole (Buenaventura, 1987; National Disability Authority, 2005). On the other hand, while there is much evidence to suggest that teachers may have expectations that are very low for physically-challenged students, expectations that are too high may be evident as well (Henderson & Bryan, 2004). Some teachers do not understand the needs of students with physical conditions and do not make allowances for their limitations. Unmet expectations are said to result in self-esteem issues on the part of physically-challenged students.

Finally, teachers must have ample information about the circumstances of such students in order to understand their needs. Both the physically-challenged students and their parents are to be involved in SEEP/education planning. There are several benefits. One, involving them can balance the expectations of teachers, students, and parents (Henderson & Bryan, 2004; National Disability Authority, 2005). Two, such an arrangement could result in higher levels of achievement and employability for physically-challenged students. Finally, involvement of students with physical limitations as well as their parents could also help foster a positive parental perception of their children's capacities.

Approaches in self-esteem building program

Negative psychosocial perceptions of disability and the physically challenged lead to negative attitudes and stereotypes, which in turn result in self-esteem issues and other psychosocial problems that beset the physically challenged. Limitations in terms of educational and employment opportunities also contribute to low self-esteem. Self-esteem issues and other psychosocial problems, attitudinal barriers, and barriers within the educational and employment systems are some of the obstacles to obtaining education and employment experienced by this group. In this section, we highlight the need for self-enhancement, PBL, counseling, APE, physical activity, disability-friendly strategies for the workplace, and giving and receiving compassionate love as likely to be helpful educational and workplace practices and approaches for the physically challenged, which can enhance their self-esteem.

A SEEP study using PDP has shown that self-esteem enhancement is effective in helping at-risk students to improve their self-image, and that this can result in improved self-esteem (Dalgas-Pelish, 2006; McVey, Davis, Tweed, & Shaw, 2004; Singg & Farquhar, 2001). Lawrence (2006) stresses the importance of self-esteem enhancement, indicating that students will not use their full ability if they have self-esteem issues. Scholars have reported a reduction in behavioral difficulties amongst those who have been enrolled in a SEEP. However, self-esteem enhancement does not always mean that the focus has to be on helping students feel good about themselves, but rather, the students themselves must be aware of a self to be enhanced.

Effective self-enhancement programs include training in at least one or more skills in areas such as problem solving, conflict resolution, and responsible decision-making (Durlak & Weissberr, 2007). It should be sequenced, active, focused, and explicit. As a form of self-enhancement program, PDP targets attitudes and behaviors that result in adjustment problems (Singg & Farquhar,

2001). In PDP, the self-esteem of the participants can be built through setting meaningful goals and making good choices, which are likely to result in the achievement of these goals; through empowering themselves by accepting responsibility for the decisions they make and learning to communicate effectively with others; and through focusing on their needs (Clegg & Bradley, 2006). Self-enhancement strategies can be adapted to the person's individual characteristics (Kahng & Mowbray, 2005; Kwan, Kenny, John, Bond, & Robins, 2004), and a process called "empowerment," which enables individuals to acquire some control over valued events, outcomes, and resources, is especially helpful for the physically challenged. In a group SEEP, for instance, approaches such as developing critical thinking skills, cultivating a positive self-image, practicing both cooperative and assertive behavior (Lawrence, 2006), and giving and receiving compassionate love (Sprecher & Fehr, 2006) are considered helpful.

PBL emphasizes the importance of interpersonal skills, problem-solving capabilities, and self-directed and regulated learning (Konings, Wiers, Van de Wiel, & Schmidt, 2005; Merrill, 2007; Norman & Schmidt, 1992). Feedback and reflection on the learning process and group dynamics are said to be important components of PBL. Research has shown that PBL enhances the self-esteem of participants, promotes greater acquisition of psychosocial knowledge, improves interpersonal skills, and motivates participants to become engaged and self-directed learners (Konings, Wiers, Van de Wiel, & Schmidt, 2005; Wan Mamat, Raja Hussain, Salleh, & Saat, 2007). Also, PBL promotes critical thinking and a problem-solving way of working (Nuriye, 2006).

Counseling services as a special educational provision (Heelan, 2009; National Disability Authority, 2005), APE (Krueger, DiRocco, & Felix, 2000; Mason, 2003; McCarthey & Knopf, 1998), and physical activity, such as sports and arts (Alleyne, 2003; Yong Yong, 2005), are believed to enhance self-esteem. Counseling is helpful in exploring or clarifying thoughts and feelings and develops critical thinking skills (Sheehy, 2008), while APE differs from ordinary physical education in that it utilizes individualized programs of instruction. One of the benefits of APE is developing motor skills, which may permit an individual to acquire prevocational or vocational skills (Mason, 2003; McCarthey & Knopf, 1998). Also, physical activity, such as sports and arts, can be helpful in developing skills, in building a positive image of our bodies, and in promoting and developing good social and interpersonal skills and relationships (Alleyne, 2003; Yong Yong, 2005).

In addition, disability-friendly strategies, such as education on disability, vocational guidance and counseling, provision of barrier-free/accessible facilities and services, and formation of disability support groups are beneficial workplace practices for the physically challenged (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 1991; United States Department of Labor, 2000; Wang, 2009). Furthermore, giving and receiving compassionate love (Jacobson, 1996; Post, 2008; Sprecher & Fehr, 2005, 2006; Sprecher, Fehr, & Zimmerman, 2007) could affect several dimensions such as self-esteem, mood, and closeness to others. Post (2008) stresses that giving and receiving compassionate love is helpful in the recovery from different forms of physical and mental illness and can increase a person's self-worth, strengthen one's spirituality, and enhance one's

life (Jacobson, 1996; Sprecher & Fehr, 2006).

Method

The autobiographical narrative approach provides a methodological grounding for this paper following the work of Hamdan (2012) of the University of Alberta in Canada. Also known as autoethnography, this technique relies on retrospective ideas usually related to the conduct of education, at least in the context of the Canadian scholar. According to Hamdan, autoethnographic notes can be a good source of data for education-related studies, calling them “privileged” and “personal experience methods...on a variety of topics relevant to teaching and the field of education to expand knowledge” (p. 587). Although the autobiographical narratives used here are not about classroom pedagogy per se, they nonetheless encompass notes and introspections that relate to the crafting of teaching programs on developing self-esteem among individuals with physical handicap. It is the belief of the authors that education should not be confined only within the four walls of educational institutions but also outside their confines, which include educational outreach programs as proposed in this study. Narratives consist of several research notes and reflections on self-esteem and accounts of people with disabilities who were interviewed to gather feedback on their SEEP preferences. Finally, the introspective notes on self-esteem enhancement strategies are revisited and incorporated in a list of proposals for faculty-student outreach activities in Harris Memorial College, a private college east of Manila, designed particularly for people with special needs.

Research involving human subjects

This relied on autoethnographic observations and notes drawn from interactions with staff of *House Without Stairs* and some of its PWD residents. Such interactions were guided by existing investigation protocols, and the authors made sure that adherence to ethical matters was observed.

Findings and Discussion

This study explored the possible strategies in conducting a self-esteem enhancement program as pedagogical approaches in teaching individuals with physical disabilities. Such strategies are based on the authors’ autoethnographic notes drawn from their observations and interactions with persons with disabilities and staff connected with an agency involved in caring for PWDs.

Proposed SEEP for faculty and students’ outreach activities

Observations of and interactions with *House Without Stairs* staff and workers have led to a self-esteem enhancement program that is designed for the TWH PCYAW and could be integrated in other faculty and students’ outreach educational programs for individuals with disabilities within the context of a local private college east of Manila. The program, which uses PDM (Phillips, 1991; Singg & Farquhar, 2001), is outlined and described in this section. The SEEP PDM is divided into two parts: the group sessions and the one-on-one counseling sessions. The group sessions, which constitute the first part of the program, are composed of 8 units/sessions, 2 units/sessions per weekend (preferably Sunday), from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Unit/Session 1 is the focusing phase, to understand

self-esteem, its definition, and the biblical-theological foundations for positive self-esteem. Unit 2 is the awareness phase, which deals with an appreciation of self-esteem and discussion regarding the sources of self-esteem and self-esteem problems. Units 3 to 6 are the enhancing phases. In these phases, acknowledging and increasing worthiness and competence are talked about and promoted. Units 7 to 8 are the management phases wherein the maintenance and nourishment of self-esteem are discussed and encouraged.

Best practices in self-esteem enhancement

The program that is proposed based on interactions with individuals with disabilities from TWH includes seven best practices in enhancing the self-esteem of the physically challenged as enumerated previously in this paper. These are: (a) enhancing self-esteem through the practice of self-enhancement (i.e. building a positive self-image, empowering oneself, communicating effectively, accepting responsibility, developing self-respect, mutual respect, and smooth interpersonal relationship, setting and achieving worthwhile goals), (b) PBL (i.e. dealing with problems and solving them and learning to cope with various problems of everyday life and stress management), (c) giving and receiving compassionate love, (d) disability-friendly strategies for the workplace, (e) counselling, (f) APE, and (g) physical activity. These are designed and discussed as interconnected topics during the proposed group session, part of the SEEP. During this part, participants will be asked to do the assigned tasks, keep daily journals, and participate in small- and large-group discussions.

To promote a better understanding and learning of the concepts and things covered in the sessions, the participants are to take part in several activities. There are at least 12 activities that are proposed in the SEEP and are described below.

Self-description. This encourages participants to describe themselves (negative and positive, facts and opinions) and write about the things and experiences that might have contributed to the way they view and feel about themselves (Lim, Saulsman, & Nathan, 2005, pp. 2-4).

Appreciating each other. Here, the potential participants appreciate each other by writing the good characteristics of each of them on a piece of paper on his/her back.

Self-talk and/or writing a letter to oneself. Potential participants are asked to think of something that they know they could and really would like to do, but feel they are not empowered to do, and they talk to themselves so that they would be encouraged and empowered to do it.

Practicing interpersonal communication skills. In this activity, each participant is to choose a partner to communicate with and discuss things about each other (e. g., family, occupation, hobbies, and vacation).

Looking into a mirror. Participants are to look closely in the mirror and try to know themselves better by paying close attention to the physical features that they

like and those that they do not. This is intended to promote inner healing and self-love.

Respectable characteristics. In this task, each participant writes at the bottom of a sheet of paper something valuable or respectable about each other.

Practicing problem-solving techniques. Here, participants are tasked to think of a personal problem and try to solve it using the problem-solving techniques that they have learned in the past.

Watching video clips, listening to, and singing a song. In this activity, participants watch the testimony/personal story of Nick Vujicic, a world-famous individual who is physically challenged. They also listen and sing along with a song that talks about hope.

Hand washing. Each participant is to choose a partner and wash each other's hand/s as a gesture of giving and receiving compassionate love.

Preparing a future work/business plan. Participants create an outline of future work/business plans that they could use when they leave TWH after their rehabilitation.

Planning my own self-esteem enhancement action program. This task involves designing a self-esteem enhancement action program by the participants.

Talent/skill show. This activity involves sharing of talents/skills (e.g., singing/videoke, dancing, basketball, weightlifting, race, painting/arts). The participants are to showcase their interest in all activities and actively participate in them.

The second part of the SEEP is to be devoted to individual counselling. Each participant is given a slot in the counselling schedule and has the opportunity to explore with the researcher the meaning of self-esteem and how their self-esteem has influenced past behaviors and actions and could influence present and future plans and decisions.

Each counselling session lasts for about thirty minutes, and all sessions are to be completed in a week. Counselling can take place after working hours and during non-working days. Throughout the whole duration of the SEEP, faculty and students are shown a positive and caring attitude to the participants for them to feel valued and promote a positive self-esteem in them. The following are suggested: (a) Engaging with the participants, (b) sharing of SEEP facilitators' personal experiences and stories, (c) sincerely listening to counselees' stories, (d) praying and fellowshiping with them, (e) journeying with them such as sharing with their laughter and crying with them, (f) participating in activities and having fun with them, and (g) making them feel special through simple acts of thoughtfulness, among others. To determine the impact of SEEP, participants can be asked to evaluate it after the implementation.

Inclusive college curriculum as avenues for program collaboration

The college curriculum of Harris Memorial College, the proponent of SEEP and related outreaches, emphasizes an inclusive approach in education. To inculcate the value of an education that embraces everyone regardless of their physical and spiritual condition, the college department offers several courses that promote inclusivity such as EDU 103, ECE 106, ECE 120, CE 109, CE 112 & 113, and CE 114. All these courses are potential avenues for the integration of SEEP, which can be directed by the instructors and implemented as collaborative outreach activities between faculty and enrolled students.

Special and inclusive education. EDU 103, which teaches the foundation of special and inclusive education, is one such avenue that focuses on philosophies, theories, and legal bases of special needs and inclusive education. This course delves into typical and atypical development of children, learning characteristics of students with special educational needs (gifted and talented, learners with difficulty seeing, learners with difficulty hearing, learners with difficulty communicating, learners with difficulty walking/moving, learners with difficulty remembering and focusing, learners with difficulty with self-care), and strategies in teaching and managing these learners in the regular class.

Inclusive education in early childhood. ECE 106 is aligned with EDU 103 as it emphasizes inclusive education in early childhood settings. While trained to understand typical and atypical development of young children and be able to address special needs in early childhood settings, students can be exposed to SEEP advocacies as directed and facilitated by the instructor.

Family-school-community partnerships. ECE 120, which deals with family, school, and community partnership, can also be an ideal avenue for SEEP development and implementation. Focusing on the diverse needs of the young child within the context of family, school, and community, this course examines the nature and scope of family- school- community partnerships, including interdisciplinary relationships and their impact on learning and development of young children. It includes a review of principles, strategies, initiatives, and programs to engage parents, families, and communities. The role of early childhood educators in planning, implementing, and assessing collaborative family, school, and community partnerships is given emphasis. A self-esteem enhancement program for those with disabilities can be integrated as a project/final requirement, something that both the faculty and students could collaborate on.

Characteristics of youth and young adults. Under CE 109, students learn about youth and adult work, a course that provides a working knowledge of the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and emotional needs and characteristics of the youth and adults. It also explores avenues of their participation/involvement in church and community. Skills in group work, exposures, and dynamics on growth are employed to help communicate the Christian faith through ministry with the youth and adults. This is another course where SEEP can be considered.

Working with different sectors of society. CE 112 & 113, which are field practicum 1 and 2, are two-semester field practicum courses for Christian Education graduating students so that they experience firsthand how to work with different sectors of the community. Students have the opportunity to learn and acquire skills in community organizing and thus engage in community involvement with rural and urban people, specifically in depressed areas. Weekly Field Practicum Instruction class and regular conference with a supervisor are parts of the requirements. This is an ideal venue as well for any self-enhancement programs for the handicapped.

Theology and mission. CE 114 introduces the students to the theology and practice of evangelism and the mission of the church. It aims to broaden the students' understanding in communicating the gospel through an in-depth study of the church and its mission, which includes the biblical and theological motivation for Christian mission. It also includes the presentation of various approaches and strategies in evangelism. SEEP can be integrated into the lessons as well as outreach activities to people with disability. One such venue is a place for people with disabilities such as *Tahanang Walang Hagdanan*.

The Tahanang Walang Hagdanan as a pilot for SEEP

In this paper, we propose the TWH or *Tahanang Walang Hagdanan* (*Home Without Stairs*) as a pilot for the implementation of SEEP for two obvious reasons. First, it is a home for individuals with physical conditions. Second, the facility is located in the nearby town and is accessible to Harris faculty and collegiate-level students for an educational outreach activity for the physically-challenged. The TWH compound can be considered a disability-friendly place that promotes the holistic development of its physically-challenged young adult workers (PCYAW). The absence of steps or stairs shows accessibility and welcoming of the physically challenged, especially those who are wheelchair users. The physical setting and design of the TWH compound appear to promote positive self-esteem for the PCYAW through its visible demonstration that it is a disability-friendly place that promotes their holistic development.

Observations made of TWH PCYAW, based on our narratives, are fairly typical people – they have families, friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, dreams, talents and skills, work relationship struggles, family problems, and a variety of different needs. In general, the potential participants have cordial interactions and relationships inside and outside TWH. There are TWH workers who do not promote positive self-esteem to their children.

A proposed framework for inclusive education for PWDs

We considered the subject of self-esteem in the context of individuals with physical disabilities and considered some best practices in developing their self-worth. The following is a proposed framework for self-esteem enhancement programs that can be adopted and adapted.

Based on the best practices for addressing self-esteem issues among the physically challenged as found in literature and our own autoethnographic notes, we created a concept map of best practices for addressing self-esteem issues

among the physically challenged (Figure 1). This concept map can help provide a framework for designing the SEEP for PCYAW in TWH.

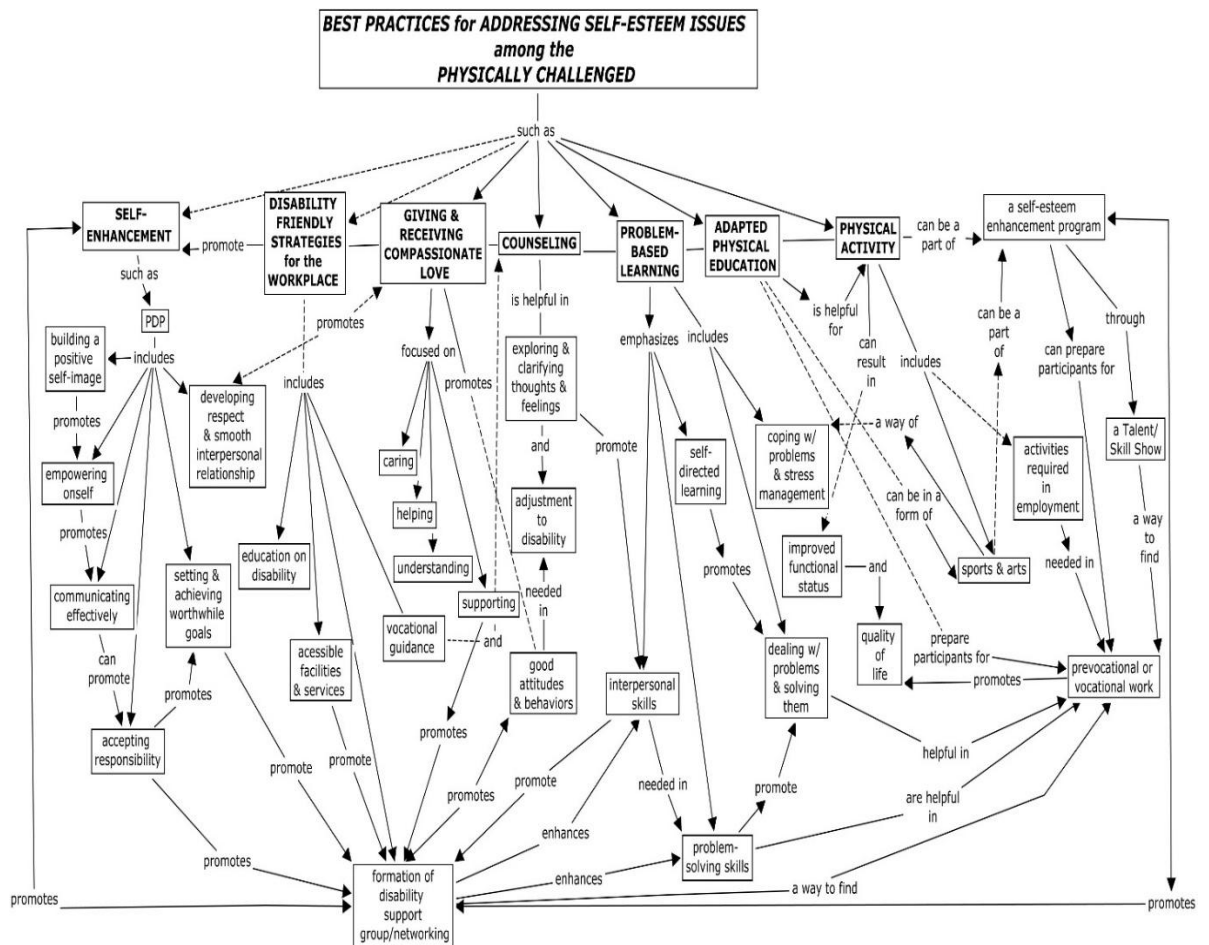


Figure 1. A concept map of best practices for addressing self-esteem issues among the physically challenged

Conclusion

In this paper, we outlined some proposals for carrying out a self-enhancement program for the handicapped and recommended that it be piloted at *Tahanang Walang Hagdanan* as an outreach and demonstration of inclusive education as espoused by Harris Memorial College, facilitated by instructors in collaboration with college students enrolled in at least seven education courses. The program can be easily adopted and adapted in any or all of these courses and can be carried out regularly following its pilot implementation. This is inclusive education in action, an example of a true witness of Christian compassion in the community. This is what education is all about; it is transformative, refocusing (or widening the horizon) of classroom instruction into a real-life experience that changes both the implementers and the recipients of the program.

This program can be piloted at TWH as planned, ensuring collaboration between instructors and education students. It can also be integrated into college curriculum by embedding the program into multiple education courses to promote sustainability and regular engagement. Additionally, institutions may consider

conducting training for facilitators, providing orientation and sensitivity training for instructors and students to ensure effective and empathetic delivery. Furthermore, said programs can be subjected to continuous evaluation by establishing feedback mechanisms and assessment tools to measure impact on participants' self-esteem and program effectiveness. Finally, community partnerships could be explored by expanding collaboration with other organizations serving persons with disabilities to scale outreach efforts.

References

- Aldridge, J. (1993). *Self-esteem: Loving yourself at every age*. Nora: Doxa Books.
- Alleyne, J. (2003, December 11). *Self-esteem, sport and physical activity*. Retrieved from www.caaws.ca/e/resources/pdfs/Self_Esteem.pdf
- Arce, W. F. (1998). *Systematic qualitative data research: An introduction for Filipino practitioners*. Manila: Ateneo de Manila University.
- Buenaventura, L. L. (1987). *Physical disability and the management of stigma: The Bahay-Biyaya case* (Unpublished dissertation, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines).
- Chong, G. D. (2009). *Flying on broken wings: Stories of courage in overcoming disabilities*. Manila: New Day.
- Clegg, S., & Bradley, S. (2006). Models of personal development planning: Practice and processes. *British Educational Research Journal*, 32(1), 57–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920500402003>
- Dalgas-Pelish, P. (2006). Effects of a self-esteem intervention program on school-age children. *Pediatric Nursing*, 8, 341-349.
- Dobbins, R. (1996). Student teacher self-esteem in the practicum. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 21(2), 16-28. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.1996v21n2.2>
- Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2007). *The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills*. Chicago, IL: Collaborative for Academic.
- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. (1991). *Vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities: Magna Carta for disabled persons- Philippines*. United Nations. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.
- Ellison, C. W. (1983). Self-esteem: An overview. In C. W. Ellison (Ed.), *Your better self: Christianity, psychology & self-esteem* (pp.1-20). Manhattan, NY: Harper & Row.
- Hamdan, A. (2012). Autoethnography as a genre of qualitative research: A journey inside out. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(5), 585–606. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691201100505>
- Harper, D. C., & Peterson, D. B. (2001). Children of the Philippines: Attitudes toward visible physical impairment. *The Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Journal*, 38(6), 566–576. https://doi.org/10.1597/1545-1569_2001_038_0566_cotpat_2.0.co_2
- Harris Memorial College. (2018). *Catalogue 2018 – AS/education department*. Rizal, Philippines: Harris Memorial College.

- Heelan, A. (2009). *Survey of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in 2nd level schools in the Republic of Ireland*. Dublin: Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD).
- Henderson, G., & Bryan, W. V. (2004). *Psychosocial aspects of disability* (3rd ed.). London: Publisher LTD.
- Hills, M. D. (2007). The psychological and social impact of epilepsy. *Neurology Asia*, 12(1), 10–12.
- Jacobson, S. (1996). *A spiritual guide to counting the Omer*. Brooklyn, NY: Meaningful Life Center.
- Kahng, S. K., & Mowbray, C. T. (2005). What affects self-esteem of persons with psychiatric disabilities: The role of causal attributions of mental illnesses. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 28(4), 354 – 361. <https://doi.org/10.2975/28.2005.354.360>
- Konings, K. D., Wiers, R. W., Van de Wiel, M. W., & Schmidt, H. G. (2005). Problem-based learning as a valuable educational method for physically disabled teenagers? The discrepancy between theory and practice. *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*, 17(2), 107-117. <https://www.doi.org/10.1007/S10882-005-3683-6>
- Krueger, D. L., DiRocco, P., & Felix, M. (2000). Obstacles adapted physical education specialists encounter when developing transition plans. *Adapted Physical Education Quarterly*, 17, 222-236.
- Kwan, V. S. Y., Kenny, D. A., John, O. P., Bond, M. H., & Robins, R. W. (2004). Reconceptualizing individual differences in self-enhancement bias: An interpersonal approach. *Psychological Review*, 111(1), 94–110. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.111.1.94>
- Lawrence, D. (2006). *Enhancing self-esteem in the classroom* (3rd ed). London: Sage.
- Lim, L., Saulsman, L., & Nathan, P. (2005). *Improving self-esteem*. Perth: Centre for Clinical Interventions.
- Mason, M.W. (2003). Physical education. Retrieved from http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/instruction/physical_education.htm
- McCarthy, P. L., & Knopf, K. G. (1998). *Adapted physical education for adults with disabilities*. Denver: Bowers.
- McVey, G. L., Davis, R., Tweed, S., & Shaw, B. F. (2004). Evaluation of a school-based program designed to improve body image satisfaction, global self-esteem, and eating attitudes and behaviors: A replication study. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 36, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eat.20006>
- Merrill, M. D. (2007). A task-centered instructional strategy. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 40(1), 5-22.
- National Disability Authority (NDA). (2005). *The experiences of students with physical disabilities in second level schools*. Dublin: NDA.
- Norman, G. R., & Schmidt, H. G. (1992). The psychological basis of problem-based learning: A review of the evidence. *Academic Medicine*, 67(9), 557-565. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00001888-199209000-00002>

- Nosek, M. A., & Hughes, R. B. (2003). Psychosocial issues of women with physical disabilities. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 46(4), 224-233. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003435520304600403>
- Nosek, M. A., Hughes, R. B., Swedlund, N., Taylor, H. B., & Swank, P. (2003). Self-esteem and women with disabilities. *Social Science and Medicine*, 56(8), 1737-1747. <https://doi.10.3389/fpsyt.2019.00698>
- Nuriye, S. (2006). Effect of problem-based learning on the critical thinking of students in the intellectual and ethical development unit. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2006.34.9.1127>
- Philippine Statistics Authority. (2019, January 06). *Disability spares no one: A new perspective*. Retrieved from <https://psa.gov.ph/>
- Phillips, V. (1991). *Personal development*. Carmel Valley, CA: Personal Development.
- Post, G. (2008). *Unlimited love - towards a new human Science*. Philadelphia: Metanexus Institute.
- Reinecke, C. R. (1993, December). *A biblical and psychological comparative study of self-concept*. Paper presented at the International Faith and Learning Seminar, Helderberg College, Somerset West, South Africa.
- Sheehy, A. (2008). *What is counseling?* Retrieved from <http://www.andrea-sheehy.com/whatiscounseling.htm>
- Singg, S., & Farquhar, K.C. (2001, January 29). Evaluation of a self-enhancement program for alternative school students. *Perspectives Journal*, 29(4), 331-336.
- Sprecher, S., & Fehr, B. (2005). Compassionate love for close others and humanity. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 22(5), 629-651.
- Sprecher, S., & Fehr, B. (2006). Enhancement of mood and self-esteem as a result of giving and receiving compassionate love. *Current Research in Social Psychology*, 11(16), 227-242.
- Sprecher, S., Fehr, B., & Zimmerman, C. (2007, March). Expectation for mood enhancement as a result of helping: The effects of gender and compassionate love. *Behavioral Science*, 56(7-8), 543-549. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9192-6>
- Teehankee, B. (2004). Culturally sensitive leadership in the Philippine setting. In D. Tjosvold & K. Leung (Eds.), *Leading in high growth Asia: Managing relationships for teamwork and change* (pp. 211-230). 5 Toh Tuck Link, Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co.
- Turner, T. (2000, September 23). Self-esteem. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/conditions/mental_health/emotion_esteem.shtml
- United States Department of Labor (2000). *Disability friendly strategies for the workplace*. Washington, DC: United States Department of Labor.
- Valstar, T. S. (2008). How to include challenging children. *Christian Educator's Journal*, 48(1), 22-23.
- Voskuil, D. (1983). The theology of self-esteem: An analysis. In C. W. Ellison (Ed.), *Your better self: Christianity, psychology & self-esteem* (pp.50-59). Manhattan, NY: Harper & Row.

- Wan Mamat, W. H., Raja Hussain, R. M., Salleh, N. M., & Saat, R. M. (2007). Problem-based learning in Asian universities: Students' perspectives. *Studies in Higher Education*, 32(6), 761–772. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070701685171>
- Wang, H. (2009). *Respect for human rights and equal opportunity practices*. Human Resource Division.
- Wang, Z., & Chang, W. (2021). Enhance self-esteem evaluation model for children's social anxiety and loneliness. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 10(16), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2021.101666>
- Yong Yong, C. (2005). *The new SPD education program*. Speech given at the SPD Education Program Awards Presentation Ceremony at the SPD Ability Center, Peng Nguan, Singapore.