

## **La intervención docente en los problemas de autoestima de los adolescentes de telesecundaria**

*The teaching intervention in the problems of self-esteem of adolescents of telesecundaria*

*Intervenção docente em problemas de autoestima de adolescentes telesecundárias*

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### **Resumen**

La adolescencia es el periodo más crítico para el desarrollo de la autoestima; es la etapa en la que la persona necesita hacerse de una firme identidad, es decir, saberse individuo distinto a los demás, conocer sus posibilidades, su talento y sentirse valioso como persona que avanza hacia un futuro. Por eso, un adolescente con autoestima aprende más eficazmente y está más capacitado para aprovechar las oportunidades. En tal sentido, la presente investigación se desarrolló con el propósito de conocer acerca de la intervención docente en los problemas de autoestima que presentan los adolescentes. Para ello, se diseñaron entrevistas y observaciones no participantes a profesores y alumnos. En los resultados se encontraron diferencias significativas en el nivel de autoestima de los participantes tanto antes como después de aplicar los instrumentos. Asimismo, se identificó una relación fuerte e inversa entre las variables y la influencia que tiene el docente en la formación de la autoestima de los adolescentes, así como en la construcción de las concepciones académicas y escolares, lo cual repercute en la calidad del aprendizaje. Esto significa que el verdadero problema de la educación no consiste solo en diseñar estrategias para adquirir conocimientos, sino también en equilibrar la teoría con la práctica para hacer de la labor docente una verdadera construcción social del conocimiento, donde todos los agentes educativos se comprometan con el adolescente y sus percepciones afectivas.

**Palabras clave:** adolescencia, autoestima, identidad, intervención docente.

## **Abstract**

Adolescence is the most critical period for the development of self-esteem; It is the stage in which the person needs to have a firm identity, that is, to know that they are different from others, to know their possibilities, their talent and to feel valuable as a person that advances towards a future. A teenager with self-esteem learns more effectively and is better able to take advantage of opportunities. The present investigation was developed with the interest of knowing about the teaching intervention in the problems of self-esteem presented by adolescents, in order to support and unify the most fundamental aspects within the same teaching practice, allowing a reflection on the problems, as well as the factors that intervene in it, trying to give an explanation of the importance of this concept in the teaching process, through an approach with adolescents and the representations they have about themselves. Non-participant interviews and observations were designed for teachers and students, as instruments that allowed for the gathering of opinions and perceptions of them regarding the teaching intervention. In the results obtained, significant differences were found in the level of self-esteem of the participants before and after the application of the instruments. We identified a strong and inverse relationship between the variables and the influence that the teacher has on the formation of adolescents' self-esteem and on the construction of academic and school concepts, which have an impact on the quality of learning. The real problem of education is that it is not enough to have the knowledge, what is required is to balance the theory with the practice, to make the teaching work a true social construction of knowledge, where all the educational agents are committed to the adolescent and his affective perceptions.

**Keywords:** adolescence, self-esteem, identity, teacher intervention.

## Resumo

A adolescência é o período mais crítico para o desenvolvimento da autoestima; É a fase em que a pessoa precisa ter uma identidade firme, isto é, saber que são diferentes dos outros, conhecer suas possibilidades, seu talento e se sentir valiosa como uma pessoa que avança em direção ao futuro. Portanto, um adolescente com auto-estima aprende com mais eficácia e é mais capaz de aproveitar as oportunidades. Nesse sentido, a presente investigação foi desenvolvida com o objetivo de conhecer a intervenção docente nos problemas de autoestima que os adolescentes apresentam. Para este fim, entrevistas e observações não-participantes foram elaboradas para professores e alunos. Nos resultados, foram encontradas diferenças significativas no nível de autoestima dos participantes antes e após a aplicação dos instrumentos. Além disso, um relacionamento forte e inversa entre as variáveis e a influência do professor na formação da auto-estima dos adolescentes identificados, bem como a construção de concepções acadêmicas e escolares, o que afeta a qualidade da aprendizagem. Isso significa que o problema real da educação não é apenas desenhar estratégias para adquirir conhecimento, mas também equilibrar a teoria com a prática, a fim de tornar o ensino uma verdadeira construção social do conhecimento, onde todos os agentes educativos se comprometem a adolescente e suas percepções afetivas.

**Palavras-chave:** adolescência, autoestima, identidade, intervenção docente.

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## Introduction

Self-esteem is a factor that influences behavior and is reflected in the areas surrounding the adolescent, particularly the family and the school. For this reason, educational actors have a preponderant role to affirm, perpetuate or form values and norms that intervene in the construction of the personality of the individual.

In other words, the school and the teachers have an essential role in the integral development of the adolescent, because as any figure of authority with which one must face or identify, the teacher exercises in this stage a certain influence on possible behaviors and attitudes. Therefore, all the teachers involved in the identification process of the young person must be aware of the changes that underlie the different spheres of the individual, that is, in the biological, psychological and social aspects.

In fact, in this period the adolescent goes through a stage of difficult growth on the emotional level (affective dimension), since he is in full development and transformation. In fact, unlike other stages, this is affected by family, school and social conflicts, which is why self-esteem is a determining factor in this search for identity.

Therefore, the teacher must provide spaces of trust, understanding and expression so that adolescents not only build their self-concept in parallel with their cognitive maturity, but also clarify their doubts gradually and according to their level of understanding. For this, their interests and needs must be taken into account, as well as their previous conceptions and meanings, which are different in each particular case due to the influence exerted by the family and the social nuclei.

## Background

When investigating specialized magazines on the subject of this work, five articles were found that deserve special attention. The first of them is titled Affective-emotional aspects in the implicit theories. Conditions, processes and results in teaching-learning, by Beláustegui (2005). In this his author emphasizes the importance of the dynamics of emotions and affectivity in the implicit theories that both teachers and apprentices handle. Therefore, it proposes interpersonal

knowledge techniques and their values, which serves to promote the preparation and reflection of teachers for this purpose.

In the second article, entitled Fear in teacher-student interaction, Fabres (2006), it is explained that this feeling is present in the teacher-student relationship when the teacher uses certain strategies, consciously, to attract attention and to demand the fulfillment of certain tasks. This, however, can generate multiple behavioral problems and negatively impact the quality of learning and school coexistence.

On the other hand, in the article entitled Piaget and LS Vygotsky in the analysis of the relationship between education and development, Barba, Cuenca and Gomez (2007) raise the need for every teacher to study not only the psychological knowledge that explains how the process occurs of personality development, but also the characteristics that the teaching-learning process must have in order to achieve this development. In this work -of ethnographic nature, and taking as reference the work of Piaget and Vigotsky- an explanation of the process of personality formation is offered, as well as of the relationships and significance of the biological and social.

Another significant article is The look of teachers: reflection on their teaching activity. Attitudes towards students and activities in the classroom, by Rodríguez (2012). In this qualitative research, knowledge is provided from the teaching experience to explain the factors related to the activities in the classroom and the attitude of the teacher towards the students.

Finally, in the article by Segura (2012), entitled Self-esteem and personal development in the educational field, the relationship between self-esteem and school performance is presented. In this regard, the author states the following:

Within the scope of formal education, the school is an institution that forms people, is the place where cultural values are transmitted and power relations are established and reaffirmed. In school, the conceptual classification of the meaning of being a boy and a girl is continued and reaffirmed. The school as a socializing agent fulfills a double function: the intellectual and scientific formation and the social formation of the individuals.

Having said the above, it can be pointed out that this article attempts to analyze the intervention made by teachers when students present problems related to low self-esteem. This seeks to offer a reflection so that the teacher attends to the school the urgent needs of the adolescent, so that it can enhance not only their cognitive development, but also their affective maturity.

In the school where this study was conducted, subjects were identified as submissive, passive, irresponsible, shy, self-conscious, dissatisfied with everyone and with themselves, which may be a consequence of low self-esteem. Faced with this scenario, the following question was posed: what is the intervention of the teachers in the self-esteem problems presented by the adolescents of the Telesecundaria Gral. Emiliano Zapata School? The hypothesis was the following one: the educational intervention constitutes a determining factor in the formation of the self-esteem of the adolescents.

## **Materials and method**

This research was based on a mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative). The quantitative approach was taken because data was collected not only to measure the phenomenon of study, but also to point out possible solutions; This approach also served to support or deny the hypothesis formulated. Likewise, qualitative research was used because information was collected without numerical measurement to discover or refine study questions in the interpretation process.

On the other hand, the design of the research was non-experimental, since the independent variables were not deliberately manipulated, that is, they occurred without the direct intervention of the researcher. As Kerlinger (1979) points out, "non-experimental or ex-post-facto research is any investigation in which it is impossible to manipulate variables or randomly assign subjects or conditions" (p 116).

The study was conducted with a sample of 68 students (19 of 1st grade, 22 of 2nd grade and 27 of 3rd grade) whose ages ranged between 12 and 15 years. Also, 3 teachers belonging to the

Telesecundaria Gral. Emiliano Zapata School, located in the ranchería Pablo L. Sidar, 1st section, belonging to the municipality of Centro, Tabasco, participated.

In the selection and elaboration of the instruments, the operationalization of two variables was taken into account: teaching intervention and self-esteem. To this end, interviews and observations were designed not in class to teachers and students to collect their opinions and perceptions of teacher intervention and self-esteem problems presented by adolescents.

As is known, in non-participant observation the researcher uses it to obtain information and data without interfering in the daily events of the life of the group studied. The purpose is to gather evidence about the aspects involved in the teaching-learning processes in the context in which it is exercised (Bernal, 2006). The purpose of the interview was to obtain, in a systematic and orderly manner, information related to the work population, variables and research objects.

## **Results and Discussion**

Before, a series of references and situations have been pointed out about the most influential aspects in the development of self-esteem and the role of the teacher. Now we proceed to show qualitative and quantitative information about the teacher-student relationship in the teaching-learning process. For this, it has been noticed that the behaviors, interests and performances of both teachers and students vary due to the integration of subjective factors, which are reflected in the predisposition.

In the student, this is formed from past experiences and the same teacher in the interpretation of subjective factors in relation to the interior of the classroom. On the other hand, in the teacher, this is determined from the group, a particular student and even the schedule (evaluative judgments).

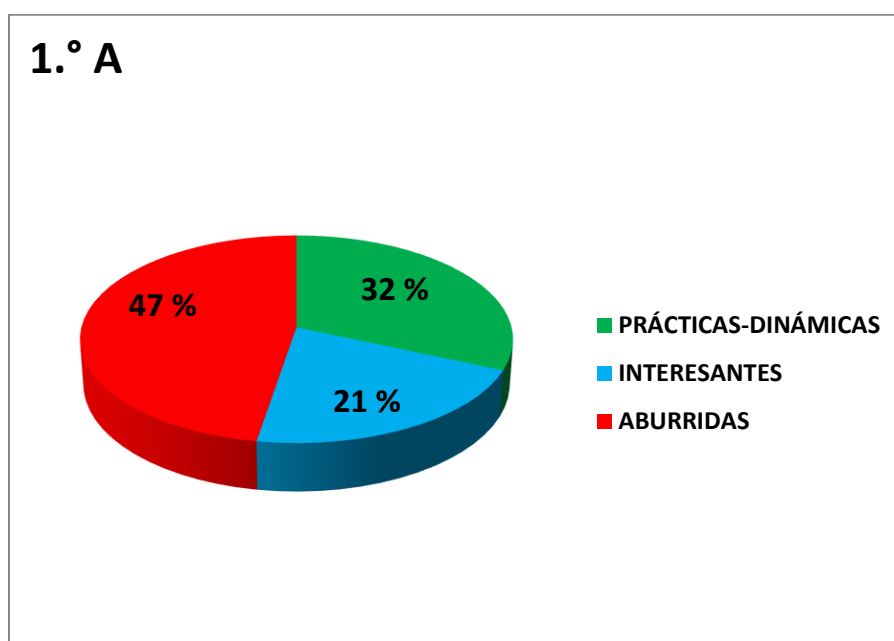
However, the success or failure that occurs within the classroom bothers or enhances the teacher, who projects that feeling through behaviors that can positively or negatively affect the adolescent. This can generate two scenarios:

- The student is predisposed, which affects their learning and their self-esteem.
- The teacher is predisposed, which hinders his practice and performance.

This means that for the good cognitive-affective development of both scenarios, the teacher must reflect on the teaching-learning process, and know that work in the classroom as a meaningful activity requires a positive and affective attitude. That is, it must have a greater degree of integration and willingness to understand the conflicts of the adolescent stage.

Below, the figures and interpretations are presented around the questions asked:

**Figura 1.** ¿Cómo imparte las clases tu maestro? (Sección 1. A)



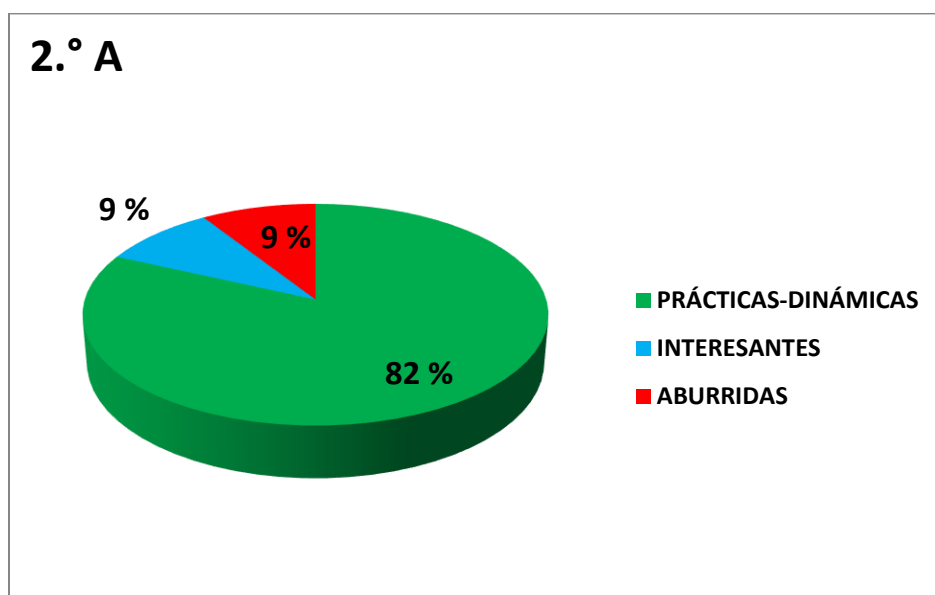
Fuente: Elaboración propia

In figure 1 (corresponding to the 19 students of 1st A) it is observed that 10 students (53%) indicated that the classes are practical-dynamic and interesting, while for 47% of the group they are boring, which represents a serious problem for the teacher, because this can affect the significant learning of the students. In this regard, the words of Silva and Mejía (2015) are appropriate:



The adolescent student body needs an active stimulation of its teachers. If we distinguish the roles that are regularly played in the secondary classroom, it would be very simple to emphasize that most of the students try to socialize, belong to a group, seek sympathy and focus their physical energy; At the other extreme, the teacher seeks to meet their learning objectives at all costs (p. 254).

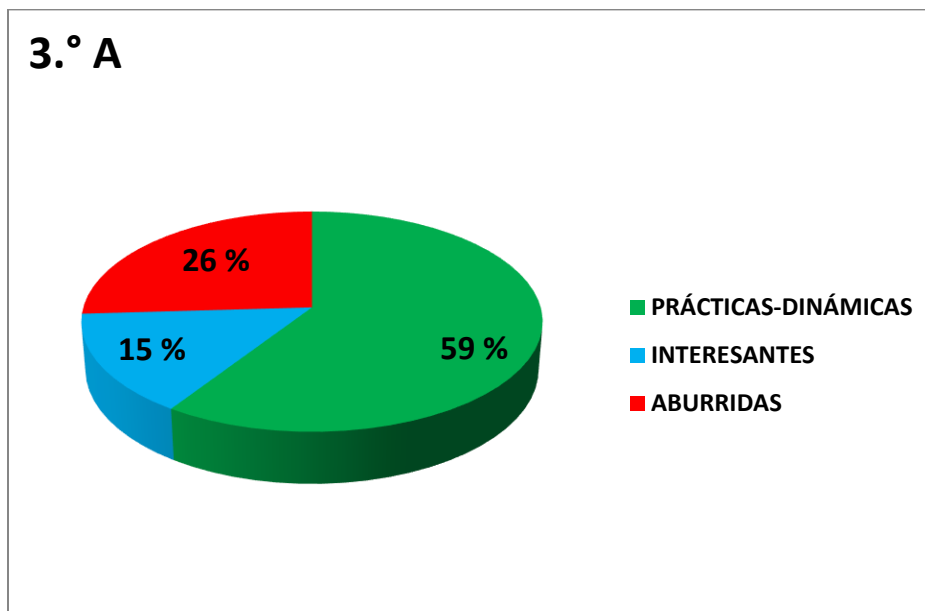
**Figura 2.** ¿Cómo imparte las clases tu maestro? (Sección 2.º A)



Fuente: Elaboración propia

In figure 2 (corresponding to the 22 students of 2 ° A) it is appreciated that 18 students (91%) consider that the classes are practical-dynamic and interesting, while 9% think that they are boring. In other words, the lack of interest and attention of this group is lower than the previous one, so it can be deduced that there is a professional job of the teacher to develop significant learning. The reasons for the students are the following: by the teacher's way of being and teaching, and by the subject.

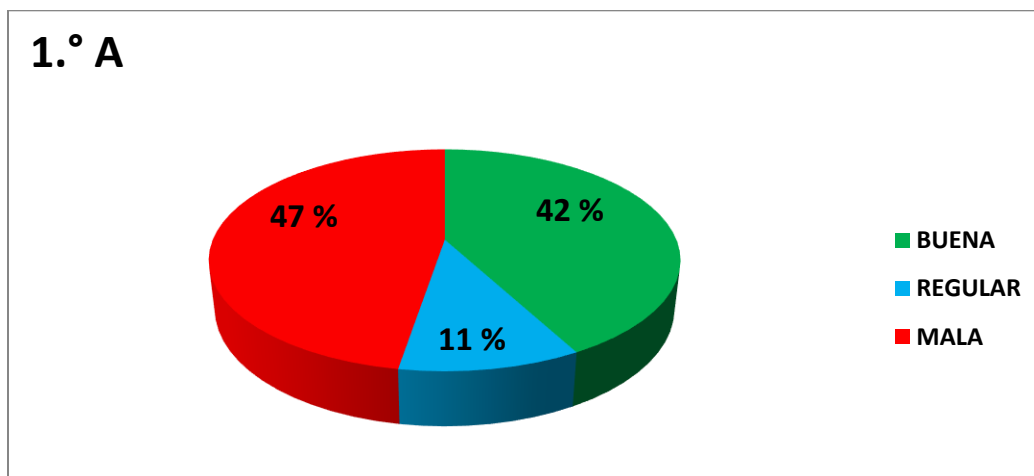
**Figura 3.** ¿Cómo imparte las clases tu maestro? (Sección 3.º A)



Fuente: Elaboración propia

In figure 3 (corresponding to the 27 students of 3 ° A) it is observed that 16 students (59%) believe that the classes are practical-dynamic, while 15% consider that they are interesting. The results also show that 26% of the group does not agree with the teacher, so it can be deduced that they have problems regarding the use and attention in the subjects.

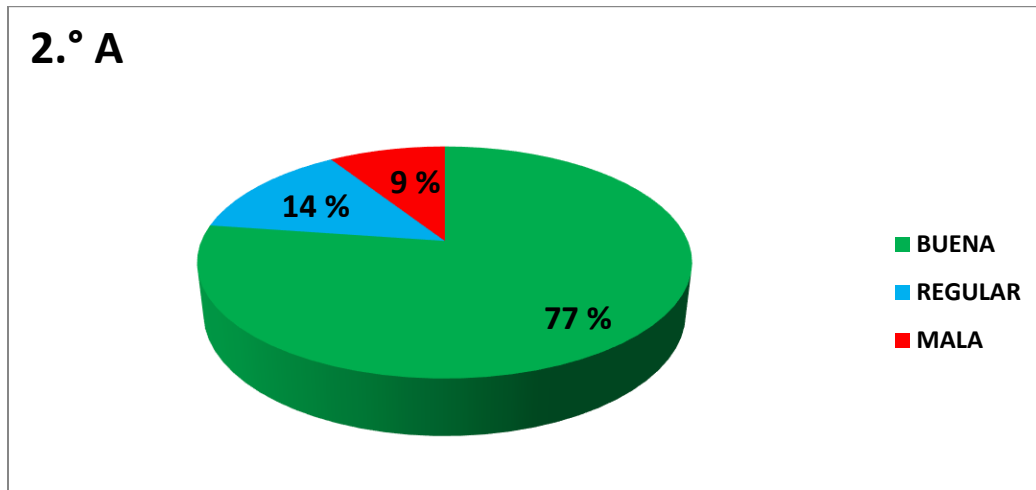
**Figura 4.** ¿Cómo es la relación que llevas con tu maestro? (Sección 1.º A)



Fuente: Elaboración propia

In figure 4 it can be seen that 42% of the students in 1st A think that their relationship with the teacher is good, 11% regular and 47% poor. This indicates that a high percentage of students consider the teacher to be very authoritative, which makes the teacher-student relationship difficult.

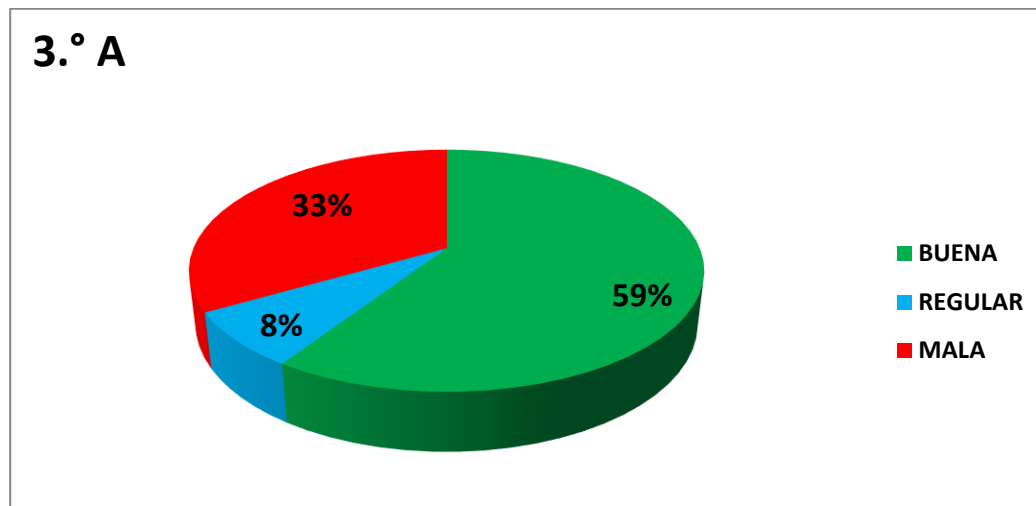
**Figura 5.** ¿Cómo es la relación que llevas con tu maestro? (Sección 2.º A)



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Figure 5 shows 77% of the 2nd grade students. A considers that their relationship with the teacher is good, 14% regular and 9% poor. In other words, 91% of students believe that the teacher is conciliatory and democratic with the decisions they make in class, which fosters an adequate environment to encourage interaction with students.

**Figura 6.** ¿Cómo es la relación que llevas con tu maestro? (Sección 3.º A)



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Figure 6 shows that 29% of students in grade 3 consider that their relationship with the teacher is good, 8% regular and 33% poor. It is important to note that 41% of the students surveyed indicated that the teacher scolds them a lot and punishes them constantly when they incur a fault. Therefore, it must be thought that the requirement of discipline in the learning activities marks the student-teacher relationship and interaction. In other words, trust and respect are two elements that can help establish a responsible academic relationship.

However, according to the data taught, it can be said that the teacher's conception of his role as a teacher and the teaching-learning process is one of the factors that promote disciplinary and performance problems.

Specifically, in the interviews it was detected that in the 2nd grade there is greater control of the discipline. This is due to the attention and learning disposition of the student, and the teacher's understanding to attend and know how to treat adolescents. The teacher in this section maintains a balance between her competence and her educational attitude. In this regard, the behaviors observed in adolescents before the teacher are the following:

- Channel their aggressiveness with curiosity and activity.
- They are capable of having their own action initiative.
- They manage to manage themselves intelligently and efficiently.
- They work cooperatively and effectively in the various activities.
- They are active, creative and responsible.
- They see the competition as a game, hence they are participatory.
- They are respectful with teachers and classmates.
- Achieve security in themselves (valuing learning).
- Respect and share work; In this way, group work is facilitated and favorable relationships are established between the teacher and the student.
- Active participation in students is spontaneous, which encourages meaningful learning by initiative and interest.

The other two teachers (1st A and 3rd A) combine the variables inconsistently, and forget their main objective: to stimulate learning. The behaviors of adolescents before these teachers vary considerably, depending on their personal interests and needs. In this sense, some students feel more motivated and interested in the teacher's way of teaching than by their way of being. However, in some cases the relationship between them becomes complicated, which generates disinterest and affects the teaching-learning process.

Some students feel more motivated and interested in the teacher's way of being (identification), which increases their level of readiness, but they also consider that the way of teaching hinders learning. This causes disinterest in the subject.

These teachers have a favorable performance on the group in terms of working in the classroom. However, the learning outcome is deficient. Students with strong needs to be directed and organized react favorably to the techniques of authoritarian direction, so they resist the change of teaching.

On the other hand, the results of the interviews show as main information the concerns of the students regarding what they think and expect from the teachers. They coincide in pointing out

that the teacher is the one who must determine how to work in the classroom, which can have an impact on the type of relationship that will be established between them during the school year.

Teachers know that they are responsible for the learning of their students; They even have some ideas about what should be done to improve their performance. Even so, they do not. Only one of the three teachers innovates to boost the teaching-learning process. The others refuse to change.

Most of these teachers do not have the information of the stimulus programs included in the educational reform and do not attend the refresher courses. In other words, there is no reflection on teaching practice: what is done, what is said and what is thought is right; therefore, there is no need to change.

They also argue that the main malaise and obstacle is the family. But the truth is that teachers unconsciously use this justification to detach themselves from the responsibility of going beyond the simple transmission of knowledge. They do not think that the constant technological, economic, social changes, etc., demand new skills.

From an objective perspective, teachers resist change for fear of losing control of the group. This causes the outdated teachers, who cling to educational ideas conceived in other times. In other words, they disdain the new techniques, methods, strategies and dynamics that can be used to encourage adolescents to work and learn. With this attitude, most teachers contribute to foster tension, low self-esteem, poor performance and the rebelliousness of adolescents, the main triggers of school dropouts.

For this reason, it can be said that the representations that the professor of his students has (what he thinks and expects of them, the capacity attributed to them, etc.) not only allows to value the learning and behaviors, but also can modify the self-esteem of the student. The relevance of the teacher in the academic performance of the students lies in the influence that exerts on them through character and interpersonal relationships within the teaching practice.

Adolescents are very susceptible to change, which is why at this educational level the role played by the teacher is extremely important. Therefore, in order to positively mold the adolescent's self-esteem, the teacher's attitude towards the student must first be changed. The

occupational identity of social belonging of utility, of feelings, of worth and of love towards oneself and towards others must be transmitted.

Based on this, the student will acquire his academic self-concept, which will be determined by feelings (trust-distrust, security-insecurity, etc.), judgments and values promoted by the teachers. Therefore, in each of the stages of evolutionary development, the individual must solve specific tasks and learnings, which will have their psychological repercussions, which will be the starting point for the next stage. In this sense, the improvement of each one will depend, to a large extent, on the degree of motivation (external and internal) that one has.

However, the results can be contrasted with other research, such as the one carried out at the University of Puerto Rico in 2009, whose objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching intervention in the psychoeducational workshops offered by the Improving your Self-Esteem (META) program for the Strengthening the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents and youth. When comparing the results of the pre-test and the post-test in this area, it was possible to see a significant increase in the level of self-esteem of the participants after the intervention, which is strengthened by the impact found.

These data support both the first and the second hypothesis of the study, where it was suggested that the psychoeducational workshops of the META program are effective in improving the self-esteem of Puerto Rican adolescents and young people, as well as that there are significant differences in pre-test scores and post-test of self-esteem, respectively. The results obtained in this research have implications for the practice of psychology and other areas of human behavior, particularly in relation to work with adolescents.

Also, the contributions of this work deserve special consideration because it takes into account the social and particular reality of adolescents. This factor, together with the evaluation of the efficacy of these intervention models, can lead to healthier lifestyles in youth. In addition, strengthening self-esteem and self-concept is a cornerstone in the prevention and treatment of dysfunctions related to mood and behavior in this population.

## Conclusions

Self-esteem is one of the main sources of motivation of people. In fact, in our school work, it has been possible to identify that low self-esteem or inadequately treated fosters a deficient academic performance, as well as multiple unproductive behaviors.

With the active participation of students and teachers, the objectives were achieved, thanks to the analysis of the intervention made by the teachers of the telesecundaria school. In this sense, it is recognized that self-concept and self-worth are essential complements to cultivate personality development, as well as self-realization in emotional life, for which adolescents need the active stimulation of their teachers and parents.

The results obtained, on the other hand, allow to verify the hypothesis proposed in this work, that is, the teaching intervention is a determining factor in the formation of adolescents' self-esteem, since it represents a process that articulates a series of didactic and affective elements inside the classroom. Self-esteem, in other words, is not only formed and developed in that process, but it is also the ingredient that can determine the trajectories of students' lives. Therefore, adolescents, in their complicated period of affective-emotional instability, must build a high and solid self-esteem that allows them to develop skills to solve the problems that arise during and after this stage. Teachers, therefore, must understand that self-esteem plays an essential role in the training processes of adolescents, because in this way they can develop their educational and training intervention more free and productive.

The adolescent - feeling valued by relatives, teachers and friends - will not only recognize their abilities and make favorable decisions for their lives, but will also allow them to reach and overcome their imaginary models created in childhood and their life projects (imaginary- social), which are part of their subjectivity. It should be known that the emotional level is the way to understand the adolescent, because in this terrain the disposition and motivation for meaningful learning is generated.

As for teachers, they can not continue acting as mere transmitters of knowledge. Instead, they must change their paradigm of seeing students as objects of control and planning didactic interaction activities to encourage cognitive, personal and social development. This requires a



readjustment of the quality of teaching and of teaching practice that overcomes the lack of answers and unsatisfactory facts that are presented in the current educational system.

You must start working on strategies that motivate the change of attitude and thinking of most teachers. The teacher, therefore, must adopt a critical and self-reflexive position to be part of the change. Otherwise, any proposal will become pedagogical idealism, because the real problem of education is that it has not been possible to balance theory with practice nor has it been possible for teaching to become a true social construction of knowledge, where all educational agents engage with children and youth, in search of meanings of life models and permanent improvement. The answer, ultimately, is found in each one of us.

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