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On Studying Teachers' Self Esteem based on Revised Janis Scale Application

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I. Introduction

Self-esteem has a long and rich history, and has been investigated for more than a century. The notion of "self-esteem" attracted a number of scholars from several disciplines, as being one of the most influential variables that is basically related to wellbeing's lives. Yet, the concept of self-esteem witnessed a wide conflict in terms of conceptualization and operationalization [1], and its main definition and usage have been critical. Still, most researchers admit its vital role in creating a strong personality and improving outcome.

a) *Definition of Effective Teaching*

Teachers are frequently regarded as the role models and motivators for students. The quality of their teaching has a great influence on students' learning. The profession is an ever-surprising mix of sheer hard work and ecstatic successes. In teaching, it is necessary to well grasp the meaning of ecstatic success; when teachers feel satisfied about their teaching performances and the knowledge provided, as well as the skills learnt and developed, they are more likely to communicate their satisfaction to their learners. Indeed, professional knowledge and intellectual practices are two essence factors in an honest and sincere teacher who enjoys noticing his/her students' development.

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[1] *Operationalization:* Operationalizing is defined as to put something into working order.

Teachers enter the field of education in the hope of changing something in the world. They have that desire to make constant efforts to breathe new life into this profession. They are, often, aware that any word uttered by them or any action taken can leave a lasting impression on their students' minds. They have the power to cross young and impressionable minds, and this can prove their effectiveness.

In fact, Teacher effectiveness has been widely questioned resulting in a plethora of definitions. Clark (1993, p. 10) wrote that: *"Obviously, the definition involves someone who can increase student knowledge, but it goes beyond this in defining an effective teacher."* Vogt (1984), *in his turn,* related effective teaching to the ability to provide instructions to students of different abilities, at the meantime, incorporate instructional objectives and assess the effective learning mode of the students. Collins (1990), while working with the Teacher Assessment Project established five criteria for effective teachers: their commitment to students and learning, mastery of the subject matter, their responsibility for managing students, they often reflect on their own practice, and they are a member of the learning community.

In addition, Swank et al (1989) viewed, "effective" as the decrease in the negative unproductive practices such as negative feedback and low-level questions, at the same time, the increase of academic questions. Million (1987) also believed that effectiveness is based on the lesson and teaching method. Papanastasiou (1999) stated: *"that no single teacher attribute or characteristic is adequate to define an effective teacher"* .

Researchers as Sanders (1999), Horn (1997) et al demonstrated that teachers' effectiveness can be gauged, and may be critical to student success. Both Sanders' (1999) and Wenglinsky's (2000) work asserted that teacher effectiveness is what contributes to student success. This means that teachers' effectiveness is related to the extent to which students have accomplished their objectives.

b) *Definition of Self-Esteem*

Self-esteem has a long and rich history, and has been investigated for more than a century. It is a potent means for self-construction that exists within each individual. It is more than a sense of self-worth. Numerous definitions exist and the most recent studies have made the concept the buzzword of the century.

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Thus, self-esteem refers topeople's confidence in their own abilities that would enable them to cope with any unpredictable situation and challenges. It means their inner right to feel happy, worthy deserving and living every moment with enjoyments.

The notion of "self-esteem" attracted a number of scholars from several disciplines, as being one of the most influential variables that is basically related to wellbeing's lives. It, indeed, affects people in every single part of their lives, their motivation, functional behaviour and satisfaction. Yet, the concept of self-esteem witnessed a wide conflict in terms of conceptualization and operationalization [2], and its main definition and usage have been critical.

Baumeister et al (2003) believed that there is no link between the two: self- esteem and academic achievement. This lack of consistency and consensus means thatmental health practitioners and educators may be making their own assumptions about self-esteem's nature, relying on common sense. Still, self-esteem is a construct and it is not seen but believed to exist via its artifacts.

Going back 30 years ago, Wells and Marwell (1978) had provided four approaches through which self-esteem could be clear up. These approaches are:object/attitudinal approach- the relational approach-psychological responses approach and the personality function/component approach[3].

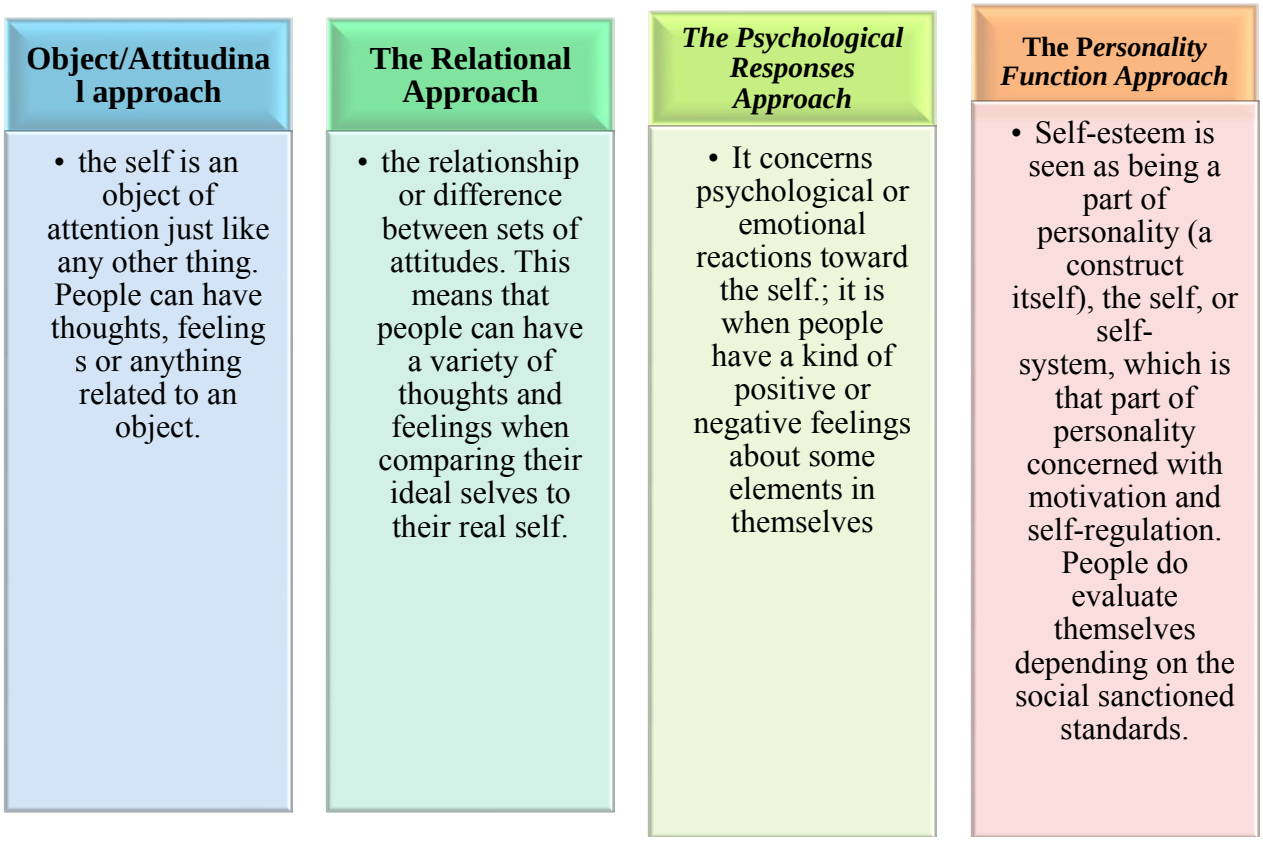

Figure 2.1 : Marwell's Approaches to Self-Esteem(1978)

So, one of the several self-esteem studies' upshots is the diversity in its definitions. Even though, Wells and Marwell[4] assumed that self-esteem can be categorized into two primary aspects: evaluation and its emotional experience or affect.

[2] *Operationalization:* Operationalizing is defined as to put something into working order.

[3] *Cited In:* MARY H. GUINDON (2010) "*Self-Esteem across the Lifespan: Issues and Interventions*". *Routledge, Francis and Taylor Group, New York, London.*

[4] *Cited In:* MARY H. GUINDON (2010) "*Self-Esteem across the Lifespan: Issues and Interventions*". *Routledge, Francis and Taylor Group, New York, London.*

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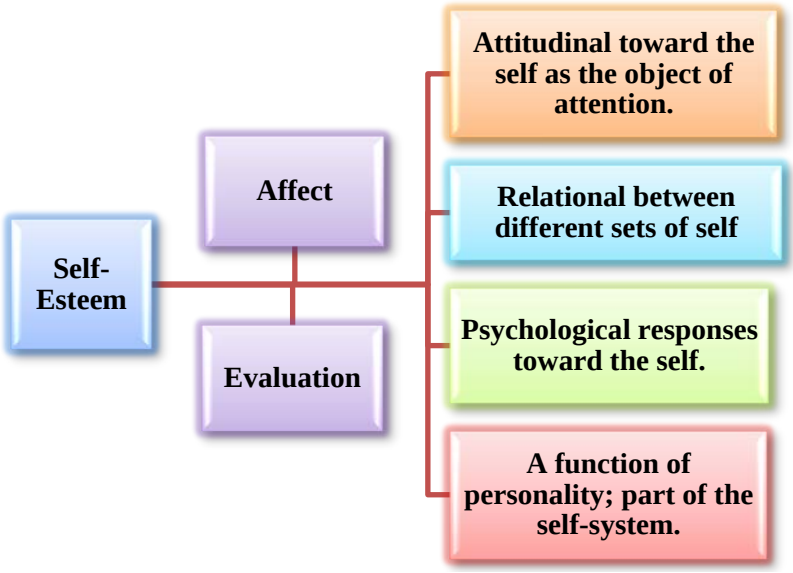

Figure 2.2 : Wells and Marwell's Different Interpretations of Self-Esteem

There are other accepted definitions that have been afforded, as for Smelser (1989); he seeks to identify it as *"almost universally accepted components of the concept."*[5] He began by presenting three of them.

> *"There is first, a cognitive element; self-esteem means characterizing some parts of the self in descriptive terms: power, confidence, and agency. It means asking what kind of person one is. Second, there is an affective element, a valence or degree of positiveness or negativeness attached to those facets identified; we call this high or low self-esteem. Third, and related to the second, there is an evaluative element, an attribution of some level of worthiness according to some ideally held standard."*
>
> *Smelser (1989, p. 10)*

Some definitions portrayed self- esteem as a stable personality trait whereas others describe it as the responsive to situational and contextual influences, the fact that makes it fluctuates. Today's interpretations to the concept is seen as: "trait versus state" (Leary & Downs, 1995) or "stable versus unstable" (Greenier, Kernis&Waschull, 1995), or "global versus situational" self-esteem (Harter, 1999).

II. Self-Esteem and Language Teaching

Researches on self-esteem have shown the extent to which it can control teachers' confidence and strengthen their personality. Valazza (2011) [6] believes that teacher personal development and self-confidence are closely related. The more teaching ability is developed, the better teacher's confidence will be. This confidence in personal teaching will lead to further readiness for moving forwards to the next level. Then, Underhill (1986) (as cited in Head, K. and P. Taylor *(1997)*[7]) defined teacher development as *"the process of becoming the best kind of teacher that I personally can be."* Then, Rossner[8] (1992, 4) advocated that:

> *"Teacher development is not just to do with language or even teaching: it's also about language development, counseling skills, assertiveness training, confidence-building (my italics), computing, meditation, cultural broadening – almost anything, in fact"*
>
> *Rossner (1992)* [9]

So, both definitions emphasize on the teacher personality, their personal development and sense of self-confidence.

III. Research Population and Methodology

Since the aim is to measure and examine teachers' self-esteem, the main method undertaken is the quantitative methods. It embraces one tool, which is

[5] *Taken from:* CHRISTOPHER, J, M. (2006) *"Self-Esteem Research, Theory, and Practice"*. Springer Publishing Company, New York.

[6] *Cited In: Gerardo Valazza (2011)* "Professional development: teacher development and confidence". Available at:http://www.one-stopenglish.com/support/methodology/professional-development/-professional-development-teacher-development-and-confidence/-146473.article.

[7] *HEAD, K. AND P. TAYLOR(1997). "Readings in Teacher Development"*. Oxford: Heinemann.

[8] *ROSSNER, R (1992):* "Where there's a will – facilitating teacher development" in Teacher Development Newsletter 18: 4 – 5.

[9] *Cited in:* the previously mentioned reference *Gerardo Valazza (2011).*

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revised and adapted Janis Field Test of Personality. This latter was distributed to 22 teachers of the English language at the DjilaliLiabes University, Sidi Bel Abbes.

a) Difficulties in Revised Janis Scale Application

Self-esteem is definitely not a new notion. Indeed, it has been widely researched by scholars like: Roseburg, Coppersmith, Janis and may other researchers. Those researchers have used variety of tools in their inquiries. Some of these tools are questionnaires (or self-esteem tests) and observation. Although these tools were of a great benefit for the current study, some problems arose in their application. That is to say, the main problem encountered in the utilization of the previous listed tools is the inappropriateness of some questionnaire's questions. Revised Janis and Field Scale, for instance, was designed for a particular kind of population that differs from the present research population in terms of culture and beliefs. Thus, during the JFS distribution process, some questions seemed ambiguous to teachers. The researcher was obliged to ignore a number of question, and select the ones that fit for teachers' culture.

b) Revised Janis and Field Scale

The aim behind the Revised Janis and Field Scale is to evaluate teachers' professional self-esteem. This evaluation would make it possible to figure out which of the following three categories does each teacher's professional self-esteem belong to: high, average or low. The test anonymity and privacy were highly respected so that to make teachers feel at ease while answering.

Henceforth, the test embraces 15 questions, each of which aims at discovering a specific point related to self-esteem. To put it clear, the test exhibits: teachers' self-acceptance – teachers' sense of inadequacy and worthiness – teachers' self-efficacy – teachers' self-evaluation – teachers' self-consciousness, and body image. Then, the Likert scale was used for the general scale calculation. Thus, the test can be divided into six parts.

c) Revised Janis and Field Scale Analysis and Interpretation

The general results of the Revised Janis and Field Scale reported that amid 22 teachers, 44% of teachers possess a high self-esteem *(3 ≤ 3 up to 3.7 ≤ 4 on the Likert Scale)*. Whilst 50% of them have a medium level of self-esteem *(2 ≤ 2.2 up to 2.9 ≤ 3 on the Likert Scale)*. The remaining 6% of teachers have a low self-esteem *(1 ≤ 1.4 ≤ 2 on the Likert Scale)*.

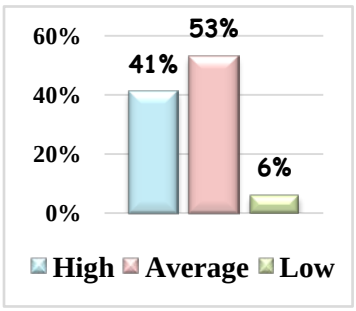

Figure 3.1 : Teachers' Professional Self-Esteem at the DjilaliLiabes University, The English Department, Sidi Bel Abbes

i. *Part One: Teachers' Self-Acceptance*

Questions (1/7/9/10/11) aim at discovering teachers' sense of self-acceptance.

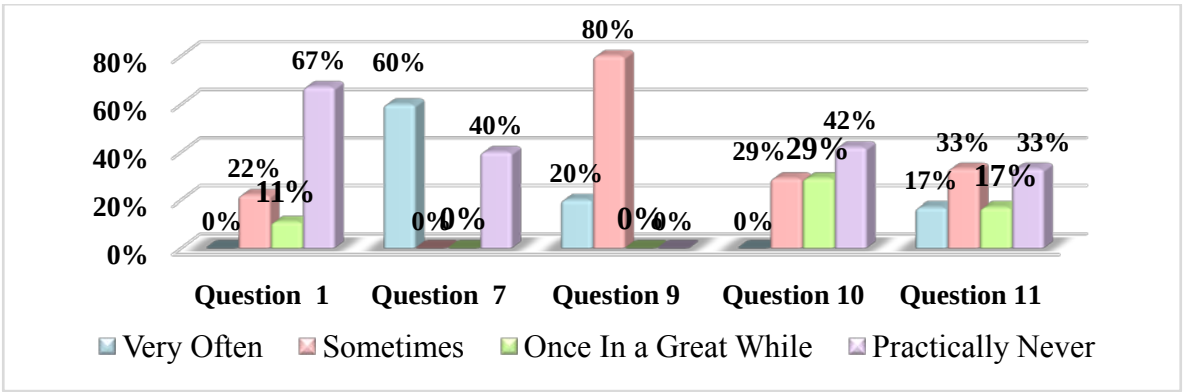

Figure 3.1 : Teachers' Self-Acceptance

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The figure above demonstrates the results of teachers' sense of self-acceptance via discussing questions (1/7/9/10/11). Question n° 1 and 7 are two sides of the same coin, i.e. they aim at showing teachers self-view. As can be noticed, 22% of teachers have sometimes the feeling of being inferior while 11% have the same feeling once in a great while, but no one 0% experience that feeling very often. The remaining 67% practically never feel substandard. This category demonstrates teachers' great self-confidence and acceptance. In the same line, 60% of teachers are very often sure that people will respect them one day contrary to 40% of them who practically never have the feeling that one day they will be respected. Their choice justifies their previous answer, i.e. they never feel substandard as they do not care of people respect; for them, it is enough to be self-respected. Whilst 0% of teachers do have this feeling very often or once in a great while.

More to the point, as seen in the question n° 9, 80% of teachers sometimes worry about their abilities to convince their colleagues, they feel concerned with others' disagreement. For this kind of teachers, convincing interlocutors is one way to feel able. At the meantime, only 20% have that feeling. These teachers, in fact, belong to the same categories of the previous questions (1/7). To put it clear, these tutors seem to depend and look for people appreciation and respect. If people respect them and agree with their ideas, they would feel more self-accepted and confident. It can be said that their self-acceptance is related to others' view and perception.

In addition, questions n° 10 and 11 are allied. This means, if teachers feel themselves worthless, they are more likely to worry whether others like and enjoy their acquaintance. Thus, 42% of teachers practically never feel discouraged or worthless, while 29% experience that feeling once in a great while, and others 29% sometimes. Yet, one of them feel worthless very often. Similarly, in question n° 11, 33% of teachers practically never worry about people's acquaintance, and other tutors 33% feel concerned sometimes whether other people like to be with them. The remaining teachers 17% worry very often whilst 17% only once in a great while about people's acquaintance.

Therefore, thing that can be assumed from the histogram above is that teachers who answered mostly with practically never have a high self-esteem. Those whose answers were mainly sometimes have a low self-esteem, while teachers who answered with either very often or once in a great while have an average self-esteem.

d) Teachers' Sense of Self- Worthiness and Inferiority

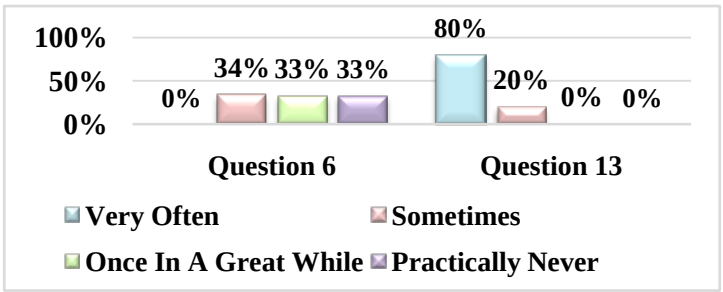

Figure 3.2 : Teachers' Sense of Self- Worthiness and Inferiority

Questions 6 and 13 are interrelated. That is to say, if teachers do not feel worthless about their capacities to solve problems in a specific situation, it is because they have confidence in their abilities and vice versa. Hence, the graph above shows that 34% of teachers feel sometimes useless in case they can do nothing about a situation, while 33% of them have that feeling once in a great while, and others 33% practically never have that feeling. Still, none of them 0% do not experience that feeling. Similarly, 80% of teachers are very confident about their abilities, whilst 20% of them are slightly confident about their capacities. Actually, these questions are compatible with question n° 1. In other words, teachers who are very confident (80%) about themselves do not experience a sense of inferiority (67%). Whereas those who doubt about their skills and capacities to solve problems (20% / 34%) have more often than not a feeling of being inferior (22%).

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i. *Teachers' Self-Efficacy*

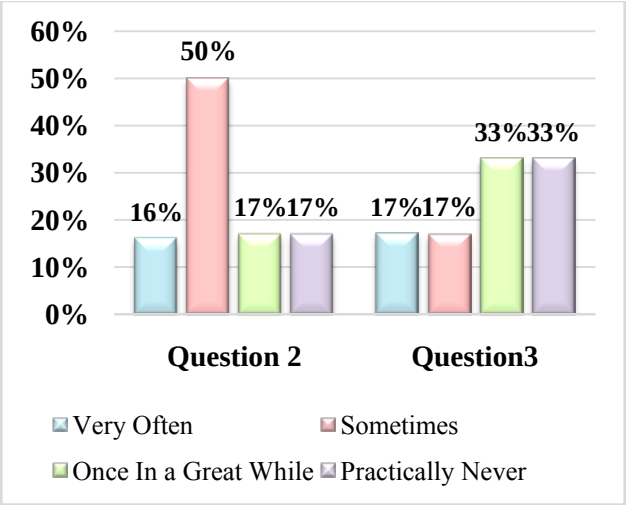

Figure 3.3 : Teachers' Self-Efficacy

Both questions 2 and 3 are well matched. This means that, if people doubt about their general capacities and skills, they are more likely to lose their conversational abilities. Indeed, the graph above demonstrates that 50% of teachers have sometimes trouble thinking of the right thing to talk about, while 16% face this situation very often. Whereas 17% of tutors have that feeling only once in a great while, whilst 17% practically never feel that way. Likewise, question n°3 categorized teachers into two groups: the first group have some difficulties to select the right thing to talk about either very often 17% or sometimes 17%, contrary to the second group of teachers who have that feeling once in a great while 33% or practically never 33%.

As a matter of fact, teachers who think that there is something they cannot do well are more likely to experience some difficulties to select the appropriate topic for the right situation. That is to say, if teachers doubt about their general skills, they tend to lose their conversational abilities. Their uncertainty would lead them to feel anxious in a conversational situation, afraid to express themselves, share their ideas and provide opinions. The fact that would lead them either to avoid communication, be isolated, or keep silent. Such teachers are believed to belong to the low-self-esteem teachers' category.

ii. *Teachers' Body Image*

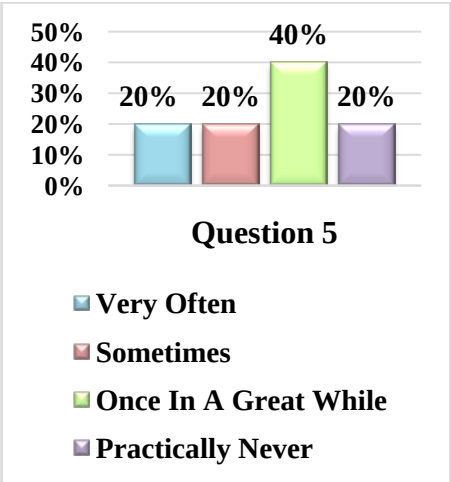

Figure 3.4 : Teachers' Body Image

Question n° 05 tackles teachers' body image. Hence, the results as can be depicted from the graph above reveals that 20% of teachers sometimes feel others see they are physically appealing, meanwhile 20% of tutors very often feel they are physically attractive. Seemingly, these two categories of teachers tend to consider people's view while evaluating oneself. That is to say, their physical attractiveness depends on people's opinion.

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Contrary to 40% of instructors who do not have that feeling on a regular basis, i.e. they think about others' views on their physical appearance only once in a great while, whereas 20% of them practically never have such feeling. The last two categories show teachers' confident about their physical appearance. It is worth mentioning that the two last group of teachers, apparently, do not take physical appearance or people's regard to their physical look into account. As they have that feeling only once in a great while or even practically never, they simply trust themselves.

iii. *Teachers' Self Evaluation*

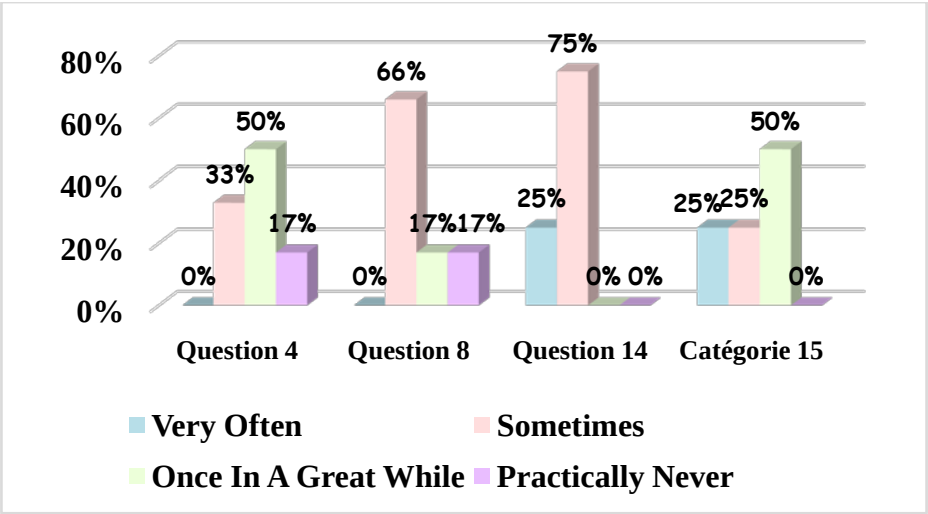

Figure 3.5 : Teachers' Self-Evaluation

Questions n° 4, 8 and 15 are widely linked to question n° 14. To put it clear, if teachers depend on others (students, colleagues) views, critics, or unfavourable opinion, this is going to determine their self-evaluation, i.e. they see themselves either a failure or success in their job. Therefore, the graph above displays that 50% of teachers worry only once in a great while about what others think they are, while 33% sometimes worry about it. The same two categories of teachers (50% and 33%) share the same feeling about colleagues' views and criticism in question n° 8. That is to say, 66% of tutors sometimes worry about colleagues' criticism, whilst 17% of teacher feel concerned once in a great while about it. In contrast, 17% of them practically never worry about people's regard, and none of them 0% experiences that feeling very often. By the same token, 17% of teachers practically never worry or fear colleagues' disapproval. Still 0% of instructors care very often about colleagues' critics.

In the same way, 50% of teachers feel concerned once in a great while about people unfavourable opinion. These teachers are the same who worry about peoples' view and criticism. Nevertheless, other tutors care about peoples' negative attitudes either sometimes 25% or very often 25%. Still, no one of them practically never cares about what others view or think.

Correspondingly, 75% of teachers worry sometimes about whether people regard them as a success or a failure in their job. As can be noticed in the graph, these teachers' depend heavily on others' opinions and critics as a means to evaluate themselves. That is to say, their personal evaluation is not an inner sense of self-confidence but the outcome of what others think and view. While 25% of them worry very often. Though such teachers do not take into account people's opinions and critics, they still worry about whether they are regarded as a success or a failure. This fact clearly exhibits their luck or unbalanced self-confidence. Still, no teacher cares once in a while 0% or practically never 0% of what others regard him: success or failure.

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iv. *Teachers' Self-Consciousness*

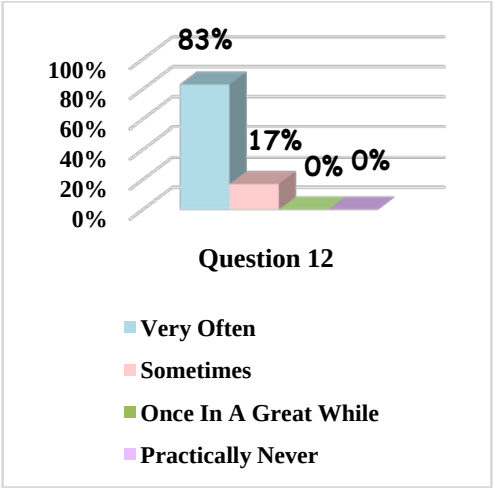

Figure 3.6 : Teachers' Self-Consciousness

Question n° 12 is aims at discovering the extent to which teachers are self-conscious. Thus, 83% of teachers claim that they are very often self-conscious, while 17% of them assumed only sometimes. But, no teacher does feel conscious only once in a great while 0% or practically never 0%. This fact ensures that self-consciousness is commonly present amid teachers.

IV. Suggestions and Recommendations

The following are some proposals that might help improving self-esteem. It can be one basic way to develop positive classroom teachers' behaviours and performances.

- *Believe One Self:* being self-confident about one's capacities, knowledge, social skills …etc.).
- *Self-Awareness:* according to lock 2013, Self-awareness is what makes a strong personality. It is central for self-development. *Body Language:* Developing body language can result in a both positive teachers' classroom behaviours and students' perception to teachers and attitudes to learning.
- *Learner Centeredness Approach:* Learners' centeredness approach highlights learners' goals and puts them at priority. It focuses on two main components: students' ability to decide about the way they prefer to go about their own learning process, and, teachers as facilitators and guiders.
- *Reflective Teaching:* The reflective practice is about questioning one's own teaching practices as to improve the quality of both teaching and learning processes.

V. Conclusion

This study is attempt towards amplifying the eminence of teachers' self-esteem. As confessed by teachers' participant and proved by scholars, self-esteem is an integral component in teaching. It can help to develop teachers' personality, better the teaching performances and improve the learning process. Thus, its improvement can be beneficial for teachers and learners alike.

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