To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Russell Larry Holt entitled "A Comparison of Self-Concept Scores of Students in an Above Average, Average, Below Average, and Slow Ability Group in the Fifth Grade at Sam Houston Elementary School." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Curriculum.

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Graduate Studies and Research

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A COMPARISON OF SELF-CONCEPT SCORES OF STUDENTS IN AN ABOVE AVERAGE, AVERAGE, BELOW AVERAGE, AND SLOW ABILITY GROUP IN THE FIFTH GRADE AT SAM HOUSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Russell Larry Holt

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DEDICATION

A Comparison of Self-Concept Scores of Students in an Above Average, Average, Below Average, and Slow Group in the Fifth Grade at Sam Houston Elementary School is dedicated to my wife Janice James Holt and son Russell (Rusty) Larry Holt, Jr., who give purpose and direction to my life.

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken for the purpose of studying the relationship between ability grouping and self-concept. A more accurate picture and understanding of students' self-concept could lead educators in the direction of providing a more effective curriculum program for these students. The fifth grade at Sam Houston Elementary School was chosen as the general study area because of its ability grouping procedure. The samples included nineteen students from the Slow Group, twenty-nine students from the Below Average Group, twenty-six students from the Average Group, and twenty-two students form the Above Arerage Group.

The primary methods and procedures used in data assembly for this research involved the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, Kruskal and Wallis H Test, and a Multiple Comparison of Data. Data from the Stanford Battery Form B Test, which was administered to students in the fourth grade, were heavily relied upon for the initial placement of students.

The major findings of the research indicated there was a significant difference between Group Two (below average group) and Group Four (Above average group). Group Four scored significantly higher on self-concept than Group Two. However, this was the only pair that differed significantly in their performance on the self-concept scale. It was also

noted that the Above Average Group had the highest self-concept followed by the Average Group then by the Slow Group, with the Below Average Group having the lowest rank average.

The researcher felt that further studies should be done in this area to look closely at the consequences of ability grouping. Students often function or behave in the manner they feel is consistent with their self-concept. Teachers in schools with ability grouping are advised to keep these factors in mind when planning for instruction. Schools should reconsider the use of alternate grouping procedures. The success of one group should not be based on the failure of another.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Ability grouping is far from being a new term in education. Ability grouping was organized to provide instruction for large numbers of students as a "means to economy and efficiency in the peculiar business of the school."[1] Ability grouping has been generally defined as a method of grouping students within classes on the basis of some measured mental ability. This method of instruction is a replacement for the Lancastrian system which was presented in New York in 1805. Lancaster formed a monitorial system that made it possible for a single teacher to have as many as a thousand pupils. Ryan and Crecelius[2] point out some advantages of ability grouping:

> There is, for example, the growth of group consciousness a thing which can be produced only through living with a group, . . . willingness to work for a common good, respect for the rights and personalities of others, and realization of the interdependence of human beings, . . . better organization, more systematic grading of instruction, the opportunity for more interesting, vital teaching.

However, there is great concern among personality theorist of the possible effects of ability grouping on the

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[1]Heber Hinds Ryan and Philipine Crecelius, Ability Grouping in the Junior High School (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927), p. 10.

[2]Ibid., pp. 20-23.

self-concept of students. The self-concept is considered to be an important factor that underlies the individual's behavior. A child that sees himself as weak, slow, or stupid will behave in ways that will tend to enhance these feelings, and refuse to accept positive feelints toward himself as being good, or smart. Jersild[3] postulates that "When a person resists learning that may be beneficial to him, he is, in effect, trying to protect or to shield an unhealthy condition. But, more broadly speaking, he is not actually protecting something unhealthy as such; he is trying to safe-safeguard his picture of himself, his self-concept. . . .[4]

A large part of the picture that makes up the student's self-concept is concerned with the school environment. This study was conducted in an effort to determine whether a difference exists in self-concept scores of students placed in different ability groups.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a difference in self-concept scores of students who are placed in different ability groups (above average, average, below

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[3]A. R. Jersild, In Search of the Self (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952), p. 114.

[4]Ibid., p. 114.

average, and slow groups). An attempt will be made to determine the differences that exist between the four groups by using the total of the scores from six areas of self-concept (behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity, and happiness and satisfaction).

II. ASSUMPTIONS

This study was conducted on the assumption that there is a relationship between ability grouping and self-concept. Students are aware of their positions in a particular ability group.

III. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is confined to the total population of fifth grade students at Sam Houston Elementary School in Maryville, Tennessee. These students had been placed in a below average, a slow group, average group, and an above average group. The class rank scores were used by the fifth grade teachers in the initial ability grouping of students. Further grouping procedures included teacher opinion. Only students enrolled since the beginning of the school year (1978) in the fifth grade were used in this study. Also, the reseacher was unaware of the effects of class organization prior to students entering the fifth grade.

IV. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In Sam Houston Elementary School, the slow, below average, average, and above average groups were selected on the basis of achievement test scores and teacher opinion. The fifth grade is the first grade level for students to be grouped according to ability. By studying the self-concept scores from each of the four groups, the researcher can provide a more accurate picture and understanding of fifth grade students' self-perception. This would make it possible to provide a more effective curriculum program for these students. The way a student views himself/herself may directly influence his/her success or failure in the school.

The importance of this study is to determine if there is a difference in self-concept scores of students who are in different ability groups. If a difference does exist, the researcher intends to determine between which groups the difference occurs.

V. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The following is a clarification of terms used in this study:

Above Average Group: This is defined by the school system in this study as the group with a class rank score on the Stanford Battery Form B Test of 76-100.

Average Group: This is defined by the school system in this study as the group with a class rank score on the Stanford Battery Form B Test of 51-57.

Below Average Group: This is defined by the school system in this study as the group with a class rank score on the Stanford Battery Form B Test of 26-50.

Slow Group: This is defined by the school system in this study as the group with a class rank score on the Stanford Battery Form B Test of 1-25.

Ability Grouping: The grouping of pupils within classes or schools on the basis of some measured mental ability.[5]

Self-Concept: The individual's perception of himself/herself as a person which includes his/her abilities, appearance, behavior, intellectual and school status, anxiety, popularity, and personal happiness and satisfaction.

Heterogeneous Group: The classification of pupils for the purpose of forming certain groups having a high degree of dissimilarity.[6]

Homogeneous Group: The classification of pupils for the purpose of forming instructional groups having a relatively high degree of similarity in regard to certain factors that effect learning.[7]

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[5]Carter V. Good, Dictionary of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973), p. 269.

[6]Ibid., p. 269.

[7]Ibid., p. 269.

Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale: A test on self-concept that consists of eighty-first-person declarative statements of the type "I am a happy person.", the child responds "yes" or "no." The items are declarative sentences, half of them are worded to indicate a positive self-concept and slightly more than half to indicate a negative self-concept. The scale was standardized on 1,183 children in grades 4-12 of one Pennsylvania school district.[8]

VI. HYPOTHESIS

The following null hypotheses gave direction to the analysis of data:

Hypothesis 1. There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between the above average, average, below average, or slow groups.

Hypothesis 2. There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group One (slow group) and Group Two (below average group).

Hypothesis 3. There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris

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[8]Oscar Krisen Buros, The Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook, Volume 1 (New Jersey: Gryphon Press, 1972), p. 306.

Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group One (slow group) and Group Three (average group).

Hypothesis 4. There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group One (slow group) and Group Four (above average group).

Hypothesis 5. There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group Two (below average group) and Group Three (average group).

Hypothesis 6. There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group Two (below average group) and Group Four (above average group).

Hypothesis 7. There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group Three (average group) and Group Four (above average group).

VII. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

For the purpose of this study, only documents from 1927 to 1877 relating to self-concept and ability grouping were used in the review of related literature. The total population from each of the four ability groups (above average, average, below average and slow) were used in the study. It should be noted that the researcher used the existing grouping procedure at Same Houston Elementary School. The following is a brief description of how students are assigned to ability groups:

Class rank scores from the Stanford Battery Form B Test were used to initially place students in each of the four ability groups. Students having a class rank score of 76-100 were placed in the above average group. Students having a class rank score of 51-75 were placed in the average group. Students having a class rank score of 26-50 were placed in the below average group. Students having a class rank score of 1-25 were placed in the slow group. During the first three weeks of school, fifth grade teachers met to make decisions on ability placements. Teacher opinion was used to change many of the initial placements made on the basis of the rank scores from the achievement tests. Thus, by the end of the third week of school, all students were placed into one of the four ability groups. In summary, although the explanation for classifying students into the four ability

groups was important for understanding ability grouping placement, this process was not part of the researchers study.

In January of 1979, the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale[9] was administered by the school's guidance counselor to each of the four ability groups. The six areas of self-concept (behavior, intellectual and school status, feelings of physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity, and happiness and satisfaction) were used and the mean scores of the four ability groups were compared by using the overall test scores from the six areas of self-concept. A total self-concept score was obtained for each pupil by adding the number of items checked from each of the six areas.

In scoring individual student responses on the self-concept scale, students who circle positive remarks which correspond to the test norm, score high on the scale. However, students who circle negative remarks, which differ from the test norm, score low on the self-concept scale. A total self-concept score will be taken from the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale for each student, and a comparison will be made between the four ability groups.

By using the Kruskal and Wallis H Test to determine a one-way analysis of rank data, the researcher was able to

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[9]Ellen V. Piers and Dale B. Harris, The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Counselor Recordings and Tests, 1969), Nashville, Tennessee.

indicate if there was a difference in self-concept that existed between the four ability groups. However, this test does not determine between which group any difference actually does exist. A multiple comparison was necessary to determine which of the four groups differed appreciably from the others (if any) on self-concept.[10]

VIII. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This document is divided into five chapters:

Chapter I includes the introduction, statement of the problem, assumptions, limitations of the study, importance of the study, definitions of the terms used, hypotheses, methods and procedures, and the statement of the organization of the study.

Chapter II gives a review of related literature.

Chpater III contains detailed methods and procedures.

Chapter IV presents the individual and group test results along with an analysis and findings of the data obtained from the eighty students participating in the study.

Chapter V contains the summary, conclusions, and the implications.

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[10]Gottfried E. Noether, Introduction to Statistics, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971), pp. 145-146.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

I. SELF-CONCEPT OF HOMOGENEOUSLY AND RANDOM GROUPED STUDENTS

One of the most extensive studies on self-concept and ability grouping was conducted by Walter R. Borg.[11] Using two adjacent school districts in Utah, Borg studied the difference between an ability grouping system and a random grouping system and their effects upon the self-concepts of elementary, junior high school, and high school pupils. District A (ability grouped) used one achievement test score as a basis for grouping students into self-contained classrooms at the elementary level. At the secondary level students were ability grouped only in math and science classes. Three levels were used for grouping students (superior, average, and slow). District R employed random or heterogeneous grouping and differentiated the curriculum through the use of enrichment.

The Index of Adjustment and Values[12] was used to yield four scores of self-concept: (1) Concept of self (how he

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[11]Walter R. Borg, Ability Grouping in the Public Schools (Madison, Wisconsin: Dembar Educational Research Services, Inc., 1966), p. 64.

[12]Bills, R. E., Vance, E. L. and McLean, O. S. "An Index of Adjustment and Values," Journal of Consulting Psychology, XV (1951), pp. 257-61.

rates himself to a trait word), (2) Acceptance of Self (how he feels about being this sort of person), (3) Ideal of Self (how he would like to be), and (4) Discrepancy Score (subtract Concept of Self from Ideal of Self). Students from samples IV (grades 5, 6, 7) and VI (grades 7, 8, 9) were tested three times over a three year period. Students from samples VII (grades 8, 9), VIII (grades 9, 10) and IX (grades 9, 11) were tested twice over a three year period. Borg found data from the sixth through the ninth grade levels more useful since the data from the IAV on the fifth grade elementary level was shorter and less reliable. Also, actual differences between the ability grouping and random treatments was much smaller at the high school level.

The results of Borg's study revealed:

> The extent and consistency of the Concept of Self data seem to justify the conclusion that pupils in random grouped classrooms tended to obtain more favorable Concept of Self Scores than comparable pupils in ability grouped classrooms, at all ability levels.[13]

The grouping treatments had a greater effect on girls than boys; placement in an ability group adversely affects girls' self-concept. Borg states that this ". . . may reflect the greater preoccupation of girls with achievement and academic success."[14]

The results from the Acceptance of Self scores also favored the random grouped students. A conclusion was drawn

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[13]Ibid., p. 74.

[14]Ibid., p. 74.

that random grouping was consistently related to higher self acceptance for pupils at all ability levels and over most of the grade levels covered.

The results on Discrepancy Scores were less favorable for ability grouping than random grouping, being more pronounced on the mean scores of superior pupils, followed by average pupils, and smaller for slow pupils.

The study shows that grouping has little or no influence upon the Ideal Self Score. There was only a slight difference between average girls, favoring random grouping.

One of Borg's subtopics dealt with self-concept changes which accompany ability level changes. From the analysis of the comparison of sample IV students who changed ability levels between the fifth and sixth grade levels, and the sixth and seventh grade changes in ability classification, the results drawn from the Index of Adjustment and Values show:

1. Placement of a pupil in a lower ability classification appears to bring about lower scores in Concept of Self, Acceptance of Self, and Ideal Self.

2. The IAV scores of girls assigned to a lower ability group appear to be more drastically affected than are the scores of boys under the same circumstances. This may reflect the tendancy of girls to place a higher value on academic achievement and status.

3. Pupils destined to reassignment to a lower ability classification show lower scores in Concept of Self and Acceptance of Self prior

to reassignment. This lower initial score may indicate that misassignment of a pupil to a higher group than his ability would justifiably bring about a lowering of his Concept of Self and Acceptance of Self because of his ability to perform satisfactorily in his assigned group.

4. Renaming in the same ability classification in an ability grouping system appears to be less threatening to the pupils self-concept than reclassification to either a higher or lower section.[15]

Similar results were indicated in a study conducted by Milly Cowles, James D. Cowles, and Kathryn Barchard Daniel.[16] The study included 713 sixth grade pupils chosen from six elementary schools. The 713 subjects were divided (356 subjects were homogeneously grouped and 357 were heterogeneously grouped). A questionnaire was used for two general areas: (A) The child's views of his relationships with his peers and classroom group and (B) his appraisal of his school success and achievement. The results of the researcher's study indicated that homogeneously grouped children had more favorable adjustment to other children and school work than heterogeneously grouped children; "however, there appeared to be as much, if not more difference from class to

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[15]Ibid., p. 75.

[16]Milly Cowles, James D. Cowles and Kathryn Barchard Daniel, "Comparative Study of Certain Social and School Adjustments of Children in Two Grouping Plans," Paper Presented to American Psychological Assocation Meeting 82nd, New Orleans, Louisiana, (September 1, 1974). (Eric Document Reproduction Service No. ED. 136961), pp. 1-20.

class in each organizational plan than between the two large organizational plans."[17]

Ability grouping was shown not to be beneficial for all children since "low" or "middle" ability classes in homogeneously grouped schools scored lower than their peers. This study shows that boys had a significantly lower score than girls on adjustment to school work. The researcher suggests more in depth studies in this area and postulated the following:

> Since this study showed variability from class to class in each of the two plans, "artifical" grouping of pupils may not be achieving what either proponents or opponents are touting. Rather, careful examination of the data seemed to show that opinions of pupils are related to the group they are with, and that fact transcends the attempts of school personnel to meet individual differences through any type of massive grouping.[18]

In summary, both Borg's and Cowles' study shows that placement of a student in a low ability group tends to bring about lower scores in self-concept. Borg concluded that ability grouping had a greater effect on girls than on boys, with girls having more of a concern with achievement. However, Cowles' believes that opinions related to grouping patterns may vary according to placement in a particular group or class.

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[17]Ibid., p. 19. [18]Ibid., p. 20.

II. SELF-ESTEEM AND TRACK POSITION

The subjects of Kelly's[19] study were drawn from adolescent boys in Western Oregon. Male sophomores were classified into two categories, college bound and noncollege bound. Students who reported definite college plans and who were taking college-prep courses were classified as college-bound. Students who had no college plans and who were pursuing a vocational or commercial curriculum were classified as noncollege bound. Fifty percent of 564 males were classified as college bound, and 50 percent of 554 pupils were categorized as being noncollege bound. Students were asked to compare themselves with their classmates in terms of their spelling ability, language usage, grades, and general intelligence. The question was worded as: "Judging from the best of the kids of your own sex in your classes, how would you rate yourself in the following things (e.g., spelling ability and score)?"[20] The questionnaire also included questions related to family, work, and peer variables. Also, data was taken from school transcripts and juvenile court records.

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[19]Delos H. Kelly, "Tracking and Its Impact upon Self-Esteem: A Neglected Dimension." Education, 96 (February 1975), pp. 2-9.

[20]Ibid., p. 5.

Findings of Kelly's study suggest that track position is directly related to self-esteem; as track position decreases, self-esteem also decreases. "This is apparent from our observation that our noncollege bound males, when compared with college-bound, are more likely to exhibit a low evaluation of themselves and their abilities."[21] It was also found that sophomores with low self-esteem were more likely to have a history of failure, dropping out, and juvenile court contact, and less likely to be involved in extracurricular activities.

The results of Kelly's study support Schafer and Olexa's[22] argument, that tracking seems to produce a corroding effect upon students' level of self-esteem. The findings also demonstrate, ". . . that students' status locations within the school, and not their status origins, seem to be associated with some rather distinct attitudial and behaviorial outcomes."[23]

Schafer and Olexa provide a more direct relationship on the effects of tracking upon student level of self-esteem. They are especially concerned with the low track position which has an adverse effect upon a student's level of self-esteem. Schafer and Olexa give supportive information

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[21]Ibid., p. 6.

[22]W. E. Schafer, and C. Olexa, Tracking and Opportunity. (Scranton: Chandler Publishing Company, 1971). P. 62.

[23]Kelly, op. cit., p. 8.

obtained from interviews with a noncollege-prep girl and an ex-delinquent. Many of the girl's comments are with respect to the shame and humiliation she felt because of her track position. Shafer and Olexa not only feel that erosion of self-esteem greatly increases the chances of not becoming delinquent, but also increases the chances of failure, dropping out, and causing trouble both within and outside the school.[24] Thus, self-esteem derived from track positions may actually dictate behavioral outcomes.

Hargreaves[25] conducted a year-long study of streaming (tracking) and its effects on fourth-year males attending England's Lumley Secondary School for Boys. Hargreaves was concerned with the effect that streaming was having upon levels of student perceptions and attitudes. Students answered questions related to how teachers thought of them. The data revealed that 73 percent of the D stream (lowest) give negative replies, whereas only 10 percent of the A stream (highest) do so. Such replies as "a timewaster" and "troublemaker" were considered negative, while replies such as "good mannered" and "good worker" were considered positive responses. Hargreaves gives some indication of how stream positions differ in student perceptions of teacher evaluations.

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[24]Schafer, Olexa, op. cit., p. 62.

[25]H. D. Hargreaves, Social Relations in Secondary School (New York: Humanities Press, 1967), pp. 90-91.

However, Hargreaves' study does not provide a direct relationship between streaming and levels of student self-evaluations.

In summary, each study suggests that track position is directly related to self-esteem. When a student is placed in a low track position, self-esteem decreases and the chances of failure tend to increase. Also, students in low track positions give a higher percentage of negative replies as compared to students in higher track positions.

III. SELF-CONCEPT OF HOMOGENEOUSLY GROUPED STUDENTS

A. Luchins and Edith Luchins[26] conducted a study to determine the attitudes of children in homogeneously grouped situations. Their subjects included 190 children from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades from one school. Five questions dealing with their school situation were directed to the subjects in a personal interview. The results indicated that many pupils in "low" sections appeared to feel "inferior" and "ostracized." They also found a strong social pressure to be in a "top" section to avoid the stigma attached to a low section. The Luchins indicated that the "brighter" children appeared to be snobbish and smug in their "top" section status positions.

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[26]A. Luchins and E. Luchins, "Children's Attitudes Toward Homogeneous Grouping," Journal of Genetic Psychology, (1948), pp. 3-9.

In a similar study conducted by Alice Keliher[27] an attempt was made to determine of students were aware of their status in a homogeneously grouped setting. Keliher's results indicated that students were aware of their own grouping. A large number of the responses denoted views of "inferiority" or "superiority" to other students in different groups.

In summary, students seem to be aware of their own group positions. Feelings of inferiority tend to be related to low group placement, while superiority seems to be realted to higher group positions. Thus, there is a status connected to being in a top group position.

IV. THE EFFECTS OF GROUP POSITION ON SELF-CONCEPT

In the two year study conducted by Goldberg, Passow, and Justman[28] on self attitudes, data was collected from students at the beginning of the fifth grade through grade six. Over 3,000 students from forty-five elementary schools in New York City were selected for the study. Two instruments were used (How I Feel About Myself and I Guess My Score) to study the effects of grouping students by ability on their attitudes toward themselves. Five ability levels were used

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[27]A. V. Keliher, A Critical Study of Homogeneous Group Grouping, (New York: Teachers College Press, 1931), pp. 101-130.

[28]Miriam L. Goldberg, A. Harry Passow, Joseph Justman, The Effects of Ability Grouping (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1966), pp. 25-30.

(A, B, C, D, E), which were formed by intellectual quotient ranges from 99 and below, to 130 and higher. The following categories were designated: A (Gifted), B (Very Bright), C (Bright), D (High Average), and E (Low and Below Average). The eighty-six classes were organized into fifteen patterns of various combinations. Each of these patterns was classified as a narrow range (all patterns with no more than two IQ levels; an IQ spread of about 20 points) medium range (all patterns with three IQ levels; an IQ spread of at least 30 points), and broad range (all patterns of four or more ability levels: and IQ spread of at least 40 points).

Each pupil had four separate scores:

> . . . (a) a present status score, designed as "I am" score; (b) and ideal status score, designed as the "I wish" score, (c) a negative discrepancy score, indicating how far the "wish" exceeded the "am" score, (d) a positive discrepancy score indicating to what extent the individual saw himself as ready beyond his desired status.[29]

The researchers' results showed ability grouping to have significant and consistent effects on self-attitudes of students. The slow student in the competitive climate of the broad range produced somewhat lower self-concepts "I am" and lower "I wish" concepts than the climate of the narrow range. The gifted in the narrow range had a lowered self image, but, while in the broad range the self image tended

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[29]Ibid., pp. 73-74.

to raise even higher than the initially high self-ratings. Therefore, "what the children experience within the classroom makes more difference in how they view themselves than does the organization pattern of the class."[30]

Shuck[31] conducted a simulated study on a teaching situation with preservice elementary school teachers to help them experience the effects of ability grouping upon beginning readers. Data was collected from 157 subjects who were seniors in a developmental reading course. At the beginning of the study, approximately 15 percent of the class members were randomly selected to represent the educationally advantaged students. These students were given fifteen minutes of instruction on the new alphabet to assure prior knowledge of the alphabet and the written word. During the study, no labels were attached to any of the groups, however, materials for them differed. At various intervals, students were asked to complete a questionnaire which included:

> . . . (1) in which third of the class they expected to rank in the new experiment, (2) in which third of the class they had been and (3) to describe on the five point scale the difficulty of the reading process.[32]

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[30]Ibid., p. 105.

[31]Carolyn Citzen Shuck, "The Effects of Ability Grouping Upon the Self-Confidence and Achievement of Students Who Are Learning to Read," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. New York, New York, (April 1977). (Eric Document Reproduction Service No. ED 138943), pp. 1-9.

[32]Ibid., p. 4.

Results of Shuck's study revealed the following:

> Students' perception of group membership (high ability group, middle ability group, low ability group) affected their post test performance in every analysis. Those students who thought they had been placed in the high ability group scored better on the reading achievement test, thought their first grade ranking was higher and adjusted their expectations more positively for new instruction than comparable students who thought of themselves as placed in other groups.[33]

This study also revealed that students who thought that they were in the low group had poorer reading test scores, remembered their first grade ranking as lower, and expected to do less well in future reading work. Shuck also found that even with extra instruction, the group with low perceptions of ability scored lower than the other two groups.

In an important study conducted on 1,050 seventh-grade students in four Old Town junior high schools, Brookover, Paterson and Thomas,[34] show a relationship between self-concepts and placement in ability groups. The investigators found the mean self-concept of ability scores for all girls to be significantly higher for all girls than that of the boys. The results of the "t" test indicated that high-achieving students have significantly high self-concept

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[33]Ibid., p. 9.

[34]Wilbur B. Brookover, Ann Paterson, Shailer Thomas, "The Relationship of Self-Images to Achievement in Junior High School Subjects," (Michigan State University: Office of Research and Publications, East Lansing, Michigan, 1962), pp. 1-55.

of ability scores than low achieving students with comparable measured intelligence ranges. The mean IQ score of the high achievers—boys 115, girls 115—and the mean IQ scores of the low achievers—boys 91, girls 94—were lower than those of overachievers—boys 96, girls 99. Thus, their hypothesis was confirmed; the self-concepts of high achievers among junior high school students with similar levels of intelligence vary significantly from the self-concepts of low achievers. The mean self-concepts of overachievers and low achieving students who had IQs a standard error of measurement of more below the mean for the total group were tested for significance of difference. Difference between underachievers and high achievers was tested the same way.

By asking questions related to how students thought their images were perceived by other students, it was found that the student's concept of his ability is significantly and positively correlated with the image that he perceives significant others hold for him. Furthermore, these evaluations that students perceive are correlated with academic performance (GPA) in school.

A similar study was done on seventh graders in 1965 by Evelyn H. Cook[35] at Alcoa Junior High School in Alcoa,

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[35]Evelyn H. Cook, "A Study of Adjustment and Self Concept of the Students in an Above Average and Average Group in the Seventh Grade at Alcoa Junior High School," (Unpublished Master of Science thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1965).

Tennessee. Using the self-concept scale from the SRA Youth Inventory, Cook administered the scale to twenty students in an above average ability group and to twenty students in an average ability group. The hypothesis was formed that there would be no significant difference between means of the two groups studied as to attitude toward the self. The Metropolitan Achievement Test was used for placement of the two groups.

The first four areas of the SRA Youth Inventory ("My School," "Looking Ahead," "About Myself," and "Getting Along with Others") were used, and the mean scores of the two groups compared in each area. A total adjustment score was obtained for each pupil by adding the number of items checked from each of the four areas. Those students checking the larger number of items were considered as having poorer adjustment, and those checking fewer items as making better adjustment. A t-test for significance of difference between means of these items was run. The mean of the superior group was 7.0; the mean of the average group was 8.3. The t was 1.69, implying there was failure to reject the hypotheses.

Cook reached the conclusion that:

> . . . placement in an above average or an average group did not make a discernable difference in the way the students viewed themselves; however, there was indication given by the larger number of problems checked that those students ranking lower in

> the two groups had a more negative self-concept than the students who ranked higher.[36]

An experiment done by Videbeck[37] shows the effects that grouping impinges on students' self-concepts. Videbeck proposes that self conceptions are learned and that the evaluative reactions of others play a significant part in the learning process. Rosen Levinger and Lippitt's[38] study also supports this position. A positive relationship was found between a person's desire for change and the group-relevant determinants of desires for him/her. Therefore, a person's self-concept is not only influenced by a student's feeling of himself, but also the desires or expectations other students have for him. Changes in levels of grouping thus, can effect self-concept.

In studying the possible effects that ability grouping has on learners, Hadermann[39] postulates that not only is ability grouping unfavorable, but actually deleterious. In effect, ability grouping is not possible, has negative effects on learning of pupils assigned to "low ability" groups, tends

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[36] Ibid., p. 45.

[37] Richard Videbeck, "Self-Conception and the Reaction of others," Sociometry, XXIII (December, 1960), pp. 351-359.

[38] S. Rosen, G. Levinger, and R. Lippitt, "Desired Change in Self and Others as a Function of Resource Ownership," Human Relations, XIII; (1960), pp. 187-192.

[39] Kenneth F. Haldermann, "Ability Grouping—Its Effect on Learners," NASSP Bulletin, 60 (February, 1976), pp. 85-89.

to group pupils by socioeconomic class rather than by innate ability, and locks pupils into a pattern of nonachievement.

Alexander[40] stated that the key to a student's success or failure lies in his self-perceptions and how others (e.g., teachers) interpret his performances. When a student perceives himself as a failure, he develops an anxiety which impedes and reflects his performance.

While in theory, students can move with fluidity between ability groups, Tuckman[41] points out that in practice, movement is more noticeable by its absence. Moreover, a student's ability group assignment is like a "flag" of his ability defined by the school. It is not reasonable to expect that a student's expectations for himself will be affected by the system's expectations for him as embodied in his ability group assignment.

In order to examine the possible affect obtained by reassigning students to higher ability groups than those assigned by the system, Tuckman, Bierman, and Milton[42]

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[40]E. D. Alexander, "Marks and Their Effects on Poor Achievers," Teachers College Journal, 36 (1964), pp. 110-113.

[41]B. W. Tuckman, "A Study of Curriculums for Occupational Preparation and Education (Score Program)—Final Report," (New Burnswick, N. J.: Rutgers University, U. S. Office of Education Project N. 8-0334, 1970).

[42]Tuckman, Bruce W., Bierman, Milton, "Beyond Pygmalion: Galatea in the Schools," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, New York, New York, (February, 1971), (Eric Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 047044), pp. 1-18.

conducted a study to compare these students to students who were not reassigned. Subjects included two junior high schools and one high school in a city of about 45,000 people in transition from an affluent suburb to a mixture of ghetto and suburb. Students were assigned in each subject matter to high (1), medium (2), and low (3) ability groups in each subject matter based primarily on the recommendation of their immediately previous teacher in that subject. In this study a group of black students in medium and low groups were randomly divided in half, and half were subsequently reassigned signed to the higher group. Thus, a group of black students who had been recommended by their teachers for the medium ability group suddenly found themselves assigned to high ability groups, while a group recommended for low groups appeared in medium groups.

The researchers postulate if the Galatea phenomenon was valid, that is, if students' performances are influenced by self-expectations, and these self-expectations are influenced by institutional identity trappings such as ability group assignment, then reassigning students to higher ability groups should alter their performance. This reassignment should also alter expectations of teachers for these students.

Findings showed that students during this one academic semester displaced into a higher ability group manifested better performance on standardized tests than students not

upwardly displaced. In many instances, students displaced into higher groups were subsequently recommended by their teachers for these higher groups. Among high school students, 54 percent of those moved up were subsequently recommended for the higher groups as compared to only 1 percent of the control group.

This study shows that grouping affects expectations. "By contributions to the self-fulfilling prophecy students come to perform in a way that "validates" the grouping assignments, damning many to a life of second-class citizenship."[43] After the completion of the study, students were given a chance to move up on their own, thus, not "denying them the opportunity to enhance their self-expectations and consequently their performance."[44]

In a study of the research on streaming (homogeneous grouping), Findley[45] points out that the high achievement easily earned by those from favored backgrounds is overpraised while the lesser achievement accomplished by disadvantaged children receives at best "Benign neglect," at worst invidious comparison. There is a most noticeable effect in the poor self-concepts of average and lower ability students, but this spreads to effort and achievement; in

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[43]Ibid., p. 18. [44]Ibid., p. 18.

[45]Warren G. Findley, and Miriam M. Bryan, The Pros and Cons of Ability Grouping (Bloomington, Indiana: The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1975), p. 13.

some "knowledge-centered" classes, this leads to friendless isolates among low achievers and is an invitation to thse children to drop out early. The effect of ability grouping on the lower tracks or groups of being stigmatized as by their open segregation is devastating. "Any favorable self-image accrued to top groups, while low ability groups got the clear message that "We're to dumb," "We don't know very much," and/or "We are lazy."[46]

Findley also points out that low self-concept operates against motivation for scholastic achievement in all individuals, but especially among those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and minority groups. In studies where lowered self-concept has been found in low-ability groups in a tracking system, the parallel finding of lowered achievement relative to heterogeneously grouped low-ability children is regularly present. "Whatever the explanation of the direction of cause/effect, or that it is circular, its regular occurance in severest form with certain minority groups in our society is clear."[47]

In summary, ability group positions tend to have a significant effect on self-concepts of students. Groups with lower perceptions of themselves score lower on test performance. High achieving students have a significantly higher

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[46]Ibid., p. 15.

[47]Ibid., p. 15.

self-concept of ability scores than low achieving students. A student's self-concept is not only influenced by the way he feels about himself, but also by the expectations other students have for him.

V. SUMMARY

Studies suggest that low ability placement is related to lower scores in self-concept. Students seem to be aware of their group positions and develop attitudes which correspond to their group positions. In most cases, high achieving students have significantly higher self-conceptions than low achieving students. As group position decreases, self-concept scores tend to decrease.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Students from the fifth grade at Sam Houston Elementary School in Maryville Tennessee participated in the study. The total population from each of the four ability groups (above average, average, below average, and slow) were used in the study. Class rank scores from the Stanford Battery Form B, which was administered to students at the end of the fourth grade, were used to initially place students in each of the four ability groups at the beginning of the fifth grade. Students having a class rank score of 76 to 100 were placed in the above average group. Students having a class rank score of 51 to 75 were placed in the average group. Students having a class rank score of 26 to 50 were placed in the below average group. Students having a class rank score of 1 to 25 were placed in the slow group. During the first three weeks of school, fifth grade teachers met to make decisions on ability placements. Teacher opinion was used to change many of the initial placements made on the basis of the rank scores from achievement tests. Thus, by the end of the third week of school all students were placed into one of the four ability groups. Although the explanation for classifying students into the four ability groups was important for understanding ability grouping placement, this process was not part of the researcher's study.

In January 1979, the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was administered by the school's guidance counselor to each of the four ability groups. The six areas of self-concept (behavior, intellectual and school status, feelings of physical appearnace and attributes, anxiety, popularity, and happiness and satisfaction) were used and the mean scores of the four ability groups were compared by using the overall test scores from the six areas of self-concept. A total self-concept score was obtained for each pupil by adding the number of items checked from each of the six areas.

The self-concept scale consisted of eight first person statements. Half of the statements indicate a positive self-concept and slightly more than half indicate a negative self-concept. The scale was standardized on 1183 children in grades 4-12 of one Pennsylvania school district. The test has no consistent sex or grade differences in the means. The internal consistency of the scale ranges from .78 to .93 and the retest reliability from .71 to .77. The scale possesses teacher and peer validity coefficients on the order of .40. Care was taken that the scale not correlate unduly with social desirability, and reasonable success was achieved. However, high correlations, -.54 to -.69, exist with a measure of anxiety. The authors of this test believe this correlation represents a true trait correlation rather than

one of response style. Thus, the authors recommend that the self-concept scale possesses sufficient reliability and validity to be used in research.[48]

In scoring individual student responses on the self-concept scale, students who circle positive remarks which correspond to the test norm, score high on the scale. However, students who circle negative remarks, which differ from the test norm, score low on the self-concept scale. A total self-concept score was taken from the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale for each student, and a comparison was made between the four ability groups.

A nonparametric H Test developed by Kruskal and Wallis was used to determine a one-way analysis of rank data. The H Test is used to test whether or not a group of independent samples is from the same or different populations. By rank ordering the scores from the four ability groups and using the H Test formula, the researcher was able to indicate if there was a difference that existed between the four ability groups. However, this test did not determine between which groups the difference actually did exist. Therefore, it was necessary to use the method of multiple comparison. The average ranks, along with a number of pairwise comparisons were used for this data treatment. A multiple comparison

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[48]Buros, op. cit., p. 306.

was necessary to determine which of the four groups differed appreciably from the others (if any) on self-concept.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF DATA

The Stanford Battery Form B Test given to students in the fourth grade was used for initial placement of the four ability groups in the fifth grade. The placement was based on class rank scores along with teacher opinion. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was the instrument used to gather data about the four groups, the above average, average, below average, and slow group.

In this study, the total population of fifth grade students (ninety-six) participated in the study. There were nineteen students in the slow group, twenty-nine in the below average group, twenty-six in the average group, and twenty-two in the above average group. In the following tables, numbers were used instead of names to identify the students.

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PIERS-HARRIS CHILDREN'S SELF-CONCEPT SCALE

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was the instrument used to measure the self-concept of the students. The scale yields a total score for six components of self-concept. These were behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity, and happiness and satisfaction.

The six parts of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale consist of a total of eighty first-person declarative statements which were designed to help teachers and guidance counselors identify personal problems which are common to many young students.

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was standardized on 1,183 children in grades four through twelve in a Pennsylvania School district. The scale's internal consistency ranges from .78 to .93 with retest reliability from .71 to .77. In the development of the test, the authors took care not to correlate unduly with social desirability, and reasonable success was achieved. "Thus, the scale possesses sufficient reliability and validity to be used in research, as recommended by the authors."[49] A copy of the scale is located in the appendix.

II. SELF-CONCEPT SCORES

Table I shows the scores of each student from each of the four ability groups. The percentile scores range from a low of 0, from a student in the below average group, to a high of 100 from a student in the slow group. The low scores are the ones of concern to the teacher and school counselor, since they indicate a low self-concept.

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[49]Buros, op. cit., p. 306.

TABLE I

PIERS-HARRIS SELF-CONCEPT SCORES

Student Number	Score (slow)	Student Number	Score (below average)	Student Number	Score (average)	Student Number	Score (above average)
1	79	1	46	1	4	1	74
2	89	2	11	2	99	2	96
3	100	3	21	3	69	3	96
4	95	4	41	4	27	4	99
5	49	5	14	5	99	5	89
6	46	6	29	6	6	6	69
7	15	7	0	7	2	7	27
8	97	8	31	8	36	8	95
9	38	9	63	9	74	9	21
10	24	10	87	10	71	10	99
11	85	11	99	11	77	11	74
12	61	12	63	12	97	12	94
13	55	13	89	13	93	13	77
14	66	14	66	14	24	14	97
15	57	15	91	15	66	15	82
16	20	16	91	16	60	16	97
17	74	17	1	17	89	17	44
18	96	18	38	18	9	18	94
19	95	19	75	19	89	19	75
—	—	20	41	20	87	20	71
—	—	21	77	21	74	21	96
—	—	22	38	22	97	22	71
—	—	23	79	23	96	—	—
—	—	24	24	24	60	—	—
—	—	25	57	25	60	—	—
—	—	26	93	26	96	—	—
—	—	27	52	—	—	—	—
—	—	28	98	—	—	—	—
—	—	29	60	—	—	—	—

III. RANK SCORES

A nonparametric H. test developed by Kruskal and Wallace was used in the study to determine a one-way analysis of rank data. The scores of the four groups in Table II have been rank ordered, where the smallest value has been given a rank of one. The total score for Group One (slow group) was 904, Group Two (below average group) was 1,111.5, Group Three (average group) was 1,239.5 and Group Four (above average group) was 1,346. The H test is used to test whether or not a group of independent samples is from the same or different populations. The sums of the ranks of the samples was then tested against the proportions of the total sum of ranks by using the H Test formula. The H Test yielded the value of 1.6. Since there were three degrees of freedom and a significance level of .05, the chi square critical value was set at 7.81. Since the observed value of H is smaller than this critical value, the first null hypothesis that no differences exist among the four groups in reference to self-concept on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale should not be rejected, since H is not significant.

IV. MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF GROUPS

In order to determine which of the four groups differed from the others (if any), it was necessary to use the method of multiple comparisons. The average ranks, along with a

TABLE II

RANK SCORES FOR STUDENTS

Student Number	Group 1 (slow)	Student Number	Group 2 (Below Average)	Student Number	Group 3 (Average)	Student Number	Group 4 (Above Average)
1	59.5	1	27.5	1	4	1	49.5
2	65.5	2	7	2	91.5	2	79.5
3	96	3	11.5	3	44.5	3	79.5
4	76.5	4	24.5	4	16.5	4	91.5
5	29	5	8	5	91.5	5	65.5
6	27.5	6	18	6	5	6	44.5
7	9	7	1	7	3	7	16.5
8	85.5	8	19	8	20	8	76.5
9	21.5	9	39.5	9	49.5	9	11.5
10	13.5	10	63.5	10	46.5	10	91.5
11	62	11	91.5	11	56.5	11	49.5
12	38	12	39.5	12	85.5	12	74.5
13	31	13	65.5	13	72.5	13	56.5
14	41.5	14	41.5	14	13.5	14	85.5
15	32.5	15	70.5	15	41.5	15	61
16	10	16	70.5	16	34.5	16	85.5
17	49.5	17	2	17	65.5	17	26
18	79.5	18	21.5	18	6	18	74.5
19	76.5	19	54.5	19	65.5	19	54.5
—	—	20	24.5	20	63.5	20	46.5
—	—	12	56.5	21	49.5	21	79.5
—	—	22	21.5	22	85.5	22	46.5
—	—	23	59.5	23	79.5	—	—
—	—	24	13.5	24	34.5	—	—
—	—	25	32.5	25	34.5	—	—
—	—	26	72.5	26	79.5	—	—
—	—	27	30	—	—	—	—
—	—	28	90	—	—	—	—
—	—	29	34.5	—	—	—	—
	904		1,111.5		1,239.5		1,346

number of pairwise comparisons were used for this data treatment. Since there was a number of possible comparisons, it was reasonable to tolerate a larger probability of making at least one false decision that two given treatments differ, when in fact they may not. Thus, a larger significance level of .25 was used for this data method.[50]

Table III shows that the rank averages were computed from the rank sums of Table II.

TABLE III

Groups	1 (slow)	2 (below average)	3 (average)	4 (above average
rank sum	904	1,11.5	1,239.5	1,346
sample size	19	29	26	22
rank average	47.6	38.3	47.7	61.2

Each of the four groups were then compared to find the differences ri-rj with the product zoij. There were six different oij's depending on the sample sizes involved. Thus we find in Table IV the following:

TABLE IV

Sample sizes		oij	zoij
19	29	8.22	16.88
19	26	8.41	16.27
19	22	8.72	17.91
29	26	7.52	15.45
29	22	7.88	16.18
29	22	8.07	16.58

[50]Noether, op. cit., pp. 145-146.

We can now say that two groups differ in their performance on the self-concept scale if the difference in rank averages surpasses the appropriate value for zoij. It follows that there is a significant difference between Group Two (below average group) and Group Four (above average group), since the rank difference 61.2 - 38.3 = 22.9 surpasses the appropriate factor 16.18. However, this is the only pair that differs significantly in their performance on the self-concept scale, since every other difference ri-rj is numerically smaller than the appropriate factor zoij. An analysis of findings indicated the following:

Hypothesis 1

There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between the above average, average, below average, or slow groups. This hypothesis was not rejected since the H value of 1.6 was smaller than the chi square critical value of 7.81.

Hypothesis 2

There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group One (Slow Group) and Group Two (below average group). This hypothesis was not rejected since the rank difference 47.6 - 38.3 = 9.3 did not surpass the appropriate factor of 16.88.

Hypothesis 3

There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group One (slow group) and Group Three (average group). This hypothesis was not rejected since the rank difference 47.7 - 47.6 = .1 did not surpass the appropriate factor of 16.27.

Hypothesis 4

There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group One (slow group) and Group Four (above average group). This hypothesis was not rejected since the rank difference of 61.2 - 47.6 = 13.6 did not surpass the appropriate factor of 17.91.

Hypothesis 5

There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group Two (below average group) and Group Three (above average group). This hypothesis was not rejected since the rank difference of 47.7 - 38.3 = 9.4 did not surpass the appropriate factor 15.45.

Hypothesis 6

There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group

Two (below average group) and Group Four (above average group). This hypothesis was rejected since the rank difference of 61.2 - 38.3 = 22.9 surpasses the appropriate factor of 16.18.

Hypothesis 7

There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group Three (average group) and Group Four (above average group). This hypothesis was not rejected since the rank difference of 61.2 - 47.7 = 13.5 did not surpass the appropriate factor of 16.58.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a brief summary of the purpose of the study, the instruments used, and procedures carried out in conducting the study. Observations and conclusions are also provided in later sections of the chapter.

I. SUMMARY

This study was undertaken for the purpose of investigating the relationship between ability grouping and self-concept. A desired outcome was to provide a more accurate picture and understanding of fifth grade student's self-concept so that educators could provide a more effective curriculum program for these students. The comparison was done on the total population of fifth grade students at Sam Houston Elementary School, Maryville, Tennessee. The samples included nineteen students from the Slow Group, twenty-nine students from the Below Average Group, twenty-six students from the Average Group, and twenty-two students from the Above Average Group.

The students were placed in these groups according to their rank scores on the Stanford Battery Form B Tests and teacher opinion. The instrument used to determine the self-concept of each student was the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale. The scale consisted of eighty first-person declarative statements.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The first hypothesis, stated in the null form, predicted that there would be no significant difference between any of the four ability groups on self-concept scores. The one-way analysis of data provided by the Kruskal and Wallis H Test indicated that there was no reason to reject the first hypothesis. However, it was necessary to use the method of Multiple Comparisons next, since the Kruskal-Wallis Test only provided a one-way analysis of data. A multiple comparison would determine which of the four groups differed appreciably from the others (if any) on self-concept. The multiple comparison of rank data revealed that there was only a significant difference between Group Two (below average group) and Group Four (above average group). Therefore, null hypothesis number six which stated that there would be no significant difference in the scores on the "Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale" between Group Two (below average group) and Group Four (above average group) was rejected. However, null hypothesis two, three, four, five, and seven were not rejected due to their low significance level.

The evidence presented in this study seems to indicate that the four groups, as a whole, did not differ significantly in the way they viewed themselves as indicated by the Kruskal-Wallis Test. However, after applying the method of Multiple

Comparisons, it was clear that Group Two (below average group) did differ significantly (at the .25 level) from Group Four (above average group), with Group Four scoring much higher than Group Two. Also, the rank average of the above average group indicated that they had the highest self-concept, follwed by the average group, then the slow group, with the below average group having the lowest self-concept. The shift between the slow group and below average group was not an expected result.

The findings obtained from the Multiple Comparison of data may have resulted from a change in the degree of significance, since the Kruskal and Wallis H Test used a .05 significance level, in comparison to a .25 significance level used in computing the Multiple Comparison data. Small group size may be another reason for the results indicated by the data.

III. IMPLICATIONS

Implications for Research

The researcher feels that further research should be done in this area to look closely at the consequences that ability grouping may have on various ability groups. It may be necessary to try various grouping procedures in order to arrive at one that promotes a high self-concept and success in the school setting. Many researchers, as noted

in the review of related literature, are in favor of heterogeneously grouped (random) classrooms over ability grouping. However, many other grouping procedures are available for education (stratified, multi-age grouping, etc.). The question stands, "Which grouping procedure provides the maximum level of positive self-concept to individual students?" The answer to this question may vary from one school setting to another. Therefore, in this rapidly changing society, it is importance that researchers continue their probe for grouping procedures that promote student success.

Implications for Current Practice

Students often function or behave in the manner they feel is consistent with their self-concept. For this and other reasons, schools should concern themselves with the implications of ability grouping. A student being placed in a superior class in an ability grouped system may become aware of his status and develop a high self-concept. However, the student being placed in a low ability group may have been able to develop, in a heterogeneous class, a higher self-perception of his ability. Also, students in lower ability groups are subjected to name calling. In many instances, the student may find it no longer possible to maintain his previous estimate of his own ability, and lose some of his positive self-concept. It is also possible that

students from above average groups could lose some of their positive self-concept through increased competition.[51] Teachers in schools with ability grouping are advised to keep these factors in mind when planning for instruction. Schools should reconsider the use of alternate instructional and grouping procedures. The success of one group should not be based on the failure of another.

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[51]Borg, op. cit., p. 64.

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APPENDIX

THE PIERS-HARRIS CHILDREN'S SELF CONCEPT SCALE

Here are a set of statements. Some of them are true of you and so you will circle the yes. Some are not true of you and so you will circle the no. Answer every question even if some are hard to decide, but do not circle both yes and no. Remember, circle the yes if the statement is generally like you, or circle the no if the statement is generally not like you. There are no right or wrong answers. Only you can tell us how you feel about yourself, so we hope you will mark the way you really feel inside.

1. My classmates make fun of me . . . . . yes no
2. I am a happy person . . . . . yes no
3. It is hard for me to make friends . . . . . yes no
4. I am often sad . . . . . yes no
5. I am smart . . . . . yes no
6. I am shy . . . . . yes no
7. I get nervous when the teacher call on me . . . yes no
8. My looks bother me . . . . . yes no
9. When I grow up, I will be an important person . yes no
10. I get worried when we have tests in school . . . yes no
11. I am unpopular . . . . . yes no
12. I am well behaved in school . . . . . yes no
13. It is usually my fault when something goes wrong . . . . . yes no
14. I cause trouble to my family . . . . . yes no
15. I am strong . . . . . yes no
16. I have good ideas . . . . . yes no
17. I am an important member of my family . . . . . yes no
18. I usually want my own way . . . . . yes no

19. I am good at making things with my hands . . . . yes no

20. I give up easily . . . . . yes no

21. I am good in my school work . . . . . yes no

22. I do many bad things . . . . . yes no

23. I can draw well . . . . . yes no

24. I am good in music . . . . . yes no

25. I behave badly at home . . . . . yes no

26. I am slow in finishing my school work . . . . . yes no

27. I am an important member of my class . . . . . yes no

28. I am nervous . . . . . yes no

29. I have pretty eyes . . . . . yes no

30. I can give a good report in front of the class . . . . . yes no

31. In school I am a dreamer . . . . . yes no

32. I pick on my brother(s) and sister(s) . . . . . yes no

33. My friends like my ideas . . . . . yes no

34. I often get into trouble . . . . . yes no

35. I am obedient at home . . . . . yes no

36. I am lucky . . . . . yes no

37. I worry a lot . . . . . yes no

38. My parents expect too much of me . . . . . yes no

39. I like being the way I am . . . . . yes no

40. I feel left out of things . . . . . yes no

41. I have nice hair . . . . . yes no

42. I often volunteer in school . . . . . yes no

43. I wish I were different . . . . . yes no

44. I sleep well at night . . . . . yes no

45. I hate school . . . . . yes no

46. I am among the last to be chosen for games . . . yes no

47. I am sick a lot . . . . . yes no

48. I am often mean to other people . . . . . yes no

49. My classmates in school think I have good ideas . . . . . yes no

50. I am unhappy . . . . . yes no

51. I have many friends . . . . . yes no

52. I am cheerful . . . . . yes no

53. I am dumb about most things . . . . . yes no

54. I am good looking . . . . . yes no

55. I have lots of pep . . . . . yes no

56. I get into a lot of fights . . . . . yes no

57. I am popular with boys . . . . . yes no

58. People pick on me . . . . . yes no

59. My family is disappointed in me . . . . . yes no

60. I have a pleasant face . . . . . yes no

61. When I try to make something, everything seems to go wrong . . . . . yes no

62. I am picked on at home . . . . . yes no

63. I am a leader in games and sports . . . . . yes no

64. I am clumsy . . . . . yes no

65. In games and sports, I watch instead of play . . yes no

66. I forget what I learn . . . . . yes no

67. I am easy to get along with . . . . . yes no

68. I loose my temper easily . . . . . yes no

69. I am popular with girls . . . . . yes no

70. I am a good reader . . . . . yes no

71. I would rather work alone than with a group . . yes no

72. I like my brother (sister) . . . . . yes no

73. I have a good figure . . . . . yes no

74. I am often afraid . . . . . yes no

75. I am always dropping or breaking things . . . . yes no

76. I can be trusted . . . . . yes no

77. I am different from other people . . . . . yes no

78. I think bad thoughts . . . . . yes no

79. I cry easily . . . . . yes no

80. I am a good person . . . . . yes no

SCORE: _____

VITA

Russell Larry Holt was born in Morristown, Tennessee on May 12, 1951. He attended elementary school in Maryville, Tennessee and graduated from Everett High School in June 1970. Between the years of 1970 and 1975 he worked for Southern Railway and Alcoa Aluminum Company. During the summer of 1975, he entered The University of Tennessee, and in August of 1977 he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education, and accepted a teaching position in the Maryville School System. In the Fall of 1977, he began study toward a Master's degree.

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