

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF
ABILITY GROUPING ON THE
SELF-CONCEPT OF SIXTH GRADERS

PAULINE M. NORMAN

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF ABILITY GROUPING
ON THE SELF-CONCEPT OF
SIXTH GRADERS

An Abstract

Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree
Education Specialist

by

Pauline M. Norman

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of ability grouping on the self-concept of sixth graders.

Special attention was given to the following questions:

1. How rigid should grouping in school be?
2. How should administrators group?
3. Should administrators give teachers students they can best teach?
4. What criteria should be used in grouping?
5. Is ability grouping good or bad?
6. Should grouping be reexamined or abandoned?
7. What does it mean to understand one's self?
8. What effects does ability grouping have on the academic and personal-social learning of the elementary school?

The writer recommends if ability grouping or any other scheme of sectioning is practiced properly, the fast, average, and slow sections would be placed according to the child's abilities in each subject area. It seems reasonable to assume such flexibility would help to eliminate or at least reduce any tendency to stigmatize pupils, since the same pupil would probably be in a different section, according to his varying achievement scores in different academic areas of activities.

The decision on grouping depends on the educational objectives and methods. The schools need to have community discussion on the grouping patterns and have increasing awareness of the facts of how grouping may impinge on the lives of the many communities of children to be educated.

If ability grouping can maintain a healthy self-concept among students and meet the other objectives of education, then this type of sectioning will be justified as a good school organizational pattern. If discouragement or suppression are apparent, the children would probably function better in a heterogeneous, noncompetitive group.

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Field Study written by Pauline M. Norman entitled "A Study of the Effects of Ability Grouping on the Self-Concept of Sixth Graders." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Education Specialist.

Allen C. Williams
Major Professor

We have read this field study and recommend its acceptance:

[Signature]
Second Committee Member

George Rawlins
Third Committee Member

Accepted for the Graduate Council:

William H. Eccles
Dean of Graduate School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

For many decades, administrators have been seeking a plan of organizing classes in school so that under a general system of instruction some adjustment could be made to the needs of individual pupils.¹

Finding the most effective method of establishing classroom sections has been of grave concern and controversy among students, parents, and educators. Much study and research has been conducted in the area of sectioning or grouping practices in an effort to find the teachable.²

Ability grouping was one such grouping pattern that began in the early 1920's. Ability grouping is organizing groups in a graded school to put together children of a given age or grade who have most nearly the same learning achievement or capability level, largely based on the results of standardized tests.³

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this investigation was to determine if there are sufficient effects on the self-concepts as a result of ability grouping.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Does ability grouping have any significant effect on the self-concept of students in the sixth grade?

HYPOTHESIS

Ability grouping of elementary school children as a device for the improvement of instruction may be detrimental to the development of a healthy self-concept of the children who are placed in the high and lower groups.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following are definitions used for terms employed in this paper:

Ability Grouping: the practice of organizing groups in a graded school to put together children of a given age or grade who have most nearly the same learning achievement or capability, largely on the basis of standardized tests.⁴

Achievement: the pupil's present status; what he knows or can do now.⁵

Grouping: classifying pupils for instructional purposes on the basis of predetermined criteria.⁶

Heterogeneous Grouping: refers to the organization of instructional classes in which pupils are grouped according to age, beginning with grade 1 for six-year-olds, regardless of natural ability or degree of mastery of school subjects.⁷

Homogeneous Grouping: refers to the organization of instructional classes on the basis of students' similarity in ability or achievement.⁸

Intelligence Quotient: (IQ) the ratio of mental age divided by chronological (actual) age, multiplied by 100.⁹

Peer Group: the people of about the same age and status in a society or neighborhood.¹⁰

Sectioning: a term used instead of "grouping."¹¹

Self-concept: the unified mental picture every individual has of himself (the ideals, perception, and beliefs that form the image of himself that the individual has created.)¹²

Self-esteem: an individual's attitude regarding his own worth as a person.¹³

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study dealt only with the influence or effects that ability grouping might have on the self-concept of the learner. No attempt was made to assess any of the many other influences which this practice might have, according to research, on such factors as academic achievement or any of the other factors that affect the self-concept such as home environment, student's motivations and interests, or maturation.

During the 1979-80 school year, population A Elementary school sixth graders who were not grouped were compared with population B Elementary sixth graders who were ability grouped. These two populations served as the testable groups. The students came from homes that could be judged as somewhat cross-sectional in socioeconomic levels. Approximately 27% of the students that were tested are considered disadvantaged on the basis of government scales for eligibility for free lunches. The ability grouping was implemented because the majority of the teachers involved felt they could do a better job of individualizing instruction.

This study covers a one year time period, and was confined to a comparison of self-concept attitude scales only in two schools and only in the sixth grade level.

The writer did not employ a control group. It is possible that use of a control group would have revealed that low and high ability pupils have similar low and high perceptions of their ability and achievements.

Another alternative would have been to include more grade levels, but the writer was interested in how the ability groups at one grade level compared with another grade level which was not grouped.

The most severe drawback of an attitude scale is the "faking" of answers by pupils who are motivated by a desire to make themselves appear different from what they really are.

Another drawback of the testing is that for the younger children, the subdimensions of self-concept might not be very much stabilized, except for those children with relatively high self-regard. Young children with middle and low self-concept along specific dimensions may at some late age become stabilized with the existing facets of self-concept. This may occur only after repeated failure experiences or after accumulation of sufficient reinforcement for maintenance of lower self-regard on these dimensions.

Because of so many factors outside of school life and the limitations stated operating to prevent this study from being a representative study of all grouping used, it would be a serious mistake to employ the results to institute or abandon ability grouping within a given school.

Conclusions reached in this study can only be generalized to similar populations and would probably have little relevance for schools with predominantly high or low socioeconomic status.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The National Education Association in 1962 reported that during the school year 1957-58, 77.6% of the 1,418 school districts with 2,500 and over in population were making use of ability grouping in the elementary grades.¹

Data obtained from a questionnaire on administrative practices within the elementary school distributed by the National Education Association Research Division to a sample of school systems in early 1966 showed 24.9% of the 12,130 schools reported to be assigning children to classes on a random basis, 43.2% to be specially grouping a few children, and 27.5% carefully grouping all children (4.4% gave no indication).²

The widespread use of ability grouping practices employed in the elementary school has led many researchers to study the effectiveness of this form of school organization.

There is a clear indication that ability grouping on a national level is: (1) presently one of the predominant methods for organizing or classifying children into classroom units, (2) becoming more and more prevalent, and (3) occurring more and more frequently as a child progresses each year through the elementary grades.³

In a Utah study spanning a four year period, Walter R. Borg thoroughly explored differences in ability-grouped and random-grouped classrooms. Two adjacent and closely comparable school districts provided the setting. One of these districts employed random grouping and the other had adopted a system of ability grouping, coincident with the start of the research. The study involved 4,000 pupils in grades four, six, seven, eight, and nine. By the end of the study, these pupils had been tested in grades four through twelve.

Pupils were administered the Index of Adjustment and Values developed by Robert E. Bills. In this index, the pupil answered questions about himself and rated himself with respect to each of the traits listed: "concept-of-self," told how he felt about being this sort of person, "acceptance-of-self," how he would like to be with respect to each trait, and "ideal-self."

Borg concluded pupils in random-grouped classrooms have more favorable concepts of self than comparable pupils in ability-grouped classrooms. 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."

Borg stated pupils probably lose self-concept because they are confronted with the stigma of identification with a lower ability group. The author concluded these apparent effects of ability grouping upon the self-concept variables are probably harmful to the development if at least some of the pupils are educated under such a system of grouping.⁴

John J. Teigland studied groups of fourth grade achievers and underachievers. Teigland found a significant difference between achievers and underachievers in terms of peer relationships. Further, it was found achievers scored higher, or toward better adjustment on all

scales of the California Test of Personality, which includes dimensions such as self-reliance, sense of personal worth, feelings of belonging, etc. Teigland also observed that peers of underachievers view them with scorn not only in school work situations, but in play and social situations as well. Lack of overall personality adjustment for the low ability group suggests the personal-social difficulties of the low achiever are present in the early elementary grades.⁵

In probably the biggest study including the social and personal attitude phase of the grouping question of 400 superintendents of schools, T. V. Goodrich reported that superintendents seemed to favor homogeneous grouping, except for dealing with the child's personal and social attitudes. The superintendents tended to believe children develop feelings of snobbishness, superiority or inferiority in ability-grouped classrooms. The majority of the superintendents felt better self and social attitudes were developed under heterogeneous grouping than under homogeneous grouping.⁶

Maxine Mann conducted a study to determine how children viewed themselves in homogeneous sectioning. The researcher studied 102 fifth grade pupils who had been classified, upon entrance into the first grade, on the basis of four ability levels--the highest group with 30 students, second highest group with 29 students, second lowest group with 25 students, and the lowest group having 18 students. A group questionnaire that was adapted from a study made by Keliher was used to obtain information as to how children see themselves in ability grouping. The top two groups showed no negative responses on the self-report scale, the third group showed few, but all the low-ability group had negative responses. The high- and low-ability groups showed more consciousness of their ability level than the two middle ability groups. Mann concluded

from the study that under ability grouping some students develop low expectations of themselves and negative attitudes toward learning and school.⁷

In 1961, Maurice Eash summarized 28 recent research findings on ability grouping. Eash gave conclusions of the effect ability grouping has on pupils achievement and on personal and social development. Although Eash found many of the research findings conflicting, he stated that certain generalizations are supported by these research findings and gave educators some guidance in the area of grouping.

Eash stated these generalizations:

- (1) More research evidence seemed to indicate ability grouping actually can be detrimental to children in the average and lower ability groups.
- (2) Ability grouping at an early age seemed to unduly favor the placement of children from the higher socioeconomic class in higher ability groups.
- (3) Ability grouping as an organizational structure may accentuate attainment of academic achievement, but may attenuate or jeopardize other desirable behavioral goals.
- (4) Grouping practices in a school can assist in developing social situations that influence the student's perception of self, his sense of dignity and worth, and his attitudes toward other children. In view of this, grouping patterns may have detrimental effects on individual children's social and personal development.

- (5) Grouping practices which separate students on the basis of ability as determined by IQ or standardized tests reduce the likelihood that students will be exposed to a broader range of ethnic and cultural differences in the society.⁸

Considering the amount and duration of interest in ability grouping, it might be thought that the issue would be settled by now, having been either adopted as a successful measure or discarded as ineffective. However, ability grouping has been considered a beneficial practice by some and a detrimental and undemocratic practice by others.⁹

One objection to ability grouping is condemned on the grounds that it is destructive to the individual self-concept. It has been suggested a stigma is attached to the pupils.¹⁰

Such stigmatization of ability grouping on the "slow" group may lead to permanent inferiority complexes, insecurity, and may create a defeatist attitude toward education. Simultaneously, the "bright" group singled out for recognition is likely to become egotistical, snobbish, and these pupils may have a false sense of superiority.¹¹ Such attitudes are probably not likely to be manifested in the classroom where the child is located solely with those adjudged his equals, but on the street or playground these objectionable traits come into prominence.¹²

A child's self-concept is highly complex and is learned as a result of daily life. A child's self-concept involves such matters as the individual's estimate of his achievement, his perception of his status relative to the other pupils in his class, his satisfaction with his role, and his attitudes toward study.¹³

The attitude toward self which students develop as a result of school experiences can be positive or negative, but is directly influenced by the feedback and pressures upon him from teachers, parents, and peers.¹⁴ A child who senses that his parents and peers, as well as teachers, accept him for himself has a much better foundation on which to build a good self-concept than a child who lacks this feeling of "fitting in."¹⁵

The individual child has to be considered in ability grouping situations. Any way of grouping that may restrict the range of attitudes, verbal fluency, cultural backgrounds, and other differences also may restrict the kind of help individuals could experience from each other. Students form their own friendships, and these are terribly important to school learning.¹⁶

In a doctoral study completed at the University of Chicago, it was found that youngsters with high IQ's tend to choose youngsters with low IQ's as their leisure-time companions and vice versa.¹⁷

However, pupils grouped on the basis of standardized tests tend to be segregated, not only on the basis of scholastic ability and achievement, but also on a racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic planes.¹⁸

A disproportionate number of minority and disadvantaged groups get segregated into slower classes, thereby depriving them of the stimulation they could be receiving from high-achievers in a heterogeneous classroom and making them feel inferior, and giving above average students an exaggerated sense of their own importance.¹⁹

Many educators have strong reservations about segregation by ability. They feel it is a sinister, unprofessional device for ignoring individual differences.²⁰ At the very time when most school systems were

trying to end segregation, at least on the basis of race, they were being pressured to provide ability grouping, especially for the gifted.²¹

Bruno Bettelheim termed this ability grouping, "segregation new life style," because he saw it as a further perpetuating discrimination against those from lower socioeconomic and racial minority groups.²²

According to Dewey, "the social spirit of the schoolroom does more for the child than the formal instruction given; that what the children learn from contact with one another and the teacher is more than what they learn from the textbook and lecture." Dewey pointed out the problem of homogeneous grouping if the formation is of an inaccurate self-picture, and this is a serious problem for society.²³

Children who consistently experience difficulty in competing academically with peers will come to believe they cannot read, write, or do arithmetic. This inadequate view of self becomes crippling to the individual. When the children see themselves as inadequate, they lose their sense of "can-ness," and what they can do diminishes. Therefore, if children with low self-esteem are to achieve, they must regain the sense of "I can do it" and begin to view themselves as achievers.²⁴

In reality, we must weigh the advantages and disadvantages to determine if, by labeling a child, we have harmed or assisted him. By determining whether a child's learning disability is solely a problem of reading, math, spelling, or whether it affects other areas of his functioning, causing him to be easily frustrated, inflexible or unable to make friends is a matter that the school must consider.²⁵

It is reasonable to assume that for many young people, school is second only to the home institution, which determines the growing individual's concept of himself and his attitudes of self-acceptance or self-rejection. Even where the school situation is about as perfect

as a human institution can be, there is leadway for unhealthy things to happen. Children are likely again and again to be reminded of their failings, shortcomings, and limitations. Ability grouping may have the effect of humiliating the child by depreciating his worth in a manner that does no good to society and may do the child much harm.²⁶

The role of the school in the development and change of self-concept is enormous.²⁷ Educators and counseling psychologists alike have recognized the value and need to consider children's self-concept as an educational variable for the growth of the whole child.²⁸ Development of a healthy self-concept in students must become a high priority if schools are to help students reach their academic potentials.²⁹ Developing programs and skills that affect the development of the total person makes schools work more directly with children and their feelings.³⁰

With this background, evidence that ability grouping may be failing to build a positive self-image and that many pupils become defensive with feelings of inadequacy and incompetence with their peers, the writer chose to research this grouping pattern.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The practice of homogeneous grouping at the present time is very widespread and there is a great diversity of bases on which pupils are assigned to groups. According to Noll, the most useful tool for organizing pupils into ability grouping is probably a general achievement battery.¹ Because this instrument measures mental ability, and provides a basis to form groups more nearly alike in their ability, it was chosen to carry out this study. However, a modification was made in the procedure, i.e., the students' IQ and teacher evaluations of pupils were considered when grouping the sixth graders.

A serious problem arises from the fact that lower status youngsters, because of limited exposure to perceptually and intellectually stimulating experiences, achieve high scores on scholastic aptitude or achievement tests far less frequently than do children who come from middle-class backgrounds. In addition, they usually get placed into a "low" ability group. After the placement of the children into three ability groups, they were given a self-report scale to see how they view themselves within their group.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT

The only feasible method to gather information needed for the analysis was that of a self-attitude report scale. The students were given the "How I See Myself" self-report scale, developed by Ira J. Gordon at the University of Florida. The scale was devised from the

categories developed by Arthur T. Jersild in his scale "What I Like About Myself." On the surface, the scale assessed attitude toward school, peers, physical body, and one's own emotions, abilities, and aspirations. The scale also evaluated relationships with the opposite sex, home and family, clothing and grooming, and special talents, such as sports, art, recreation, and music.²

SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Children were administered the self-concept scale in small groups. It was explained to students that they were asked to answer these questions as honestly as possible, according to how they see themselves most of the time, not how they think they ought to be, not how the teacher thinks they ought to be, not how they want to be; just how they feel about themselves most of the time. It was explained there are not right or wrong answers, and their papers would not be seen by anyone other than the people making the study. Unfamiliar words were explained and each item read aloud to insure comprehension of all terminology. The numerical rating scale was explained by using question No. 1 as an example (see Appendix). They were asked to put their name on the papers so it could be checked by other scales that might be given in the future.

TECHNIQUES FOR ANALYZING DATA

There is little sense in the teacher adding up a person's score, or getting a mean score and saying this score is the student's self-concept. From the writer's perspective, it is quite possible for a student to think of himself as handsome, a good dancer, popular, well-liked, and yet as rather ignorant in mathematics, a poor reader, and tired of school. No single summarizing statement of this individual's concept of self is appropriate. Brookover and Erickson, in their book

Society, Schools, and Learning seem to think that if a person is viewed as having a high, low or average self-concept, in general, would ignore relevant characteristics of the student.³

Self-concept is not a single factor, but an organization of factors that change with age and differ according to sex. Self-concept also varies with the situations. A student may feel quite able to read with his peers in class, but feels that he is unable to read in front of a group of parents. Brookover and Erickson suggest there is no one self-concept which is operative in all situations.

But using the factors and items as a rough guide, the teacher can get some indication of how different youngsters feel about themselves in these different respects. Gordon, in Studying the Child in School, believes such knowledge becomes useful in creating classroom situations, in assigning materials, and in designing learning experiences to match the youngster's perceptions of himself.

If it were possible to secure even an approximately adequate measure of the way in which ability grouping effects the self-concept of the children it reaches, such information would undoubtedly prove of great value in assisting us to deal with the problems of grouping.

RESULTS

Because of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and because of the extreme difficulty in obtaining data for presentation in this section of the study, the writer was given permission by the major advisor to report only the results. The writer did see the papers of the children studied and made conclusions from them.

After analyzing and comparing achievement scores, study habits, peer status attitudes, personality, and self-concepts of the students in

this study, the writer is convinced grouping is neither good nor bad. There was no significant difference found in either aggression or inferiority feelings in the two groups. The writer believes that the students' ability to learn as well as what he learns is shaped by the social context within which he functions. The value or harm in grouping depends upon the way in which it is utilized. It seems that we as educators should help build a positive self-image. Each student should be made to feel that he is a unique individual and that he is important. The student must find his place in the world by thinking well of himself and knowing others think well of him. This is very important in his ability to grow academically and socially. Any teacher who does not believe in grouping and cannot be flexible in the placement and movement of students within their academic groups should not attempt to implement homogeneous grouping. Both the instructor and the students would probably function better in a heterogeneous groups.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer has become convinced there are certain elements and problems involved in the grouping system which are not apparent on the surface. The hope is such a method of presentation may call attention to the serious implications of certain of these assumptions which are either lightly regarded at present or totally unthought of.

Ability grouping is inherently neither good nor bad. Its value depends upon the way in which it is used. When it is used without close examination of the specific needs of various pupils, it could become damaging.

Earl C. Kelly, in "The Fully Functioning Self" believes what happens to a youngster as he goes through school must certainly rank as some of the most important experiences in his life. Depending upon what occurs in school, a child learns that he is able or unable, adequate or inadequate, wanted or unwanted, or liked or disliked.¹

In this analysis, the writer attempted to criticize these aspects of ability grouping which seem to impede this movement of education toward the recognition of and provision for the total personality. Both opinion and research tend to agree that in order for ability grouping to be of value to both teacher and student, the grouping should be appropriate to the intellectual, emotional, and social needs of pupils.

The writer believes education is life and that the school society should be consciously coextensive with society. If education is to be life in its fullness, the individual must be thought of as more than merely the sum of his academic capabilities. The total scope of his make-up must come into recognition when grouping students.

Schools can do more than they are now doing to help people gain a healthy self-understanding and an acceptance of themselves and others. The fact is that schools have not one mission but two. The task of teaching arithmetic, social studies, and other subjects is one mission. The other mission is to induct children into a large society and to prepare them for their place within the society. In short, in an ability-grouped classroom, the child may learn more academic content and skills, but he may not easily educate himself into a particular emotional or social position.

The writer recommends if ability grouping or any other scheme of sectioning is practiced properly, the fast, average, and slow sections would be placed according to the child's respective subject areas. It seems reasonable to assume that such flexibility would help to eliminate or at least reduce any tendency to stigmatize pupils, since the same pupil would probably be in different sections according to his varying achievement scores in different academic areas or activities.

If the grouping could be done even more informally and less objectively, the students could be heterogeneously grouped, and then they could be ability grouped in the subject areas, such as reading, within the classroom.

The decision on grouping depends on the educational objectives and methods. For wise decisions, the schools need to have community discussion on the grouping patterns and have increasing awareness of the facts of how grouping may affect the lives of the many communities of children to be educated.

The writer agrees with Gordon that to become a fully functioning person the student must (1) think well of himself, (2) think well of others, (3) see his welfare in others, (4) see himself as part of a social world in movement, and (5) live in keeping with his values.

If ability grouping can maintain a healthy self-concept among its students and meet the other missions of education, then this type of sectioning is justified as a good school organizational pattern; but if discouragement or suppression are apparent, the children would probably function better in a heterogeneous, noncompetitive group where discouragement is not so likely to result.

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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahman, Stanley J. and Marvin D. Glock. Evaluating Pupil Growth. Boston: Allyn Bacon., 1967. 605pp.

This book dealt with all areas of evaluation in education. The role of evaluation in education, objectives, procedures, validity, and reliability was discussed. The only chapter useful to me was chapter 14 on evaluating personal and social adjustment and how to analyze the results.

Bettelheim, Bruno. "Segregation: New Style." School Review 66: 251-272 (Autumn 1958)

Bettelheim termed ability grouping as a further perpetuating discrimination against lower and racial minority groups.

Borg, Walter R. Ability Grouping in the Public Schools. Madison, Wisconsin: Dembar Educational Research Services, Inc., 1968. 97pp.

This book analyzed differences in the effect of ability grouping upon elementary, junior high, and senior high students. The book surveyed the literature and also reported results of his own study which compared achievement, study habits, peer status, attitudes, personality, and the self-concepts of 4000 pupils in ability and random-grouped classes over a four-year period.

Brite, Luna Robertson. The Effect of Ability Grouping on Personality Variables of Slow Learning Fifth Grade Pupils. Doctoral Dissertation. Abstract. Dissertation Abstracts 24; 4080-81; April 1964.

Projective tests were used to determine effects of grouping slow learners together as compared to random grouping. No significant differences were found in aggression, inferiority feelings, or depression in samples of the same sex from the two groups, but there were significant differences in the performance on an achievement battery between boys and girls.

Brookover, Wilbur B. and Edsel L. Erickson, Society, Schools, and Learning. Houston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969. 141pp.

This was a very readable discussion of the nature and function of self-concept. This book encouraged awareness, and concern for how a student's ability to learn, as well as what he learns, is shaped by the social context within which he functions. Chapter 5 dealt with the role of self-concept.

Eash, Maurice J. "Grouping: What Have We Learned?" Educational Leadership 18: 429-34 (April 1961).

The researcher exposed the practices of grouping that fit in a democratic society, and those that are inimical to democratic

processes. Through the research, Mr. Eash gave educators guidance in the area of grouping and states that ability grouping militates against personal development of a healthy self-concept and the social development of children.

Esposito, Dominick. Homogeneous and Heterogeneous Grouping: Principal Findings and Implications of a Re-search of the Literature. U.S., Educational Resources Information Center. ERIC Document ED 056 150, July 1971.

The purpose of this research was to summarize the issues and principal findings on homogeneous and heterogeneous ability grouping, and to consider the implications it may have for evaluation and improving the design of the educational setting. To begin, it defined and then proceeded to sketch research findings on academic achievement affective development, and ethnic social development and social economic consequences.

The paper concluded by discussing the implications of research in these areas.

Findley, Warren G. and Miriam M. Bryan. Common Practices in the Use of Tests for Grouping Students in Public Schools. U.S., Education Resources Information Center. ERIC Document ED 048 381, December 1970.

The history of ability grouping is reviewed. The data was collected from school officials in all states concerning: the grade levels at which grouping is used; the basis on which students are assigned to groups; the number of students involved; the percentage of these students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and what the respondee considers are the advantages and disadvantages of grouping. The questionnaire is included, and the data is reported in detail.

Findley, Warren G. and Miriam M. Bryan. Ability Grouping: 1970-71. The Impact of Ability Grouping On School Achievement, Affective Development, Ethnic Segregation, and Socioeconomic Separation. U.S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 048 382, December 1970.

In this comprehensive review, important studies from the literature relevant to the impact of ability grouping on students are summarized. It is concluded that grouping practices based on standardized tests not only tend to restrict the quality of the instructional experiences for children with respect to academic and social learning, but also, as a result of ethnic and socioeconomic separation tends to restrict the overall range of experiences and learning opportunities available in the classroom. Ability grouping, the report concluded is generally ineffective in improving academic achievement and social attitudes.

Franklin, Marian Pope. School Organization: Theory and Practice. Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1967. 477pp.

This book was entirely selected readings on all forms of school organization. Chapter II is composed of 8 such selections on ability grouping. This chapter examined assumptions underlying homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping and states conditions that makes each plausible.

Gerger, Kenneth J. The Concept of Self. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1971. 101pp.

This book attempted to furnish the process for better self-understanding. It did not have any material that proved valuable on self-concept for my proposal.

Gibson, Westby-Dorothy, Grouping Students for Improved Instruction. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966. 64pp.

This book researched the history of grouping, and different grouping patterns, and guidelines for implementing these grouping situations.

Gibson, Janice T. Psychology for the Classroom. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976. 555pp.

This informative book helped to understand the development of the self-concept, and all the factors that influence it. Chapter 2 used the discussion of the development of children in the early school years, and the individual differences between children both the level of maturation and in previous experiences, and the implications for education in America.

Goldberg, Miriam L. ET AL. The Effects of Ability Grouping. New York: Teachers College Press, 1966. 254pp.

This book assessed the effects of ability grouping on the academic and personal-social learning of elementary school students. The findings raised some serious questions about ability grouping. Its value or harm depends upon the way it is used. The factors of ability grouping, such as self-concepts, aspirations, interests, and attitudes toward school were studied.

Gordon, Ira J. Studying the Child in the School. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966. 145pp.

The book discussed the integrality of the relationship between teaching and studying children. Chapter 3 had the self-report scales of Ira Gordon, Pauline Sears, Mary Engel and Walter J. Raines, R. H. Ojemann and B. C. Snider. It included the instructions of how to administer the report scales, analyze and summarize the data on different grade levels. This was a very informative book for my proposal.

Hall, Morrill M. and Warren G. Findley. "Ability Grouping: Helpful or Harmful?" Phi Delta Kappan 52 556-557 (May 1971).

The authors stated that ability grouping for achievement reasons may be accepted; however, the authors considered that this grouping pattern has many flaws, especially to the low-achieving groups. Through close inspection of peer groups, disadvantaged students, and the stigma placed on the groups, the authors suggested a reconciliation is needed on ability grouping.

Hamachek, Don E. Encounters With the Self. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971. 264pp.

This book included discussions about what it means to understand one's self, a look at how self-concept is linked to physical growth and development, and how it is related to child-rearing practices. An over-view of how self-concept is connected with academic adjustment, some implications for teaching practices and some reflections concerning the encouragement development of a healthy self-image was given. Chapter 6 was the most informative chapter on how self-concept is associated with the school environment.

Hamachek, Don E. Human Dynamics in Psychology and Education. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971. 667pp.

This book had selected readings written by sixty authors. This was a very useful source. Chapter 13 was about personality and personal adjustment, and included readings on ability grouping and the self-concept. The selections focused on ideas and controversies related to personal, cognitive, and biochemical aspects of learning.

Jesild, Arthur T. In Search of Self. New York: Teachers College Press, 1951. 141pp.

An excellent book on the exploration of the role of the school in promoting self-understanding. This book discussed how boys and girls regard their own personalities, self-control, relations with others, their intellectual abilities, and their appearances. The book was divided into three parts-the theory of the study of self-concept, concepts used in self-evaluation, and the school and the self-concept, which was most valuable.

Keliher, Alice V. A Critical Study of Homogeneous Grouping. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1972. 165pp.

This was an excellent research report, that was originally presented as the author's thesis. The history, analysis of assumptions, and data was presented clearly. This author was against ability grouping, because she feels it does not educate the whole child and consider his total personality. Dr. Keliher concluded that homogeneous grouping develops a caste system with negative effects on values, and social and emotional health.

Kelley, Earl C. "The Fully Functioning Self," Chapter 13, Human Dynamics in Psychology and Education. Don E. Hamachek, ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1972.

Dr. Kelley discussed the goal of becoming "a fully functioning self," and how to attain that goal. The writer told what it means to be a "total" person, and speculated about how people got to be the way they are, and how people can continue to develop a growing expanding, creative self capable of functioning at its fullest potential.

Kronick, Doreen. "The Pros and Cons of Labeling," Academic Therapy. 13: 101-104 (September 1977).

The issue of labeling a child was discussed. The author concluded that by labeling children, educators place a stigma on the child and limits the child's social environment in school, and places a great impairment on his learning environment.

Maldonado, Bonnie M. and William C. Cross. "Today's Chicago Refutes the Stereotype" College Student Journal 2: 146-152 (Summer 1977).

The article stressed that members of groups may manifest traits of self-doubt, self-hate, and negative self-concept, and that education should help build a positive self-image, and that each child should be made to feel that he is an individual and that the individual is important.

Mann, Maxine. "What Does Ability Grouping Do to the Self-Concept?" Childhood Education 36: 356-60 (April 1960).

This was an excellent research report on the negative effects that ability grouping has on the self-concept. Mrs. Mann stressed the importance of how children view themselves. The method, description, and results of the data was clearly presented. The author concluded that ability grouping is not the answer to instructional problems, and that ability grouping needs to be either re-examined or abandoned as it was in the thirties.

National Education Association. Ability Grouping. Research Division. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association Press, 1968. 52pp.

This entire book was an excellent source of information. The research summary discussed grouping practices, the place of ability in an over-all school organization, and the pros and cons of ability grouping. Recent research from 1960 to the present was emphasized throughout the book.

Noll, Victor H. Introduction to Education Measurement. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1965. 509pp.

The book was the development objectives of achievement, and how educational measurement is achieved in the schools. Chapter

12 dealt with how to measure personality and adjustment in homogeneous grouping, by self-report techniques, and how to use the results and findings.

Rinehart, George. "Ability Grouping: Out Or In?" The Educational Digest 36: 49-51 (February 1971).

In this excellent article, the writer discussed the research that has been inconclusive and contradictory about whether ability grouping is good or bad. The author examined the arguments on both sides (the advocates and critics), and then concluded there is much disagreement on ability grouping, and then states reasons why it is still such a widely used practice. The writer is "in," but its mission needs to be improved to help each child reach his potential, both academically and socially.

Sauvain, Walter H. A Study of the Opinions of Certain Professional and Non-Professional Groups Regarding Homogeneous or Ability Grouping. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1972. 151pp.

This research report was originally published as the author's thesis. It included much information usable for my proposal. The child's personality, social attitudes, parent's opinions, and opposition and preferences regarding ability grouping was studied. Teacher's and school official's opinions on the grouping patterns were polled by the author.

Spartain, Harry W. "Organizational Patterns of Schools and Classrooms for Reading Instruction," Innovation and Change in Reading Instruction, Sixty-seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968. 439pp.

This yearbook discussed the innovations and changes in reading. It too evaluated the new issues and trends of classroom organization. I used some of the terms in my proposal.

Teigland, John J. ET AL. "Some Concomitants of Underachievement at the Elementary Level," The Personnel and Guidance Journal 44: 950-55 (May 1966).

This article was a study of the problems of academic achievement. The study compared a group of fourth-grade underachievers with a control group in the areas of peer relationships and measured personality variables. This investigation indicated that regardless of sex, underachievers are selected less frequently by their peers and have a lower level of personality adjustment.

Thelen, Herbert A. "What's New in Grouping," Chapter 7 in Human Dynamics in Psychology and in Education Don E. Hamachek, ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1972.

The idea of arranging students according to ability has been

an entrenched part of the educational scene for many years. Dr. Thelen developed a plan for assembling students into mixed age groupings with cross-sections of our socioeconomic structure in each group. He also suggested that teachers be given the students they can best teach.

West, Paul. A Study of Ability Grouping in the Elementary School. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1972. 70pp.

This was a research study on ability grouping that was originally presented as the author's thesis. It discussed ability grouping in the elementary schools in terms of variability of achievement, the teaching problem, and pupil adjustment. This report had all the criterion of a good research report.

Wilhelms, Fred T. and Dorothy Westby-Gibson. "Grouping: Research Offers Leads," Educational Leadership 18: 410-413 (March 1961).

The author reviewed other research on grouping, and accumulated the findings. The author interpreted the data, and discussed the dangers of believing that grouping patterns master all the problems of classroom organization and gave evidence to back up these assumptions.

Winn, Philip H. and Ronald W. Marx. "A Multimethod Study of Three Self-Concept Inventories," Child Development 48: 893-901 (September 1977).

The article provided research and compared three self-concept instruments. Thirty sixth graders were given the Sears self-concept inventory, the Gordon "How I See Myself" scale, and the Piers-Harris children self-concept scale. Results were discussed in terms of the implications for basic research and program evaluation. The authors stated that much caution is needed to examine the individual facets of self-concept.

Wirth, Sammylane. "Effects of a Multifaceted Reading Program on Self-Concept," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling 12: 33-40 (October 1977).

This was a research report on how 95 students from a low socioeconomic area of Illinois showed marked attitude change during the course of a school year, and the methods and procedures that brought about this attitudinal change in these children.

APPENDIX

The students were given the "How I See Myself" self-report scale developed by Ira J. Gordon at the University of Florida. The scale itself was devised from the categories developed by Arthur T. Jersild in his scale "What I Like About Myself". On the surface, the scale assesses attitudes toward school peers, physical body, and one's own emotions, abilities, and aspirations. The scale also evaluates relationship with the opposite sex, home and family, clothing and grooming and special talents, such as sports, art, recreation and music.

Directions

Children in home rooms were administered the self-concept scale. It was explained to the students they were to answer these questions as a part of a study. This study was trying to get information that will eventually help to improve the kind of school and education for them and other pupils. It was emphasized this is not a test to see how much they know or do not know about something. They were to answer the questions as honestly as possible, according to how they saw themselves most of the time, not how they thought they ought to be - not how the teacher thought they ought to be - not how they wanted to be; just how they felt about themselves most of the time.

It was explained there were no right or wrong answers, and their papers were not seen by anyone other than the people making the study.

Unfamiliar words were explained and each item was read aloud to insure comprehension of all terminology.

HOW I SEE MYSELF

SELF-REPORT SCALE

| | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| Nothing gets me too mad | 1 2 3 4 5 | I get mad easily and explode |
| I don't stay with things and finish them | 1 2 3 4 5 | I stay with something till I finish |
| I'm very good at drawing | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm not much good in drawing |
| I don't like to work on committee, projects | 1 2 3 4 5 | I like to work with others |
| I worry a lot | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't worry much |
| I wish I were smaller (taller) | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm just the right height |
| I wish I could do something with my hair | 1 2 3 4 5 | My hair is nice-looking |
| Teachers like me | 1 2 3 4 5 | Teachers don't like me |
| I've lots of energy | 1 2 3 4 5 | I haven't much energy |
| I don't play games very well | 1 2 3 4 5 | I play games very well |
| I'm just the right weight | 1 2 3 4 5 | I wish I were heavier, lighter |
| The girls don't like me, leave me out | 1 2 3 4 5 | The girls like me a lot |
| I'm very good at speaking before a group | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm not much good at speaking before a group |
| My face is pretty (good looking) | 1 2 3 4 5 | I wish I were prettier (good looking) |
| I'm very good at music | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm not much good in music |
| I get along well with teachers | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't get along with teachers |
| I don't like teachers | 1 2 3 4 5 | I like teachers very much |
| I don't feel at ease, comfortable inside | 1 2 3 4 5 | I feel very comfortable inside at times |
| I don't like to try new things | 1 2 3 4 5 | I like to try new things |
| I have trouble controlling my feelings | 1 2 3 4 5 | I can handle my feelings |
| I do well in school work | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't do well in school work |
| I want the boys to like me | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't want the boys to like me |
| I don't like the way I look | 1 2 3 4 5 | I like the way I look |
| I don't want the girls to like me | 1 2 3 4 5 | I want the girls to like me |
| I'm very healthy | 1 2 3 4 5 | I get sick a lot |

| | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| I don't dance well | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm a very good dancer |
| I write well | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't write well |
| I like to work alone | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't like to work alone |
| I use my time well | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't know how to plan my time |
| I'm not much good at making things with my hands | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm very good at making things with my hands |
| I wish I could do something with my skin | 1 2 3 4 5 | My skin is nice looking |
| School isn't interesting to me | 1 2 3 4 5 | School is very interesting |
| I don't do arithmetic well | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm real good in arithmetic |
| I'm not as smart as the others | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm smarter than most of the others |
| The boys like me a lot, choose me | 1 2 3 4 5 | The boys don't like me, leave me along |
| My clothes are not as I like | 1 2 3 4 5 | My clothes are nice |
| I like school | 1 2 3 4 5 | I don't like school |
| I wish I were built like the others | 1 2 3 4 5 | I'm happy with the way I am |
| I don't read well | 1 2 3 4 5 | I read very well |
| I don't learn new things easily | 1 2 3 4 5 | I learn new things easily |