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A COMPARISON OF THE SELF CONCEPT  
OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS, INDUSTRIAL ARTS STUDENTS  
AND COLLEGE PREPARATORY STUDENTS

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A Research Paper

Presented to  
the Graduate Council of  
Austin Peay State University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in Education

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by  
Thomas Austin Seay

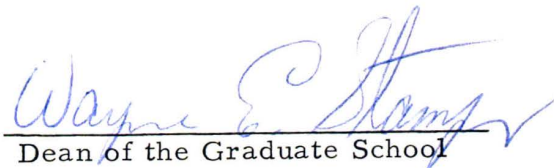
August 1968

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Research Paper written by Thomas Austin Seay entitled "A Comparison of the Self Concept of Juvenile Delinquents, Industrial Arts Students and College Preparatory Students." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education, with a major in Counseling and Guidance.

  
Major Professor

Accepted for the Council:

  
Dean of the Graduate School

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In the modern world of education, educators are required to know many things, all of which seem of immediate importance. The behavior of the children that are turned over to them for educational purposes is no exception to this statement. These behavior patterns are likely to be one of the most important areas that educators must understand. If the educator fails to develop this understanding, then he has failed to reach the child as a learner.

Snygg and Combs (5, p. 11) have divided behavior into two categories based upon the person doing the perceiving: 1) from the point of view of the observer, and 2) from the point of view of the behavior. For the most part, American psychologists and educators have worked with the child using the frame of reference of the observer. This has followed from the emphasis placed upon the scientific approach or as Gordon Allport (1, p. 7) sees it from the Lockean tradition, characterized by the behaviorists and stimulus-response theorists.

Behavior from the frame of reference of the behavior was neglected until the advent of the European Gestalt movement. When Gestalt psychology filtered into American psychology, the emphasis on the scientific approach began to change somewhat. This change was expedited through the prolific writings of such theorists and researchers as Allport, Maslow, Snygg, Combs, May, and Rogers. Through their efforts, the "person" has once again developed in American psychology with renewed interest.

Along with the development of perception from the behavior's frame of reference, the term self concept has come to the foreground. Snygg and Combs (5), leaders in the development of the concept of self have indicated its importance in understanding behavior. They see the person and his environment as components of the total perceptual field. The self selects or accepts those experiences from the environment that tend to enhance the self. The role of the self in this perceptual field is one of an actor rather than a reactor, i. e., he acts upon the selected experiences rather than reacts to them. Also the person's action or behavior in a particular situation is determined by the way he sees himself, thus his self concept.

Carl Rogers (8), another of the outstanding leaders in the development of the theory of self, also sees the self concept as the

determiner of behavior. The experiences that are accepted and used by the self are those experiences that enhance the self concept.

Many researchers and "self" theorists (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9) indicate that a positive or negative self concept will promote positive or negative behavior. They see the self concept as a causative agent. Thus a person with a positive self concept sees himself as a worthy human being and reacts as such. The person demonstrating a negative self concept sees himself as an unworthy human being and reacts in negative or unacceptable ways.

The renewed interest in the self concept has opened new doors for those persons concerned with the education of children. The facts known about the self demonstrate its importance in understanding not only "problem" children but also "well-adjusted" children. According to Williams and Cole (9, p. 480), "Few factors are more fundamental to a child's success and happiness than his evaluation and acceptance of himself." Thus if educators are to provide for the education and well-being of their students, they must take into consideration the views that the person has of himself.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the study was to determine if there was a difference in the mean self concept of three groups of boys, one group of delinquent and two groups of non-delinquent adolescent boys. The non-delinquent boys were divided into two groups on the basis of their choice of a vocational or college preparatory course at the high school level. The delinquent and non-delinquent groups were chosen as they represented different types of behavior patterns. The delinquent group demonstrated atypical behavioral patterns in that they had broken the law to such an extent that they were institutionalized for their behavior. The non-delinquent subjects who were selected for the study demonstrated different behavior patterns in that one group chose a vocationally oriented curriculum and the other chose a college preparatory oriented program. It was believed that the different behavior patterns of these three groups of young men resulted from the different concepts they held of themselves. It was felt that there would be a range of self concepts with the college preparatory group having the most positive regard for self, the delinquent group having the most negative regard for self and the vocationally oriented group having a middle position between the two extremes. The increased emphasis in the present society on



the greater value of a college education as compared with a vocational education was the basis for assuming that the college preparatory student would have the most positive concept of self. The delinquent, who would be considered something of an "outcast" from society because of his being sentenced to a correctional institution, would be expected to have the most negative concept of self.

The subjects used included boys between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who were enrolled in two different institutions, a public school offering vocational and academic preparation and a state correctional institution. The delinquent group was confined in the Tennessee Youth Center at Joelton, Tennessee. The Tennessee Youth Center, a correctional institution for mild offenders, offers high school classes that lead to graduation. Along with the academic preparation, every boy enrolled at the youth center follows a vocational curriculum. The non-delinquent youths were taken from Montgomery Central High School, a rural school in Montgomery County, Tennessee. The high school offers both an academic and a vocational curriculum. This division of the curriculum was followed for the sub-division of the non-delinquent groups into an industrial arts class and a college preparatory English class.

For the study of self concept, the Tennessee (Department of Mental Health) Self Concept Scale was utilized as the instrument of measurement. The Scale was developed by Dr. William Fitts, director of the Nashville Mental Health Center.

In summary, the problem was to determine if there was a difference in the self concept of fifteen to eighteen year old youths exhibiting different behavior patterns as determined by anti-social behavior serious enough to warrant placement in an institution by the group designated as delinquent and by the choice of different high school curriculums on the part of the non-delinquents. To study this problem it was necessary to establish certain predictions. These predictions served as a frame of reference for the study by giving it a direction in which to work. The predictions for this study were:

1. The youths under study demonstrated divergent behavior patterns thus they should have different self concepts. If the self concept was an important consideration in determining behavior, then a positive self concept should precede positive behavior and a negative self concept should precede negative behavior.

2. The pursuit of excellence has become one of the most important influences in our society. Society has found itself



emphasizing the theory that the better educated a person is, the more likely he is to be a better citizen. Thus due to this emphasis on a college education as the acceptable mode of behavior, it was predicted that the college preparatory group would have a self concept that would be more positive than the other two groups.

3. Juvenile delinquency was the most unacceptable behavior demonstrated by the three groups of boys. Thus it was predicted that they would demonstrate the lowest scaled self concept of the three groups.

4. The industrial arts group will demonstrate a self concept that is at a mid-position between the other two groups, because they have not chosen the highest route but neither have they rejected the expectations of society as have the delinquents.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

As purporter of the educational process, educators must attempt to modify the behavior of children into socially acceptable channels. They must have an extensive understanding of human behavior to accomplish this general goal of education. To channel behavior they must first understand behavior and to do this they must study the possible determinants of behavior.

At least one of the determinants has been ignored until recent years. The term "self concept" did not find acceptance in psychological terminology until recent years. As stated by Gordon Allport (1, p. 36), "Indeed we may say that for two generations psychologists have tried every conceivable way of accounting for the intergration, organization, and striving of the human person without having recourse to the postulate of a self." However, the term and its usage have come into popularity with a rebirth of ego-psychology.

This study attempted to add to the body of knowledge concerning the self concept of adolescent boys and the resultant behavior in relationship to the school setting and adherence to the rules of society. It also endeavored to substantiate the findings of other researchers.

The ultimate meaning that the study may have is to provide information which may be useful to counselors and educators of youth. It is hoped that by incorporating the findings into their existing repertoire of knowledge concerning human behavior, they can use it to better discharge their responsibilities to their students.

### ASSUMPTIONS

In the study of a subject as dynamic as human development and human nature, it is quickly realized that there are innumerable

general and specific areas that are not fully understood. It is difficult to make definite or absolute statements. This is most profoundly true of a study which attempted to investigate a concept as elusive as the one which this paper purported to investigate. Thus, to have proceeded with any certainty it became necessary to establish some assumptions upon which the study was based.

It was assumed that when three groups of boys held different perceptions of themselves, their resultant behavior would reflect those perceptions. A negative self concept or a low opinion of themselves would be found in negative behavior and a positive or high concept of self would be found in approved behavior with the most highly valued behavior being shown by those with the highest concept of self. Thus, the self concept of a youth would help to determine his behavior. The available research would seem to support this position.

If it is accepted that the self concept is related to different behavior patterns, then it must be assumed that the higher the positive self concept, the higher or more positive the behavior would be. It was also assumed that the Tennessee Self Concept Scale is a valid instrument for measuring the self concept.

## LIMITATIONS

Since it was impossible to control all of the possible variables involved in the study, it became necessary to restrict the accumulation of data and the scope of the investigation. In order to accommodate the direction and purpose of this investigation these necessary limitations were established:

1. The study was limited to twenty-four students in a rural school in Montgomery County, Tennessee, which included all the male students enrolled in the college preparatory English class and the industrial arts class, and forty-eight adjudicated delinquents from a state-supported rehabilitation center located in Joelton, Tennessee.
2. Only one condition was established for consideration in this study. This condition was the self concept as perceived and reported by the youths on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale.
3. This study was limited to the Total P (Positive) Scale of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale.
4. Only boys between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who were enrolled in the selected school systems were utilized.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

Delinquent: This study defines delinquents as boys between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who were judged delinquent by the courts of Tennessee and confined to the Tennessee Youth Center.

Non-Delinquent: This study defines non-delinquent as boys between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who were not incarcerated at the time of the study and who were enrolled in Montgomery Central High School.

Industrial Arts Class: This study defines an industrial arts class as a technical training class for those students not pursuing an academic program leading to enrollment in higher education.

College Preparatory Class: This study defines a college preparatory class as a class in an academic program for those students contemplating college entrance.

Self Concept: For this study, self concept is defined as those statements that each member or subject ascribed to himself on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale. The statements seem to be concerned with three primary messages: 1) This is what I am, 2) This is how I feel about myself, and 3) This is what I do. (7, p. 2).



Positive Self Concept: This study defines a positive self concept as a high score on the Total P Scale thus indicating a good or high feeling of worth, tend to like themselves, have confidence in themselves and act accordingly. (7, p. 2).

Negative Self Concept: This study defines a negative self concept as a low score on the Total P Scale indicating that the person has a feeling of worthlessness, sees himself as not being desirable, is often unhappy and anxious, and has little faith, belief, or confidence in himself. (7, p. 2).

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## CHAPTER II

### RELATED RESEARCH

#### THE SELF CONCEPT: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Dollard and Miller (9, p. 1) describe all human behavior as being learned. Most psychologists would tend to agree with this idea although they might change the emphasis somewhat. Allport (1) and Snygg and Combs (7) would place the emphasis on the behavior rather than on the process. Mead (18, p. 227) emphasizes the person in society or the importance of significant "others." He says that "The behavior of all living organisms has a basically social aspect. . . ." However, no matter where the emphasis is placed they still see human behavior as being learned.

"Self" theorists, exemplified by Rogers, May, Allport, and Snygg and Combs see the self as the center of learning. Rogers (22, p. 503) describes the self and learning. He says,

"as experiences occur in the life of the individual, they are either (a) symbolized, perceived, and organized into some relationship to the self, (b) ignored because there is no perceived relationship to the self-structure, (c) denied symbolization or given a distorted symbolization because the experience is inconsistent with the structure of the self."



This seems to be in agreement with the beliefs of Allport and Snygg and Combs. Equally important to educators is Roger's explanation of behavior and the self concept. He writes, "Most of the ways of behaving which are adopted by the organism are those which are consistent with the concept of self."

It would seem to follow from Rogers' statements that a person who views himself in a negative manner would behave in a negative way, and a person who sees himself in a positive way would react positively. This idea would seem to be extremely important to both those concerned with delinquency and those concerned with education.

Also extremely important to educators are the findings of Schuldt and Truax (23). They tested Rogers' assertion that a patient had the capacity for self direction. In working with mental patients and juvenile delinquents they found that the position of Rogers held true for their experiment.

The report of Strong and Feder (24) described fifteen instruments which were being used to measure the self concept. They reported that one or more aspects of "self" were measured by each instrument.

## THE SELF CONCEPT: ITS RELATIONSHIP TO DELINQUENCY

Probably in no other aspect of behavior is the negative self concept better exemplified than in these aspects of behavior pertaining to delinquency. Numerous studies have demonstrated that a negative self concept is held by delinquent children. Whether they attempt to purge themselves from failure or unconsciously desire to be punished or for some other reason, children become delinquent. Though there are many factors present that could account for the delinquent behavior none are in a better position to cause the behavior than the self concept. For, as Jersild (16, p. 9) says, "The self is a person's total subjective environment."

William Hamner (13) reports numerous studies on the use of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale with delinquents. In most of the research that he reported, the non-delinquent was favored, i.e., the non-delinquent held a higher or more positive self concept than did the delinquent. This was true of both male and female delinquents. In the studies reported by Hamner, the self concept profile utilized in the Tennessee Self Concept Scale showed a marked similarity among delinquents from all sections of the United States. Their scores were consistently low and formed a basic pattern.

Deitche (8) reported the results of a study conducted using fifty white male delinquents and fifty white male non-delinquents. He reported that the self concept differed significantly between the two groups. The lowest and most negative score was found among the delinquent group. However, he found that both tended to hold positive self concepts. The delinquent group actually scored positively as opposed to negatively on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale but their scores were below the non-delinquent group.

Atchison (2) found a similar profile using behavior problem boys and non-behavior problem boys. The behavior or problem boys scored significantly below the non-behavior problem boys. Both the Deitche (8) and the Atchison (2) studies, when depicted on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale profile sheet, appeared to be low or negative, even though Deitche reports his groups to be positive. Atchison felt that his study demonstrated that his groups were quite truthful and showed a good understanding of their self concepts. Atchison indicates the importance of this for the educator. If there is self-understanding on the part of the children, educators should be able to build positive self concepts. Both the Deitche and the Atchison studies reported consistency of the self concept. This would indicate that both groups in each study had an organized system of values. The difference

between the groups would lie in the fact that the delinquents and the behavior problem groups held a lower value system than did their respective control groups.

Balester (3), using the Q-Sort technique, found similar results among delinquent and non-delinquent boys. He did find that there were no significant differences between an adult population and the non-delinquent boys. This would seem to emphasize even more the deviate self concept of delinquent youths.

In a slightly different type of study, Washburn (25) used the personality types established by Freud, Sarbin, Erikson, Horney, and Fromm to test one hundred high school children. Items used in the analysis had to fit into one of the five personality types. Washburn measured the self concepts by setting up three patterns: 1) Conformity, 2) Ambition, 3) Adjustment. He selected the more serious adjustment problems, two neurotic groups: neurasthenia and psychasthenia, and juvenile delinquents for his study. All groups showed significantly lower self concept scores than did their control groups on the adjustment scale.

The indications are clear for those persons working with delinquents. The concepts of self that these youths have are in dire need of enhancement or improvement. Thus the development of a



positive self concept should be of the upmost concern for the rehabilitation as well as for the prevention of delinquency.

Mead (18) sees the self as a reflection of society and as constantly reacting against it. If this is true then the delinquent may be reacting against society for the failure that he has felt in his relationship with society. Thus, society has contributed to his low self-esteem, and he rebels by anti-social or unacceptable behavior.

#### THE SELF CONCEPT: ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE SCHOOL

The views that a person has of himself will be reflected in his behavior. This is of considerable consequence to the concerned educator. It may well determine the approach or method he will use in the education of children. If he sees the self concept as an important influence in education, he will attempt to vary his methods so that he may build a positive self concept for each of his students.

Ted Landsman (17) examined the self concept as it pertained to the learning situation. He found that educators tended to follow two of the approaches or directions taken by behavioral scientists:

- 1) Atomistic direction represented by the teaching machine; and
- 2) Self-Concept - learning from the learner himself.

Landsman takes the position that learning occurs to the extent that it is significant

to the self concept that the learner has. The role of the self concept in a learning situation is exemplified when Landsman (17, p. 290) says, "The learning of the young person is perhaps most certainly determined, influenced, and in some cases distorted by the child's perception of self." Upon further investigation, Landsman found that more significant learning takes place when the tasks provided by the teacher are perceived by the child as being related to self.

Williams and Cole (26) measured the self concept of eighty sixth graders. They endeavored to establish a relationship between the self concept and variables relating directly to the school setting. They sought to extend the idea of self concept to such variables as the child's concept of school, his social status at school, his emotional adjustment, his mental ability, his reading ability, and his mathematical ability. The most significant result from this study was the conclusion that these variables and the self concept were interdependent. It proved quite difficult to distinguish any one variable as being important to school-related success. Invariably, the self concept was found to be an important influence on each of the variables, including intelligence.

Almost as important as the child's self concept, is the emphasis placed on the role of the self concept by the teacher. Goodlad (12)

takes the position that school personnel must take the initiative in developing the child as an individual. However, due consideration for the self concept precludes any action necessary to accomplish this goal. He sees the child's rebelliousness as the result of an unwholesome attitude toward the self. Hughes (14) places the responsibility for developing wholesome self concepts in children directly on the school personnel. She feels that the over-all objective of the school is to develop positive self concepts.

Morse (19) using 600 children in the third and eleventh grades, measured self-esteem. They found that self-esteem began to drop in or about the third grade and did not recover until around the eleventh grade. However, they found that the measure of social self actually improved after the third grade. This would tend to indicate that the children had somewhat successfully met the learning tasks involved in socialization skills. It also substantiates Jersild's (15, p. 138) position that as a child ages, he is more able to participate in complex social endeavors.

Myers (20) places a little different emphasis on the self concept as related to learning. He sees the process as being reciprocal, i.e., self modifies learning and learning modifies self. He explains the "problem-child" as one who has established an ideal concept of self

but who has failed to attain the ideal. This causes conflict in the child and thus calls for modifications of the ideal. This anxiety-producing situation causes the child to rebel, much like the child in Goodlad's description.

Many authors stress the importance of the child seeing his "self" in a positive way. To many, the self concept constitutes one of the most important influences in school success. Failure in school often leads to the termination of school enrollment. This might also be seen as reciprocal. A negative self concept will tend to lead to failure and failure will tend to lower the self concept. The results of this process are plain. The child will develop unwholesome attitudes toward himself and his place in the school setting. He is consequently forced to seek success elsewhere, often times in delinquency.

The necessity of holding a positive view of self is seen by Borislow (5) as extremely important to academic success. He found that underachieving college freshmen developed negative self concepts after attempting performance. They tend to develop more pessimistic concepts of themselves than do other students. However, he did not find that self-evaluation would distinguish the underachievers from the achievers prior to college entrance.

Quimby (21) measured the self-concept and ideal self concept of fifty-eight eleventh and twelfth graders by the Q-Sort technique.



She divided her subjects into achievers and underachievers. Both groups demonstrated significant differences between their self concept and their ideal self concept, but the achiever group scored higher on the ideal self concept measure than did the underachievers. She points out that a person with an adequate self concept will be able to meet life successfully and the person with an inadequate self concept will meet with failure.

Whereas many writers and researchers speak of self concept in terms of one definite measure, Campbell (6) views the self concept in much the same way as Fitts (11). Campbell finds that by examining the available research on the self concept, authors are generally speaking of different facets of the self concept, not just one measure. He sees the self concept as actually consisting of varying levels, with each of these levels being important to different aspects of the school situation.

Bledsoe and Garrison (4), in a comprehensive study, examined the self concept of elementary school children. They investigated the self concepts of 605 fourth and sixth graders from four different schools. They made their comparison between the grades, between the sexes, and with such variables as academic achievement, intelligence, interest, and manifest anxiety by using several different instruments of

assessment. They found that there were differences relating to sex in favor of the female subjects but there were no differences relating to sex according to grade levels. They found a small positive correlation between self concept and intelligence. The same was true for achievement. Correlations between self concept and interests were found to be low or absent with the exception of the fourth grade girls. In considering manifest anxiety, the correlations were negative but significant with the exception of sixth grade girls. The implications of these results are many. The teacher's role in the educational process, is one of developing to the fullest extent the capacities of each child. To do this she must understand the importance of the child's view of himself as well as take account of her own role and self concept.

Jersild (16) discovered that with the exception of the fourth grade and upper college, students listed school and their school performance as one of their major dislikes. This dislike for school seemed to reach its peak in the ninth grade and slowly declined thereafter. In describing the effect that school can have on a child, Jersild (16, p. 100) says, "Many other children find the educational scene so filled with failure, so full of reminders of their limitations, and so harsh in giving these reminders that they hate school." The implications of this statement are serious. Jersild (16) sees the school personnel as having the responsibility of developing each and every child not

just a few. To him it is the school that points out a child's failure so it must be the school that provides the success that a child needs. This is the surest way to develop a positive self concept.

To test the stability of the self concept, Engles (10) experimented using eighty-nine eighth graders and sixty-one tenth graders. They were tested in 1954 and again in 1956. She found that the correlation between Q-Sort obtained was .53. This indicates that the self concept is a stable measure. She found that persons showing a negative self concept in 1954 were more maladjusted than those having a positive self concept when retested in 1956.

From the preceding literature, it is apparent that the self concept is extremely important to the development of the child. This is particularly true of those aspects of his life which relate to school. Often times it would seem that the school is directly responsible for building a negative concept of self. Whether speaking of the "poorly adjusted" child or the "well adjusted" child, it remains that the maintenance and enhancement of a good attitude toward self is one of the prime concerns of the educator if he is to develop the full potentialities of his students.

As this problem related to the control of delinquency it still remains a school problem. For generally when a child becomes

delinquent he is still in the school setting. Thus it becomes a prime concern of the educator for the control and prevention of delinquency. A negative self concept, as demonstrated by research, is one of the major contenders as a cause of delinquency. Thus the educator should follow the path opened by research to do everything that he can do in order to develop a positive concept of self.

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# CHAPTER III

## RESEARCH DESIGN

### HYPOTHESIS

The self concept has been determined to be an important consideration in understanding behavior. It seems to contribute to both acceptable and non-acceptable behavior and to be an essential element in learning in the school situation.

This investigation endeavored to study the self concept as it related to the behavior patterns of three groups of subjects: One group of delinquent and two groups of non-delinquent boys. The non-delinquent boys were separated into two groups on the basis of their choice of an industrial arts or college preparatory English course in their high school curriculum. The null hypothesis tested was as follows:

There is no difference in the self concepts of delinquent, industrial arts, and college preparatory subjects as determined by their responses to the Tennessee (Department of Mental Health) Self Concept Scale.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECTS

Delinquent Group: The juvenile delinquents used in this study were incarcerated at the Tennessee Youth Center, Joelton, Tennessee

after being judged delinquent by the courts of Tennessee. The information concerning the delinquent population was supplied by the head counselor for the Youth Center. The population represented male delinquent youths from all sections of Tennessee, and were by the standards of the Tennessee rehabilitation program "mild" offenders. The boys concentrated at the Tennessee Youth Center were considered the most likely to gain from the rehabilitation program. They were between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, and ranged in intelligence from low to superior. The lower socio-economic group was predominately represented among these youths.

The program at the Tennessee Youth Center provides an educational curriculum for these boys. They pursue both an academic and a vocational program until the end of their eleven to twelve month confinement.

The delinquent subjects were chosen for study because of the nature of their behavior which led to their confinement for rehabilitation. It was predicted that this group would represent the lowest self concept of the high school age groups because of the unacceptable behavior demonstrated. Because of many factors, the writer was of the opinion that the delinquent youths had developed self concepts that were quite negative, and this lowered self concept adversely affected their overt behavior.



The scores of the delinquent group used in this study were provided by the head counselor for the Tennessee Youth Center. The Scale was administered to these youths as they entered the Center during the school year 1967-1968. Of the fifty scores provided, forty-eight were utilized for this study. Two were discarded due to technical errors that eliminated their usefulness in the study.

Non-Delinquent Group: The non-delinquent subjects were selected from a rural high school in Montgomery County, Tennessee. The high school was chosen because it seemed to represent an approximation in certain respects to the type of student found at the Tennessee Youth Center, i. e., approximations in respect to age, intelligence, and socio-economic level. The information concerning the non-delinquent group was provided by the Counselor at Montgomery Central High School. The twenty-four subjects in the non-delinquent group ranged in ages from sixteen to eighteen. They were predominantly from the lower socio-economic level and they ranged in intelligence from low to superior. They were enrolled in Montgomery Central High School for the school year 1967-1968. They represented two classes from the school population: twelve boys from an industrial arts class and twelve boys from a college preparatory class.

After receiving permission from the principal and the respective teachers, the Scale was administered to the two classes. Even though

the Tennessee Self Concept Scale is a self-administering test, the investigator read the directions to the students in order to eliminate any errors due to the misunderstanding of directions. This was followed by a demonstration of the correct use of the special answer sheet that accompanied the test. The investigator attempted to answer all questions that the student posed.

The students were told the nature of the investigation with the exception that the study was limited to male youths. Since the college preparatory class was composed of both male and female students, the test was administered to all members. The responses of the female students were not used in the study.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENT

The Tennessee (Department of Mental Health) Self Concept Scale was selected for this study because of its multi-purpose use as an instrument of assessment. In the Tennessee Self Concept Scale manual, Dr. Fitts (2, p. 1) states "the Scale therefore can be useful for a variety of purposes--counseling, clinical assessment and diagnosis, research in behavioral science, personnel selection, etc."

The Scale is a self-administering group test that can be used with either of two specially prepared forms: the Counseling Form or the Clinical and Research Form. The Clinical and Research Form

was utilized in this study because of its comprehensiveness and varied usefulness. The Counseling Form is a shortened version of the Clinical and Research Form.

Even before the advent of publication, the Scale was used in a variety of research studies that enhanced its usefulness as an instrument for measuring the self concept. William Hamner (3) authored a bulletin citing the research that has been conducted using this scale with delinquent and non-delinquent boys.

The Tennessee (Department of Mental Health) Self Concept Scale (2, pp. 1-5) was developed by selecting items from a number of self reporting instruments, from written descriptions of self by both patients and non-patients, and ten items from the L-Scale of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (1951). The items were then submitted to seven clinical psychologists for selection for the 3X5 framework of the Scale. Items were included for use on which there was perfect agreement among the judges. The final selection of ninety items in addition to the ten items from the L-Scale of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory made up the Tennessee Self Concept Scale. The Scale includes fifty items that are positive statements and fifty items that are negative statements about self. (Refer to the Appendix for a copy of the Self Concept Scale.)

The Scale is arranged into a basic 3X5 frame composed of three dimensions and five areas of the self concept. The three dimensions are 1) Identity (What I am) - This is the picture the subject has of himself; 2) Self-Satisfaction (How I accept myself) - This indicates the degree to which the subject accepts himself positively or negatively once he has stepped back to view himself as an object; and 3) Behavior (How he acts) - This is a view of his behavior as he sees it. The five frames of the Self Concept are 1) Physical Self - How he perceives his physical make-up: his appearance, health, etc.; 2) Moral-Ethical Self - This Scale lets the subject express his perception of his own moral-ethical worth; 3) Personal Self - The subjects view of his personal worth; 4) Family Self - In this frame the subject looks at himself as a member of his family. He expresses himself as being or not being a worthy family member; and 5) Social Self - This frame presents his view of himself as a member of society. That is, his relationship to "others".

In addition to the 3X5 frame of self concept the Scale yields these scores:

1. Self Criticism Score (SC). This is composed of the ten items taken from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. It represents statements that are slightly negative but true of most people. This score is then a measure of defensiveness.



2. Total Positive Score (P). This score represents a total measure of the 3X5 break-down of self concept. The Total P Score was the only scale used in this study.

3. Variability Score (V). This score is a measure of the amount of consistency or inconsistency of the perceived self from one area to the other. There are three scores given according to variability: Total, Row, and Column Variability.

4. Distribution Score (D). This score is a measure of the way the five possible answers are distributed. It also provides an additional measure of defensiveness if scores tend to be low.

5. True-False Ratio (T/F). This measure indicates a strong tendency to agree or disagree. It also indicates whether a person is accepting himself as what he is or what he is not.

6. Net Conflict Scores. This measure has a high correlation with the T/F ratio. It indicates a conflict between positive answers and negative answers in the same frame of self.

7. Total Conflict Scores. This score measures the total amount of conflict or confusion resulting from the answers given on the scale.

8. Empirical Scales. The following six scales differentiate between groups of subjects.



- A. Defensive Positive Scale (DP). This score indicates a measure of defensiveness with the extreme scores holding significance.
- B. General Maladjustment (GM). This score proposes a general measure of adjustment. It discriminates between psychiatric patients and non-patients but not between the different groups or types of psychiatric patients.
- C. Psychosis Scale (Psy.) This scale differentiates psychotic from non-psychotic subjects.
- D. Personality Disorder Scale (PD). This score attempts to differentiate persons who have personality disorders from those who appear not to have personality disorders.
- E. Neurosis Scale (N). This scale proposes to differentiate between neurotic and non-neurotic persons.
- F. The Personality Integration Scale (PI). This scale suggests better than average adjustment or personality integration.
9. Number of Deviant Signs Score (NDS). This is a measure of the deviations between the other scores. It is currently the best measure of the scale for predicting deviant behavior.

The subject is asked to provide a measure of his self concept by rating each item according to five possible responses. He is to

choose which of the five answers best describe him. The responses and their respective scores are:

Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and Partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
1	2	3	4	5

The subject indicates on his answer sheet which response he prefers. When converted to the score sheet, the responses to the negative items are reversed to make the scoring uniform. The subjects indicated on their answer sheets which of the five responses they preferred. Since a Completely False answer to a negative question was essentially the same as a Completely True to a positive question, Dr. Fitts reversed the point value for negative questions. A Completely False answer was then scored as 1 on the answer sheet but when the score was transformed to the score sheet it was given a value of 5. This provided a uniform value system for the scoring of answers.

Norm Groups: The original individuals from which the normative data were developed was composed of 626 people from various parts of the country. The subjects ranged in age from twelve to sixty-eight. "There were approximately equal numbers of both sexes, both Negro and white subjects, and representatives of all social, economic, intellectual and educational levels from 6th grade through the Ph. D. degree." (2, p. 13)

The normative data have not been expanded since the original sample because it became apparent from studies that other populations did not differ significantly. The author states, however, that the Scale has an over representation of white subjects, college students and persons between the ages of twelve and thirty. The author also reports that there does not seem to be any significant effect on the self concept scores because of such variables as age, sex, race, education, intelligence, and socio-economic level.

Reliability: William Fitts (2, p. 15) reports a test-retest reliability coefficient of .92 for the Total P Score. Since the Tennessee Self Concept Scale yields twenty-nine scores pertaining to the self concept, reliability was reported for each of the scores. The test-retest values range from .60 to .92, with predominance of values in the .80 to .92 range.

Validity: William Fitts (2, pp. 17-30) reported that validation of the Scale was accomplished by four methods: 1) Content validity; 2) Discrimination between the groups; 3) Correlation with other personality measures; and 4) Personality changes under particular conditions. The Manual does not provide statistical support for the validation of the instrument.

## TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to compare the measured self concepts of three groups of boys demonstrating different behavior patterns: a delinquent group, an industrial arts group, and a college preparatory group. To accomplish this purpose, the null hypothesis was employed. The hypothesis was tested by the analysis of variance. (4) The 5% level of confidence was established as the level of significance for acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis.

Bartlett's (1) test for homogeneity of variance was employed where a significant F-ratio was found in order to establish that the variances were from a common normal population. Where homogeneity of variance was established, t tests (4) were then calculated to determine which combination of groups differed significantly.

## FINDINGS

By analysis of the data, the F-ratio (7.722) was found to be significant both at the 5% and the 1% level of confidence. To demonstrate that a significant difference existed between the groups, the obtained value of F had to exceed 3.15 at the 5% level of confidence and 4.98 at the 1% level of confidence.



Since the obtained value of  $F$  exceeded the 5% level of confidence, the null hypothesis was rejected. Submitting the  $F$ -ratio to the test for homogeneity of variance gave assurance that the variances of the three groups were from a common population. Table I includes the results of the analysis of variance.

TABLE I

Summary of the Analysis of Variance of the Total P Score for Delinquent, Industrial Arts and College Preparatory Groups

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Between group	14288.432	2	7144.216	7.722
Within group	<u>63841.134</u>	<u>69</u>	925.234	---
Total	78129.566	71		

The  $F$ -ratio was significant at the 5% level of confidence, therefore  $t$ -tests were applied to the data to determine which combination of the groups differed significantly. Table II includes the mean and the standard deviation for the delinquent group, the industrial arts group and the college preparatory group. Table III includes the results of the  $t$ -tests for the three groups.



Tables II and III demonstrate that the industrial arts group scored significantly higher on Total P than either the delinquent group or the college preparatory group. When the mean scores and the standard deviations of the three groups were compared to the mean score (345.6) and the standard deviation (30.7) of the norm group, the industrial arts group was the only one of the three groups that would be considered as indicative of average adjustment. The industrial arts class held a score that was in the 45th percentile range. The scores of the delinquents and the college preparatory class were in the 10th percentile, thus indicating poor adjustment. When self concept scores of the delinquent group and the college preparatory group were compared, there was no significant difference found between the two groups.

TABLE II

Summary of the Mean and Standard Deviation of the Total P Score for the Delinquent Group, the Industrial Arts Group and the College Preparatory Group

Group	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
Delinquents	48	305.5	25.6
Industrial Arts	12	342.8	31.6
College Preparatory	12	308.1	41.3

TABLE III

The t-Test Values for the Delinquent Group, the Industrial Arts Group and the College Preparatory Group

Group	Delinquent	Industrial Arts
Delinquent	---	3.71**
Industrial Arts	---	---
College Preparatory	.20	2.28*

\* Significant at the 5% level of confidence

\*\* Significant at the 1% level of confidence

The findings of this study are contradictory to the results that might be normally expected from a study of the self concept of delinquents and non-delinquents. The available research studies have demonstrated that delinquents score much lower on Total P than do the non-delinquents. Since the college preparatory group represented a non-delinquent group, they would be expected to have a significantly higher self concept than would the delinquent group.

The data collected in this investigation was not adequate to determine the reason or reasons for the similarity of scores for the two groups. Therefore, it became necessary to delay drawing

final conclusions from the obtained results. With the advent of additional research to determine the causative factors involved, conclusions might be drawn from this study. However, until such additional research is conducted, this study must remain inconclusive in reference to the obtained difference between the college preparatory group and the delinquent group.

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## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### SUMMARY

This study endeavored to discern if seventy-two boys, who demonstrated three different behavior patterns, would differ in their perceptions of self as measured by the Total P Scale of the Tennessee (Department of Mental Health) Self Concept Scale. Juvenile delinquents, an industrial arts class, and a college preparatory class were chosen to represent the three behavior patterns used in this study. The delinquents were chosen because their overt behavior was recognized as atypical and unacceptable in society as demonstrated by their incarceration. The college preparatory group was chosen because of their socially approved pursuit of excellence; that is, their high aspiration level. The industrial arts group was chosen because it was thought to occupy an intermediate position between the other two groups, indicating a more typical or average behavior pattern.

The three groups of youths were taken from two institutions in Tennessee. The delinquent group was confined to the Tennessee Youth Center at Joelton, Tennessee and the industrial arts group

and the college preparatory group were taken from a rural high school in Montgomery County, Tennessee.

The Tennessee Self Concept Scale, developed by William Fitts, was used as the instrument for assessing the self concept of the three groups. The instrument is a self-reporting, group-administering scale for measuring different aspects of self as categorized into a 3X5 scheme. The Total P Scale was used in this study as a composite measure of self concept.

To determine whether or not the measured self concepts of these three groups were different, the null hypothesis was established and then tested by analysis of variance. The null hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level of confidence. The t-test was applied to the data to determine where the differences existed. It was concluded that the industrial arts group could be distinguished from the other two groups by virtue of their self concepts. However, in this study the delinquent group could not be distinguished from the college preparatory group in terms of their self concepts. This was quite unusual in that research studies and theories of self indicate that the opposite should have occurred. The college preparatory group should have scored a much higher and a more positive self concept than the delinquents.



## CONCLUSIONS

The null hypothesis was rejected which established that there was a significant difference among these three groups of boys as measured by their concepts of self. The group of boys represented by the industrial arts class scored the highest, thus the most positive in terms of self concept of the three groups. Their mean score on the Total P Scale was within two units of the norm group for the Tennessee Self Concept Scale. This would indicate that the industrial arts group had a good understanding of themselves and that they had accepted themselves as they were. Since the Total P Score was high, it can be assumed from the nature of the test that this group saw themselves as being persons of worth and value. They would appear to be the most well-adjusted of the three groups.

In comparing the college preparatory group to the delinquent group, it was found that no significant difference existed between the two groups. The results of the t-test were unusual in that the available research indicated that the opposite should have occurred. The data collected in this study was not sufficient to determine the cause for the similarity in the scores. Before conclusions can be drawn, several questions must be answered:

1. Would the results be the same if a larger group of college preparatory students were used?

2. Were these boys experiencing difficulties that were unknown to the investigator? Thus what was the cause and effect relationship in the obtained results?

Since both the delinquent and the college preparatory groups scored low on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale, it would appear that neither group considered themselves as being of worth and value as persons. These groups would tend to be less well-adjusted than the industrial arts group. The college preparatory group would tend to be under more pressure to excel and more subject to possible failure than would the industrial arts group. This might explain the fact that the college preparatory group scored lower than the industrial arts group. However, it does not explain why their scores were similar to the delinquent group, nor why they were considerably lower than the industrial arts group. Thus due consideration must be used in interpreting the results of this study until additional research can disclose the reason for the similarity of the two groups.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This study produced atypical results, thus the most important recommendation is that another investigation be conducted to discern why the college preparatory group had a Total P Score quite similar to the delinquent group.
2. It is also recommended that larger samples be used. This will insure the requirement that representative groups are being studied.
3. The value of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale to discriminate between groups has been demonstrated in this study by the analysis of variance. It is thus recommended that the complete range of scores on the Scale be used with a variety of groups demonstrating different behavior patterns. This will add to the knowledge and usefulness of the Scale and to the knowledge of the self concept.
4. There is a great need in education to discover the cause and effect relationship that apparently exists between self concept and behavior. Thus, there is a continued need for research that can contribute to the knowledge concerning the self concept.

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## APPENDIX



# **TENNESSEE**

(Department of Mental Health)

## **SELF CONCEPT SCALE**

**by**

**William H. Fitts, PhD.**

Published by

Counselor Recordings and Tests

Box 6184 - Acklen Station

Nashville, Tennessee 37212



## INSTRUCTIONS

On the top line of the separate answer sheet, fill in your name and the other information except for the time information in the last three boxes. You will fill these boxes in later. Write only on the answer sheet. Do not put any marks in this booklet.

The statements in this booklet are to help you describe yourself as you see yourself. Please respond to them as if you were describing yourself to yourself. Do not omit any item! Read each statement carefully; then select one of the five responses listed below. On your answer sheet, put a circle around the response you chose. If you want to change an answer after you have circled it, do not erase it but put an X mark through the response and then circle the response you want.

When you are ready to start, find the box on your answer sheet marked time started and record the time. When you are finished, record the time finished in the box on your answer sheet marked time finished.

As you start, be sure that your answer sheet and this booklet are lined up evenly so that the item numbers match each other.

Remember, put a circle around the response number you have chosen for each statement.

Responses-	Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
	1	2	3	4	5

You will find these response numbers repeated at the bottom of each page to help you remember them.



1. I have a healthy body.....	1
3. I am an attractive person.....	3
5. I consider myself a sloppy person.....	5
19. I am a decent sort of person.....	19
21. I am an honest person.....	21
23. I am a bad person.....	23
37. I am a cheerful person.....	37
39. I am a calm and easy going person.....	39
41. I am a nobody.....	41
55. I have a family that would always help me in any kind of trouble.....	55
57. I am a member of a happy family.....	57
59. My friends have no confidence in me.....	59
73. I am a friendly person.....	73
75. I am popular with men.....	75
77. I am not interested in what other people do.....	77
91. I do not always tell the truth.....	91
93. I get angry sometimes.....	93

Responses-	Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
	1	2	3	4	5

2. I like to look nice and neat all the time.....	2
4. I am full of aches and pains.....	4
6. I am a sick person.....	6
20. I am a religious person.....	20
22. I am a moral failure.....	22
24. I am a morally weak person.....	24
38. I have a lot of self-control.....	38
40. I am a hateful person.....	40
42. I am losing my mind.....	42
56. I am an important person to my friends and family.....	56
58. I am not loved by my family.....	58
60. I feel that my family doesn't trust me.....	60
74. I am popular with women.....	74
76. I am mad at the whole world.....	76
78. I am hard to be friendly with.....	78
92. Once in a while I think of things too bad to talk about.....	92
94. Sometimes, when I am not feeling well, I am cross.....	94

Responses-	Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
	1	2	3	4	5

7. I am neither too fat nor too thin.....	7
9. I like my looks just the way they are.....	9
11. I would like to change some parts of my body.....	11
25. I am satisfied with my moral behavior.....	25
27. I am satisfied with my relationship to God.....	27
29. I ought to go to church more.....	29
43. I am satisfied to be just what I am.....	43
45. I am just as nice as I should be.....	45
47. I despise myself.....	47
61. I am satisfied with my family relationships.....	61
63. I understand my family as well as I should.....	63
65. I should trust my family more.....	65
79. I am as sociable as I want to be.....	79
81. I try to please others, but I don't overdo it.....	81
83. I am no good at all from a social standpoint.....	83
95. I do not like everyone I know.....	95
97. Once in a while, I laugh at a dirty joke.....	97

Responses-	Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
	1	2	3	4	5

- |     |  |    |
|-----|--|----|
| 8.  | I am neither too tall nor too short.....   | 8  |
| 10. | I don't feel as well as I should.....  | 10 |
| 12. | I should have more sex appeal.....   | 12 |
| 26. | I am as religious as I want to be.....   | 26 |
| 28. | I wish I could be more trustworthy.....  | 28 |
| 30. | I shouldn't tell so many lies.....   | 30 |
| 44. | I am as smart as I want to be.....   | 44 |
| 46. | I am not the person I would like to be.....  | 46 |
| 48. | I wish I didn't give up as easily as I do.....   | 48 |
| 62. | I treat my parents as well as I should (Use past tense if parents are not living)..... | 62 |
| 64. | I am too sensitive to things my family say.....  | 64 |
| 66. | I should love my family more.....  | 66 |
| 80. | I am satisfied with the way I treat other people.....                                  | 80 |
| 82. | I should be more polite to others.....   | 82 |
| 84. | I ought to get along better with other people.....                                     | 84 |
| 96. | I gossip a little at times.....  | 96 |
| 98. | At times I feel like swearing.....   | 98 |

Responses -	Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
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13.	I take good care of myself physically.....	13
15.	I try to be careful about my appearance.....	15
17.	I often act like I am "all thumbs".....	17
31.	I am true to my religion in my everyday life.....	31
33.	I try to change when I know I'm doing things that are wrong.....	33
35.	I sometimes do very bad things.....	35
49.	I can always take care of myself in any situation.....	49
51.	I take the blame for things without getting mad.....	51
53.	I do things without thinking about them first.....	53
67.	I try to play fair with my friends and family.....	67
69.	I take a real interest in my family.....	69
71.	I give in to my parents. (Use past tense if parents are not living).....	71
85.	I try to understand the other fellow's point of view.....	85
87.	I get along well with other people.....	87
89.	I do not forgive others easily.....	89
99.	I would rather win than lose in a game.....	99

Responses -	Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
	1	2	3	4	5

14.	I feel good most of the time .....	14
16.	I do poorly in sports and games .....	16
18.	I am a poor sleeper .....	18
32.	I do what is right most of the time .....	32
34.	I sometimes use unfair means to get ahead .....	34
36.	I have trouble doing the things that are right .....	36
50.	I solve my problems quite easily .....	50
52.	I change my mind a lot .....	52
54.	I try to run away from my problems .....	54
68.	I do my share of work at home .....	68
70.	I quarrel with my family .....	70
72.	I do not act like my family thinks I should .....	72
86.	I see good points in all the people I meet .....	86
88.	I do not feel at ease with other people .....	88
90.	I find it hard to talk with strangers .....	90
100.	Once in a while I put off until tomorrow what I ought to do today .....	100

Responses-	Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true
	1	2	3	4	5