

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL STRUCTURE
ON THE SELF-CONCEPT OF EARLY ADOLESCENTS

by

ROBERT NEIL McALPINE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Education

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AND FOUNDATIONS

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

SEPTEMBER, 1983

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect that various institutional structures have on the self-concept of early adolescents. Specifically, the study asked three questions: first, does the transition from elementary school to junior high school affect the perceived and ideal self-concepts of early adolescents; second, do institutional arrangements for junior high school grades affect the perceived and ideal self-concepts of early adolescents; and, third, do various personal and family characteristics mediate the relationships between institutional arrangements and self-concept.

Data was collected from 500 students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 in four institutional arrangements--elementary school (kindergarten to grade six), elementary-junior high school (kindergarten to grade 9), junior high school (grades 7 to 9), and junior-senior high school (grades 7 to 12). Results from the questionnaire were coded onto IBM cards and analyzed using S.P.S.S. Self-concept was mentioned by twelve bipolar adjectives which were factor analyzed to produce a measure of perceived and ideal self-concept.

Initial analysis indicated that age was the main factor in causing a decrease in adolescent self-concept. The effect of the sex of the adolescent was also shown to have a significant effect upon self-concept. When these two variables were analyzed with the

institutional effect, it was demonstrated that the institution, not age, was the significant factor in causing a decrease in the perceived and ideal self-concepts of early adolescents. In addition, significant differences were noted between the mean self-concepts of students in the various institutions. Finally, the sex of the adolescent also had a significant effect upon the perceived and ideal self-concepts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to the many people who have helped me during the various stages of this study:

To Dr Rodney Clifton, my advisor, for his assistance and guidance throughout the planning, analysis, and writing of the manuscript;

To Dr John Long and Dr Daniel Albus, members of my committee, for their assistance and professional guidance;

To the principals, and staff of the schools involved in the study for allowing me access to their schools;

To the students who participated in the study, for without them the study would not have been possible;

To the staff, students, and parents of my own school for their understanding and encouragement.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Roberta, and my two boys, Garth and Graham, for their understanding and encouragement during the course of the study.

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CHAPTER I

NATURE OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

In 1977, the Middle Years Review Committee of the Manitoba Department of Education published its final report, Education in the Middle Years, using the term "middle years" to describe the period from approximately ten or eleven years of age to approximately fifteen years of age. This report presented research findings which indicated that children in the middle years undergo dramatic developmental changes as they enter puberty but no conclusions were made by the Committee as to the possible effects that these developmental characteristics or the setting of the school have on the self-concept of students in their early adolescent years.

The lack of discussions of early adolescent self-concept by the Middle Years Review Committee is a major oversight. Over the years, the self-concept of adolescents has received considerable attention. G.S. Hall (1904), one of the earliest researchers in adolescent psychology, characterized adolescence as a period of "storm and stress", a time of identity crisis. He addressed the biological issues of adolescence as they affected maturation and self-concept

but he did not examine the effect of environmental factors, specifically institutional structures, on the self-concept of adolescents.

Since Hall's work on adolescence in which he characterized this time as being a period of inevitable "sturm und drang", many other researchers have investigated the phenomenon of adolescence and several studies lend credence to Hall's work. Anna Freud (1969), for example, described adolescence as being a period of "developmental disturbance". The necessity of adolescents coming to terms with the increase in their sexual and aggressive urges cannot come about without a certain amount of turmoil. Another researcher, Erik Erikson (1968), has used the term "identity crisis" to describe the situation of dealing with the disturbance caused by adolescents attempting to reconcile their perceived and ideal self-concepts.

In order to understand the significance of the self-concept for social-psychological development, it is necessary to establish a definition of it. Self-concept has been defined as that particular cluster of ideas and attitudes we have about our awareness at any given moment of time. Out of our awareness of ourselves grow the ideas (concepts) of the kind of person we see ourselves as being (Adams, 1976:83). This definition can be said to be the perceived self, a concept that is derived from the reflected appraisals of significant others. The impressions and inferences from statements, actions, subtle gestures of others towards the individual gradually establishes a self-concept as the person believes he is seen by

others and will come to include a point of view on all aspects of the self (Staines, 1958).

Not only do individuals have a perceived self-concept but they also hold an ideal self-concept which is a set of interpretations about the individual when he is revealing his most personal wants and aspirations and may not, as Burns (1979) claims, be in touch with reality at all. Horney (1945) has shown that it may be so far away from his or her perceived self that the individual may be depressed through its unattainability. Murray (1953) described the ideal self as a set of ambitions leading to a goal conceived by the person as himself or herself at his or her highest hope.

The crisis model of adolescent self-concept introduced by Hall (1904) and supported by Freud (1969) and Erikson (1968), for example, would lead one to the conclusion that adolescents ideal self is so far removed from their perceived self as to cause possibly irreconcilable difficulties. According to Burns (1979:172), the closer a person's perceived self approaches the ideal self, the better he will be able to satisfy his needs. Implicit in the ideals of having many friends, being good-looking, or becoming a success, for example, are the feelings that one's affectional, security, competence, acceptance, and status needs would be satisfied if the ideals were achieved. Any sizeable shortfall of the ideals suggests that the needs are blocked and various maladjustments such as withdrawal, anxiety, and guilt are likely to manifest themselves. This suggests that a high degree of

congruence between perceived and ideal self-concepts suggests a state of appropriate adjustment. However, Schlien (1969) indicates that it might also reflect high maladjustment, that is, the person is so self-defensive that he or she cannot openly admit that discrepancies between the perceived and ideal self-concept exist.

SELF-CONCEPT FORMATION DURING ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence is generally accepted by most researchers as a time when each person needs to re-examine and re-evaluate himself or herself physically, socially, and emotionally in relation to those close to him or her and society in general. From the writings of Hall and Erikson, a traditional conception of adolescence as a crisis period flowing from physiological change and psychological maturation within a complex society is offered. However, most research does not support the universality of adolescence as a period of self-concept crisis. Engel (1959) conducted a study on the stability of self-concept in adolescence. Testing 104 eighth grade students and 68 tenth grade students and retesting them two years later, Engel found that the self-concept remained relatively stable for both groups over the two-year period. Nevertheless, she also found that for those students whose self-concept on the first testing was negative, their self-concept was significantly less stable than those whose initial self-concept was positive. She further determined that those students who began and continued with

a negative self-concept showed significantly more maladjustment than those whose self-concept remained positive. Carlson (1965) carried out research on the self-concept during adolescence using 49 students (33 girls and 16 boys) in a 6-year longitudinal study. The children were first tested at 12 years of age and again at 18 years of age by means of a self-descriptive questionnaire. Results showed that median self-concept scores remained identical for boys and girls over the 6-year period.

However, Katz and Zigler (1967) produced results opposite to the two studies cited above. These researchers used 60 boys and 60 girls in the fifth, eighth, and tenth grades whose perceived and ideal self-concepts were assessed both by a questionnaire and an adjective checklist. Self-concept disparity was defined as the degree of difference between the perceived and ideal self-concepts. The results showed that the self-concept disparity increased with age, with the greatest change occurring between the fifth (10 year olds) and the eighth (13 year olds) graders.

Piers and Harris (1964) compared the stability of the self-concept over a 4-month period among eight, ten, and fifteen year-olds, and found no differences by age. Like Engel, these two researchers found that correlations between age and self-concept at all age levels were in excess of 0.70. Coopersmith (1967:21), at the end of his 3-year study of self-concept, said that the self-concept appears relatively resistant to change. Once established, the self-concept apparently provides a sense of

personal continuity over space and time, and is defended against alteration, diminution, and insult.

Coleman (1974), in a large study, found that self-concept is relatively stable throughout adolescence. He found that the proportions of youngsters who experience self-concept disturbance remained constant at each age. Coleman provides evidence that points to some teenagers struggling with identity problems, but this is certainly not true for all teenagers. Perhaps, as Burns states (1979:178), it may be that those adolescents who suffer identity crises are those who have always had problems of self-concept definition perhaps due to a diet of inconsistent and often negative feedback from significant others ever since birth.

Offer (1974), on the basis of a longitudinal study of adolescent boys from ages fourteen to eighteen, suggests that for most boys these years are not characterized by stress or turmoil. Other researchers, such as Douvan and Adelson (1966) and Weiner (1970) also question the theory of adolescent crisis. These studies, however, often do not deal with early adolescence, nor do they systematically measure differences in the self-concept over a range of ages. Monge (1973) produced evidence from factor analyses of semantic differential data of 1,035 boys and 1,027 girls from eleven to seventeen years of age that self-concept structure remains relatively constant throughout adolescence. It would seem, according to Burns (1979), that change in self-concept in adolescence for most children is dependent on experiences being

subjectively interpreted as traumatic, such as violent change of environment, role, or status, as with a change of school.

Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) conducted a study to discern when, if at all, the disturbance in adolescent self-concept occurs. Several dimensions of the self-concept were measured among 1,917 urban school children aged eight to seventeen. Compared to children in the eight to eleven year age group, the early adolescents, particularly those between twelve and thirteen, were shown to have a lower perceived self-concept. More importantly, evidence was presented suggesting that the child's environment may have a stronger effect than his age in producing the lower self-concept. Children who had entered junior high school appeared to have lower self-concept than their age peers still in elementary school. Thus, while they found a disturbance in the self-concept, it was in early adolescence and not, as Erikson hypothesized, in late adolescence. Also, this disturbance was related to the movement into secondary school at puberty--a highly significant event for many children--a move from a protected small school context to a larger more impersonal school where they have lost their status based upon size and age and where they are constantly changing rooms. Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) hypothesized that this move, apparently, makes the self-concept more vulnerable and increases the disparity between the perceived and ideal self-concepts.

Regardless of whether one accepts the theory of "storm and

stress" advanced by Hall or the theory of a disturbance in the self-concept advanced by Engel and others, one has to recognize that children enter puberty with its accompanying physical, emotional, and social pressures. Concurrently, early adolescents are faced with a major change in their school environment as they move from elementary to junior high school.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE, SCHOOLING, AND SELF-CONCEPT

Not all children leave an elementary school at the end of grade 6 and arrive at a junior high school containing grades 7, 8 and 9. The Middle Years Review Committee, in its 1976 study, found, in fact, that only 10 percent of schools serving students in junior high grades were exclusively grades 7, 8 and 9. A further 31 percent of schools contained grades 7, 8 and 9 as an extension of elementary schools and 9 percent contained grades 7 to 12. Fifty percent of schools serving students in junior high grades contained various combinations of grades such that one or two of the junior high grades were combined with other grades. If, as Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) have stated, the self-concept of adolescents is affected by the transition from elementary school to junior high school, is it not possible that different perceived and ideal self-concepts would be found depending on the institutional structure experienced by the early adolescent? Might not educators better understand the needs of their adolescent students by having

some reliable research as to the significance, if any, of institutional structure for adolescent self-concept?

Why should the institution of the school have an influence on children? The school is an institution with which the majority of children come in contact. To understand the behaviour of children, it is often argued that we must consider both the individuals and their environments. And, it must be remembered that school is the one major social institution, other than the family or the peer group, with which virtually all persons are intimately involved during the critical developmental years of childhood and adolescence.

School, for most children, may be equated to the adult's occupation. On several studies employing Manford Kuhn's Twenty-Statements Test (kuhn and McPartland, 1954; Hickman and Kuhn, 1956; Mulford and Salisbury, 1964), the greatest response to the question "What do you do?" was the task (work) which takes up the most of their day. For children, their "work" is that which they do at school. Similarly, as adults have work careers which involve their movement through society, children have work careers involving their movement through the educational system. The educational system is an organization that provides children with interactions with significant others and provides for the socialization of its members. As Lauer and Handel (1983) point out, socialization is a lifelong process and people are socialized each time they enter a new group. Whereas the child has learned one set of rules and

patterns due to his interaction with the elementary school organization, the child as he enters a new organization, the junior high school, is faced with a new structure requiring him to begin the socialization process again. The greater the organizational change and the greater the adaptation with which the child is faced, the greater the possibility that the child will experience a lower self-concept.

Hurlock (1973) focuses on the school environment and has identified six aspects of school life which may affect the self-concept: teachers, extracurricular activities, bull sessions, prestige of the institution, grades and popularity. These aspects, although not intended as such, can be linked to Mead's theory of symbolic interaction. Herbert Bloomer (1965:13) presents a concise definition of symbolic interaction as a process of interpretation (ascertaining the meaning of the actions or remarks of the other person), and definition (conveying indications to another person as to how he is to act). The teachers' influence comes from the way they treat children, the academic expectations they have for children, and, in fact, their own personal and social adjustment. Hurlock (1973) further claims that, since athletic achievements for boys and social achievements for girls are often considered prestigious, those adolescents who stand out in these areas will often develop favourable self-concepts. These adolescents may often be regarded as exceptional by their peers and thus assist in enabling adolescents to have a more positive self-concept. If the

school has prestige in the community because of its high academic rating, this can help adolescents to have a more positive image of themselves.

The academic aspects of schools, or the effect of grades upon adolescents, is also addressed by Hurlock (1973). She claims that adolescents often judge themselves, to a great extent, in terms of their academic achievement. If the school stresses academic achievement, or if the leading group places greater emphasis on grades than other achievements, adolescents who are capable of success academically may achieve a more positive perceived self-concept. However, Hurlock (1973) concludes her discussion on the effect of schools by claiming that it is, in fact, success in extracurricular activities rather than grades which has a greater influence on adolescent self-concept. It must be remembered that the development of self-concept involves the integration and internalization of outside stimuli from significant others, that is those persons who are important or who have significance to the child by reason of his sensing their ability to reduce insecurity or to intensify it, to increase or decrease his helplessness, to promote or to diminish his sense of worth (Burns, 1979:161).

Parents are presumed to be the most significant others in a child's environment. However, as the child enters the adolescent years, the peer group has an enormous impact on the adolescent. The peer group replaces the family as a major source of feedback; it provides self-esteem, mutual support, standards, opportunity for

practice in, and rehearsal of, tasks preparatory for adulthood. The peer group provides a milieu within which an identity may be secured, since the growing child becomes less like his parents and more like his peers (Burns, 1979:165). Thus, if peers place more emphasis on extracurricular activities than grades, then adolescents who excel in those areas may have an enhanced image of themselves.

The fact that schools can play an important role in the development of adolescent self-concept, as shown above, is further borne out by Simmons, Rosenberg, and Rosenberg (1973). One of the major findings related specifically to school structure, namely that the move from elementary school to junior high school causes a disturbance in the self-concept of adolescents. This conclusion to their study was very general referring only to the move from grade six to grade seven. No mention was made of different grade organizations and whether children's self-concepts are affected by the actual institutional arrangements which children experience.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS AND SELF-CONCEPT

In addition to the effect that institutional arrangements or the school environment may have on the self-concept of adolescents, research shows that self-concept may be affected by several other variables including age, sex, family size, status in the family, and socioeconomic status of the family. Although the effect of these factors will be discussed separately, they often are interrelated

and, to some extent, interact with the institutional setting.

Age and Self-concept

Linked to age is the time at which a child is permitted to enter the school system. In Manitoba, for example, children generally enter kindergarten in September if their fifth birthday occurs before the end of that calendar year. With a normal progression of one grade per year, children at age twelve are moving from grade six to grade seven. The beginning of the onset of puberty occurs at the age which places children in grade five and this stage of development continues for approximately four years (Crowe and Crowe, 1956; Dacus, 1963; Tanner, 1963). Thus, the majority of children are at varying stages of development during the transition from elementary school to junior high school.

Hurlock (1973) observed that one of the most important developmental tasks during adolescence is the acceptance of changes taking place in body and physique. Physical growth can be a source of great anxiety, whether it be too slow or too fast, too little or too much. The rate of an adolescent's physical development in comparison to others in the peer group considerably affects how each youngster feels about himself. In this respect, it must be remembered that the peer group is one of the most important set of significant others for older children. According to Hurlock (1973:32), the rapid growth and physical change so alter the body that the adolescent who cannot readily accept his new physique and

revise his physical self-image may become overly self-conscious. The amount of knowledge and forewarning the adolescent has of the changes taking place in his or her body will markedly influence his or her attitude toward any change. Any feature that greatly deviates from the adolescent's childhood ideal of himself or herself as a grown-up may be a source of concern. Conger (1973) cites studies to support observations that physical characteristics are mentioned more than any other characteristic in response to what adolescents disliked most; likewise Conger observes that adolescents who perceive themselves as deviating from cultural stereotypes are likely to have a greater problem with their perceived and ideal selves resulting in a negative self-concept. Peer relationships during adolescence are also extremely important, as previously stated, for adolescent self-concept. The adolescent's acceptance into a peer group is often influenced by his or her physical appearance or attributes. The child who has a poor self-concept based upon self-perceived abnormalities or defects in their physical make-up, may shun attempting to establish friendships with the group in which they are most interested.

In addition to studies related to the developmental characteristics of adolescents and their effects on self-concept, other studies have examined the self-concept of adolescents to determine if, and when, a decrease in the perceived self-concept occurs. The study conducted by Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) showed that there was a decrease in self-concept in the

twelve to thirteen year group. Katz and Zigler (1967) also found that self-concept decreased with age, with the greatest change occurring between the ten and thirteen year-olds.

Jorgensen and Howell (1969) studied changes in self-concept from ages eight to eighteen and found that there was a decrease in self-concept between the ages of eight through twelve. Metcalfe, in a study reported in Burns (1979:178), studied the effects of transfer to a comprehensive school from primary school. He tested the self-concepts of children during the final term at primary school and retested them one year later in secondary school. No overall differences in measured self-concept were detected for boys or girls. However, on the first and second testings for children with high or low self-concept scores (top and bottom 25 percent of students on the first testing), it was found that the scores for the children with high self-concepts decreased significantly but there were no significant differences for low scorers. This suggests that it is the young adolescent with a high self-concept who has the most to lose in changing his or her environment. The low self-concept child may be vulnerable too, but perhaps it would be difficult for him to sink much lower.

Sex and Self-concept

The influence of the sex of the adolescent on self-concept has been investigated in several studies. The literature which was reviewed indicated that although boys and girls experienced disturbance in their self-concepts, there was no significant

differences between the sexes in their self-concepts. The disturbance, however, may be caused by different factors for boys and girls. With the onset of puberty, there is an increasing pressure on children to develop an appropriate sex-role identity. According to Burns (1979), sex differences in self-concept seem to occur from late primary school age onwards as the young girl tunes into the fact that the stereotypical characteristics of the female self-image are less valued than those of the male. Until then, the self-concept of girls, as well as of boys, derives largely from the mastery of age-appropriate skills. However, beginning in prepuberty and increasing through adolescence, girls seem to shift the source of self-concept from achievement to heterosexual affiliation.

Smith (1975), as reported by Burns (1979:196), administered the Sears' Self-Concept Inventory to 171 upper primary school children. Generally, the children possessed favourable self-concepts. However, a sex difference appeared in most aspects of the self-concept measured. Boys rated themselves significantly more favourably than girls on seven of nine subscales (physical ability, appearance, convergent mental ability, divergent mental ability, social relations, social virtues, and school performance). On the remaining two subscales (work habits and happy qualities), boys were slightly, but not significantly, ahead. This study indicates that as early as early childhood, girls were beginning to evaluate themselves less favourably than boys.

Douvan and Gold (1966) make a general distinction between the

centrality of personal achievement to self-concept in boys and the importance of personal attractiveness and popularity to girls. Most girls derive a sense of esteem through social interpersonal adequacy. Boys can establish their self-esteem in varied ways--by direct sexual expression, by independence and autonomy, and by asserting competence in various competitive areas such as athletics and leadership in school affairs. Girls' greater reliance on specific social validation of their femininity means that dating, acceptance by peers, and popularity are more critical to them than to boys (Douván and Adelson, 1966; Kagan, 1964).

The idea that girls have a greater concern for their physical appearance than boys is further reinforced by Conger (1973) who suggests that they are more concerned with their physical appearance and development than boys because their outward appearance and their perceived self are more closely bound together than they are for boys. The more that a healthy, well-proportioned, strong, and graceful body and an attractive face reduces the tensions produced by change, the less the individual will experience the storm and stress of adolescence. Girls, to the extent that breast development and slimness are exalted by the cultural stereotype, may place an inordinate emphasis upon these physical features. "Body cathexis" (Hurlock, 1973), or the feeling of satisfaction with the body, is more important to girls than to boys. The girl who is unsatisfied with the transformation in puberty may develop feelings of anxiety and insecurity.

Nevertheless, boys are not immune from the effects of body image on self-concept. Conger (1973) demonstrates that a considerable number of boys may experience rapid testicular growth accompanied by abundant pubic hair before they enter their growth spurt. From their own personal observations, they are men, but to the external world they still have the appearance of boys. This discrepancy between their private image of themselves as men and the continuing public perception of them as boys may lead to seemingly incongruous behaviour.

Family Size, Status in Family and Self-concept

There appears to be a significant lack of research information regarding the effect that the size of the family and the child's status, or ordinal position, in the family have on self-concept. However, Hurlock (1973) indicates that the adolescent from a one-child family generally develop[s a more positive self-concept than one who is subjected to the damaging influence of sibling rivalry and friction. She also claims that first born children are under constant pressure to live up to parental expectations, and so they tend to become serious, sensitive, conforming, and dependent and often suffer from feelings of inadequacy. Later-born children become more peer-oriented, and this makes them more cheerful, friendly, and competitive. They tend to be more popular with their peers than first borns and this has a favourable effect on their self-concept.

One would assume from this information, which is supported by

Garrison and Garrison (1975), that, if these factors affect self-concept, single children should have a more positive self-concept than children from multi-child families, and that in multi-child families, the first-born should experience a lower self-concept than other children of the family.

Socioeconomic Status and Self-concept

What is the effect of socioeconomic status on adolescent self-concept? Research in this area generally shows that socioeconomic status does not necessarily affect adolescent self-concept. Rosenberg (1965), for example, found that academic achievement was not necessarily affected by socioeconomic status. Although the peer group in the study criticized high grades, one-fourth of the group had high grades and coincidentally exhibited higher self-concept than others. In the Simmons, Rosenberg, and Rosenberg (1973) study reported previously, these researchers found a sharp increase in low self-concept between the ages of twelve and thirteen but these results were not affected by socioeconomic status.

Nevertheless, Rice (1978) claims that adolescents from lower socioeconomic status families have lower self-concept than those from higher status families, since membership in a disadvantaged group often has an important influence on self-concept. However, the socioeconomic status of the parents by itself is not enough to produce low self-concept among their children. Lower class, low income families can produce high self-concept children, according to

Rice (1978), if the parents' self-concept is high. The scope of this research did not, however, allow for the measurement of the parents' self-concept.

Soares and Soares (1969) studied the self-concept of disadvantaged students in grades five through eight. They found that both disadvantaged and advantaged children exhibited positive self-concepts. They found that disadvantaged students did not necessarily suffer from a lower self-concept or a lower sense of personal worth than advantaged students. Soares and Soares (1971) found that the change from neighbourhood schools to high schools, with its greater competitiveness on societal standards, and its lesser security contributed to the lowering of the self-concept of disadvantaged and advantaged pupils alike. Other studies which question the assumption that disadvantaged children have negative self-concepts include those of Kerensky (1967) and Carter (1968).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The preceding introduction suggests that, although there may be changes in the self-concept of adolescents, there is a question about the severity of the adolescent crisis in self-concept. Further, the literature suggests that the institutional setting may have a greater influence on the self-concept of adolescents than purely developmental factors which are associated with age or sex. Accordingly, in this study, the following three questions are

addressed. First, does the transition from elementary school to junior high school affect the perceived and ideal self-concepts of early adolescents. Second, do institutional arrangements of junior high grades affect the perceived and ideal self-concepts of early adolescents? And, third, do other variables concerning personal and family characteristics mediate the relationships between institutional arrangements of junior high grades and the perceived and ideal self-concepts of early adolescents?

This study was primarily concerned with the possibility that different institutional arrangements affect the self-concept of early adolescents and, therefore, the perceived and ideal self-concepts were assessed for children ages ten to fifteen years of age. The majority of children in this age span are in grades five through eight and encompasses the onset of puberty (Dacus, 1963; Tanner, 1963). This enabled the hypothesis that changes in perceived and ideal self-concepts are not due to puberty alone but are affected by the institutional setting to be tested.

Although the research on the effect of personal and family characteristics on self-concept is not totally conclusive, these factors were controlled in this study to determine if any or all of them affect the perceived and ideal self-concepts.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

Several studies have examined adolescent self-concept and have

examined the effect of the school environment on the adolescent. However, there has been a lack of research into the specific effects that changes in the educational environment may have on the self-concept of early adolescents. Following the lead of Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973), the present study specifically examined the effects that different institutional arrangements had on the self-concept of adolescents. Thus, this study provides research data on the important relationship between institutional arrangements and the self-concept of adolescents which was not considered by the Middle Years Review Committee in Manitoba.

As educators, we are responsible to ensure that the children placed in our care receive the best possible education available. Decisions affecting the educational welfare of children should be based upon the best information available. If one examines junior high school arrangements, existing in Manitoba, there is variability in institutional arrangements. The decision as to which grades will be placed together is one made by local school boards and may be based on a number of factors including available finances, population distribution, and numbers of students. However, if one particular institutional arrangement produces less disturbance in the self-concept of adolescents, those officials charged with making major policy decisions should be made aware of this fact in order that decisions affecting the students take into account reliable knowledge about adolescents.

LIMITATIONS

The school division from which the sample for this study was selected contained only three institutional arrangements for the children in grades 7, 8 and 9: separate junior high schools (grades 7 to 9), kindergarten to grade 9 schools in which junior high students are combined with elementary students, and grade 7 to 12 secondary schools in which junior high school students are combined with senior high school students. No other combination of grades was available in the school division selected for the study. However, these grade arrangements are representative of approximately 50 percent of the institutional arrangements for children in junior high grades in Manitoba. This may mean though that the results of this study may not be applicable to the entire province.

If, in this study, personal and family characteristics are found to affect the self-concept of adolescents, the results may not be generalizable to the entire province. The division from which the sample was drawn is a large urban division. Consequently, factors found in such a setting may not occur in other smaller urban or rural areas of the province.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the data and the techniques used in the analysis of the data are described. First, the sample is examined; second, the variables are presented; and, third, the procedures used in analyzing the data are discussed.

THE SAMPLE

The data for the study was collected from students enrolled in grades five through eight in a large division in a major Western Canadian city. The schools which the students attended were selected to provide examples of the prevalent institutional arrangements--elementary (kindergarten to grade 6), elementary-junior high (kindergarten to grade 9), junior high (grades 7 to 9) and junior-senior high (grades 7 to 12). As there are no other institutional arrangements available in the selected school division, no other arrangements were studied. Only students enrolled in grades 5, 6, 7 or 8 were included in the study. A total of 500 students, consisting of 257 females and 243 males, participated in the study. The number of females and males participating by grade in each of the institutional settings is

shown in Table 1.

In the case of the elementary arrangement, it was necessary to obtain data from grade 5 and 6 students in two elementary schools. The sample size from either school was considerably smaller than the sample sizes obtained in the other institutional arrangements. Therefore, combining the data from grade 5 and 6 students in the two elementary schools provided a larger group of students from this institutional arrangement.

In the elementary-junior high school, all students in grades 5 and 6 were included; however, as students from other schools attend this school for junior high, only students who had attended elementary grades in this school were selected for the grade 7 and 8 sample. The junior high and the junior-senior high are larger than the other schools as several elementary schools send their students to them for grade 7. Students in these two institutional arrangements were randomly selected to supply a sample size approximately equal to other sample sizes.

THE VARIABLES

The questionnaire which was used in this study (see Appendix A) was designed to obtain information on the variables. The questionnaire has two parts, both parts being completed by all respondents. Part I consisted of a series of questions to obtain data on the variables comprising the personal and family

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS
BY INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT AND GRADE

| Grade | | Institutional Arrangement | | | | Total |
|--------|--------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------|
| | | Elementary | Elementary- Junior-High | Junior High | Junior- Senior High | |
| 5 | Male | 27 | 16 | -- | -- | 43 |
| | Female | 33 | 11 | -- | -- | 44 |
| 6 | Male | 42 | 15 | -- | -- | 57 |
| | Female | 31 | 22 | -- | -- | 53 |
| 7 | Male | -- | 21 | 26 | 20 | 67 |
| | Female | -- | 28 | 31 | 22 | 81 |
| 8 | Male | -- | 28 | 28 | 20 | 76 |
| | Female | -- | 21 | 33 | 25 | 79 |
| Totals | | 133 | 162 | 118 | 87 | 500 |

characteristics of the students. These variables are: age, sex, family size, status in the family, and socioeconomic status as measured by the father's occupation. Part II measures the dependent variables--the perceived self-concept and the ideal self-concept--by means of two twelve-item Semantic Differential Scales.

Personal and Family Characteristics

Age. This variable was measured from the following question:

When were you born? _____ (Day, month, year)

The responses were coded into a three digit number representing the number of months from the child's birthdate to the testing date of April 1, 1983. Thus a standard reference point from which to measure each student's age was established. For example, if a student reported his birthdate as 17 February 1971, this was converted to 145 months.

Due to the relatively small number of respondents at several monthly age groupings, it was decided to compress the respondents' ages into four-month groupings. This data was used for some analyses; however, in other analyses, it was decided to further compress the ages into yearly intervals. This decision increased the number of respondents in each age category and permitted age to be used in the same way as used by Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973). The distribution of students in each age grouping for both treatments of the variables are shown in Table 2. The mean age of the respondents was 147 months (12 years, 3 months) with the greatest percentage of students, 54.4 percent, being in the age

TABLE 2
 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE
 IN 4-MONTH AND YEARLY INTERVALS

| Age (Years-Months) | Number of Respondents | Age (Years) | Number of Respondents |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Less than 10 years | 2 | Under 11 | 44 |
| 10-1 to 10-4 | 8 | 11-0 to 11-11 | 106 |
| 10-5 to 10-8 | 23 | 12-0 to 12-11 | 121 |
| 10-9 to 11-0 | 21 | 13-0 to 13-11 | 151 |
| 11-1 to 11-4 | 31 | 14-0 to 14-11 | 63 |
| 11-5 to 11-8 | 38 | 15-0 and older | 15 |
| 11-9 to 12-0 | 37 | | |
| 12-1 to 12-4 | 29 | | |
| 12-5 to 12-8 | 47 | | |
| 12-9 to 13-0 | 45 | | |
| 13-1 to 13-4 | 53 | | |
| 13-5 to 13-8 | 55 | | |
| 13-9 to 14-0 | 51 | | |
| 14-1 to 14-4 | 26 | | |
| 14-5 to 14-8 | 13 | | |
| 14-9 to 15-0 | 7 | | |
| 15-1 and older | 14 | | |
| Totals | 500 | | 500 |

range of 12 and 13 years of age. The number of students at either extreme of the age ranges is small as these ages have either not entered grade five or have already left grade eight. This is caused by the natural progression of 1 grade per year after the child enters kindergarten at age 5.

Sex. In order to determine sex, each respondent was requested to indicate his or her sex. As noted above, there were 257 female respondents (51.4 percent of the sample) and 243 male respondents (48.6 percent of the sample). When the data was transferred to computer cards, females were coded as 1 and males coded as 2.

Family Size. The question used to measure the family size was:
How many children INCLUDING YOURSELF are there
in your family?
Responses to this question indicated that the number of children per family ranged from 1 to 9 with the mean family size being 2.9. Single child families accounted for 7.2 percent of the respondents replies whereas families with two or three children accounted for 63.6 percent of the cases.

Status in the family. In order to determine the status of each respondent in his or her family, the following question was asked:

How many brothers and sisters are older than you?

Responses to this question varied from zero children older to eight children older. The mean number of children older than the respondent was 1.3. There were 188 children (37.6 percent of the sample) who were the oldest in their family and 144 children (28.8

percent of the sample) who were the second oldest in their family.

Socioeconomic Status. In order to obtain information on the family's socioeconomic status, the following question was asked:

What is your FATHER'S occupation?

The occupations were coded into eight categories. The first six classifications were based on the scales developed by Blishen and McRoberts (1976) from their analysis of the 1971 Canadian census. The classifications from Blishen and McRoberts were: Class 1--architects, dentists, doctors, and other highly skilled professionals; Class 2--accountants, teachers, financial managers, and other professionals; Class 3--ministers, health care workers, foremen and salesmen; Class 4--skilled occupations such as actors, athletes, and musicians; Class 5--semi-skilled occupations such as mechanics, nursing aides, and truck drivers; and, Class 6--unskilled occupations such as farmers, janitors, and waiters.

A number of responses could not be coded into Blishen and McRoberts classifications. Therefore, Class 7 was added to accommodate fathers' occupations which were described as laid-off or unemployed. These 7 classes accounted for 411 responses out of the sample of 500. The remaining 89 responses were classified in a residual category and were not treated in the analysis. This residual classification included occupations listed as retired, student, separated, divorced, deceased or unknown.

The mean of this variable was 4.7. Class 6 (unskilled

occupations) accounted for 30.4 percent of the sample, classes 4 and 5 accounted for 41.6 percent and classes 1, 2 and 3 accounted for 21.7 percent of the sample.

Perceived and Ideal Self-concepts

As mentioned, Part II of the questionnaire consisted of two twelve-item Semantic Differential Scales to measure the two variables--the perceived self-concept and the ideal self-concept. The semantic differential was developed by Charles Osgood (Osgood, et al., 1957). Although it was not originally designed as such, it has been shown by extensive research to be a very reliable instrument to measure attitudes (Osgood, et al., 1957:192-195).

Factor analysis of semantic differential bipolar adjectives has generally revealed three distinct dimensions--evaluation, potency, and activity--of which the evaluative is the dominant dimension. This finding led Osgood to believe that evaluation is the primary dimension in human thinking. Since the self-concept can be said to be evaluations of the self, this instrument appears to be appropriate to measure the self-concept (Wylie, 1974:225). In fact, the Semantic Differential has been used extensively in the measurement of self-concept. Wylie (1974:224-230) reports that this technique has been used in more than 80 studies. Although she claims that it is extremely difficult to validate the use of the Semantic Differential as a measure of self-concept due to the variation in researchers' choices of bipolar adjectives, she does feel that the use of this technique is commendable. This is because

the explicit contrast presented within each scale likely helps to communicate to the subjects the meaning of each adjective more clearly than in many other scales used to measure self-concept.

As stated by Osgood, et al. (1957:191), the scales which are used in the measurement of attitudes have high factor loadings on an evaluative dimension and negligible loadings on other dimensions. Nine of the twelve scales used in this study reflect the evaluative dimension--good-bad, beautiful-ugly, awful-nice, kind-cruel, sad-happy, relaxed-tense, pleasant-unpleasant, friendly-unfriendly, and agitated-calm. The remaining three scales which were used were selected as they appeared to have applicability to the study of adolescent self-concept. These scales are from the potency dimension (brave-cowardly, serious-humorous) and the activity dimension (passive-active).

The bipolar adjectives which are used in the study are separated by five intervals rather than the customary seven because, as Osgood (Osgood, et al., 1957:85) states, grade-school children seem to work better with a five-step scale than the customary seven-step scale. Perhaps, as they suggest, children do not have sufficient powers of discrimination which would permit them to use a seven-step scale. A score of 5 was allocated to the category closest to the positive end of the scale, a score of 3 was allocated to the middle category, and a score of 1 was allocated to the category closest to the negative end of the scale.

In an attempt to determine the relationships between the twelve

bipolar adjectives on both the perceived self-concept and the ideal self-concept, a correlation matrix was produced using the FACTOR subprogram of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The intercorrelations, which are presented in Table 3, indicate that certain scales have positive relationships while others have little or no relationship. In order to remove those scales which have little relationship to the evaluative dimension, the correlation matrix was factor analyzed.

A series of exploratory factor analyses were conducted. When the twelve items were analyzed using three factors, not all items loaded on a single factor. The eigenvalue for this factor was 3.45 for perceived self-concept and 3.97 for ideal self-concept whereas the eigenvalues for the second and third factors were 0.81 and 0.59 for perceived self-concept and 0.64 and 0.48 for ideal self-concept. The first factor accounted for 71.1 percent of the common variance in perceived self-concept and 78.0 percent of the common variance in ideal self-concept. However, some items did not load on this factor and as it is customary to accept only those factors having an eigenvalue greater than 1 for further analysis, the next factor analysis utilized a single factor.

When the principal factor analysis of the twelve bipolar adjectives was conducted, the eigenvalue was 3.35 for the perceived self-concept and 3.88 for the ideal self-concept. The factor loadings varied from .16 to .72 and it was decided to exclude those items with factor loadings of less than .50. As a result, the times

TABLE 3

INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG TWELVE ITEMS
FOR THE PERCEIVED AND IDEAL SELF-CONCEPT¹

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|
| 1. Good-Bad | | .33 | .21 | .50 | .07 | .46 | .28 | .26 | .48 | -.07 | .54 | .37 |
| 2. Beautiful-Ugly | .23 | | .43 | .40 | .15 | .34 | .36 | .26 | .42 | .07 | .33 | .25 |
| 3. Brave-Cowardly | .03 | .27 | | .21 | .15 | .15 | .30 | .24 | .24 | .06 | .15 | .21 |
| 4. Awful-Nice | .54 | .28 | .02 | | .14 | .59 | .44 | .26 | .59 | .08 | .58 | .24 |
| 5. Passive-Active | .06 | .27 | .19 | .12 | | .14 | .16 | .20 | .18 | .16 | .21 | .23 |
| 6. Kind-Cruel | .48 | .15 | -.02 | .57 | .04 | | .40 | .29 | .53 | -.01 | .45 | .22 |
| 7. Sad-Happy | .32 | .29 | .17 | .38 | .22 | .32 | | .38 | .44 | .03 | .45 | .31 |
| 8. Relaxed-Tense | .25 | .21 | .11 | .28 | .07 | .31 | .43 | | .44 | -.05 | .31 | .39 |
| 9. Pleasant-Unpleasant | .34 | .26 | .10 | .50 | .12 | .49 | .39 | .40 | | .02 | .60 | .38 |
| 10. Serious-Humorous | .09 | .14 | .01 | .03 | .21 | .01 | .06 | .02 | .04 | | .06 | .02 |
| 11. Unfriendly-Friendly | .41 | .18 | .10 | .53 | .10 | .49 | .35 | .31 | .50 | .03 | | .43 |
| 12. Agitated-Calm | .20 | .18 | .13 | .27 | .10 | .26 | .42 | .48 | .34 | -.05 | .37 | |

¹The correlation matrix for the ideal self-concept is above the diagonal and the correlation matrix for the perceived self-concept is below the diagonal.

from the potency dimension (brave-cowardly, serious-humorous) and the activity dimension (passive-active) were excluded from further analysis. Also excluded was one item from the evaluative dimension (beautiful-ugly) which did not load on the single factor although previous research suggested that this item should be appropriate to the measurement of self-concept as physical attributes are noted by several researchers to be of particular concern especially for girls.

The remaining eight items were subjected to a final principal component analysis, the results of which are presented in Table 4. All items loaded between .51 and .73 on the single factor for the perceived self-concept and between .49 and .79 for the ideal self-concept. These items, which are all from the evaluative dimension, were therefore selected to represent the perceived and ideal self-concepts. In the analyses of the data the eight items, for both the perceived and the ideal self-concept, are summed to form two scales.

The range of scores for the perceived self-concept was from 8 to 40 with a mean score of 31.92 which indicates a mean item score of 3.92. If a mean item score greater than 3.5 is considered to be an indication of positive self-concept, 81.4 percent of the students could be said to have a positive self-concept. Conversely, if a mean item score of 2.5 or less is considered to be an indication of negative perceived self-concept, only 3 percent of the students could be said to have a negative perceived self-concept. The

TABLE 4
 PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS OF THE EIGHT ITEMS
 FOR THE PERCEIVED AND IDEAL SELF-CONCEPT

| | Perceived Self-concept | | Ideal Self-concept | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| | F ₁ | h ² | F ₁ | h ² |
| 1. Good-bad | .59 | .35 | .64 | .41 |
| 2. Awful-Nice | .73 | .54 | .74 | .54 |
| 3. Kind-Cruel | .69 | .48 | .65 | .42 |
| 4. Sad-Happy | .58 | .34 | .59 | .34 |
| 5. Relaxed-Tense | .52 | .27 | .49 | .24 |
| 6. Unpleasant-Pleasant | .68 | .48 | .79 | .62 |
| 7. Unfriendly-Friendly | .69 | .48 | .77 | .59 |
| 8. Agitated-Calm | .51 | .26 | .49 | .24 |
| Eigenvalue | 3.16 | | 3.40 | |

remaining 15.6 percent of the respondents could be said to have a neutral perceived self-concept.

For the ideal self-concept, the scores again ranged from 8 to 40 with a mean score of 37.06, indicating a mean item score of 4.38. If the same criteria for positive and negative self-concept is used for the ideal self-concept, 94.6 percent of the respondents had a positive ideal self-concept, 1.4 percent had a negative ideal self-concept and 4.0 percent were neutral. It is interesting to note that 44.6 percent of the students indicated that they strived for the perfect ideal self-concept as their mean item score was 5 out of a maximum of 5.

PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Schools were selected, in consultation with divisional personnel, in order to provide an example of various institutional arrangements. As stated previously, two elementary schools (kindergarten to grade 6), one elementary-junior high school (kindergarten to grade 9), one junior high school (grades 7 to 9), and one junior-senior high school (grades 7 to 12) were selected to provide the sample of students for the study. Before the research was conducted, a request for school based research was submitted to a Divisional Research Committee and approval was received in December 1982. Before students could participate in the study, parents were notified of the study and permission was obtained for

their son or daughter to participate. The parental letter (see Appendix B) was distributed by the students' homeroom teachers who ensured maximum return of the consent form. Approximately 90 percent of the parents agreed to let their children participate in this study.

The questionnaire was administered to the students by the researcher. This ensured anonymity as the researcher did not know the students and was not able to influence their responses. It also ensured that verbal instructions were identical in all testing sessions. The questionnaire was administered to the students in their classroom groups and required approximately 15-20 minutes. Those students for whom parental permission was not given were excluded from the testing session.

The data from the completed questionnaires was transferred to computer cards to facilitate statistical analysis. Specifically, the following programs of SPSS were used in the analysis: SCATTERGRAM to present the relationship between the perceived self-concept and age, and the ideal self-concept and age; ANOVA (analysis of variance) and ANCOVA (analysis of covariance); REGRESSION to determine the effect of the personal and family characteristics on the perceived and ideal self-concepts.

CHAPTER III

THE FINDINGS

The main purpose of this study is to examine the effects that various institutional arrangements have on the self-concept of early adolescents. However, literature indicated that several personal and family characteristics affected the self-concept. Consequently, these personal and family characteristics are examined first to determine which, if any, have a significant effect on self-concept. This permits those variables affecting self-concept to be controlled when examining the institutional effect.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS AND SELF-CONCEPT

As indicated earlier, several personal and family characteristics--age, sex, family size, status in the family, and socioeconomic status--may affect self-concept. It has been noted that age has the most important effect upon self-concept as mentioned by most researchers from G.S. Hall (1904) to Simmons, Rosenberg, and Rosenberg (1973). For this reason, the effect of age on self-concept is examined first. An examination of the other personal and family characteristics--sex, family size, status in the family, and socioeconomic status--will follow.

Age and Self-concept

As stated, research has indicated that the perceived self-concept decreases with age, particularly in the age range of 8 to 14 which often coincides with the transition from elementary school to junior high school. In addition, the research suggested that the ideal self-concept remained relatively stable over the same age range. Because age is directly related to a specific grade in an educational structure, it is important to distinguish the age effect on self-concept from the institutional effect.

In order to determine the relationship between age and perceived self-concept, scatter plots of individual self-concept scores were examined. The correlation between age and perceived self-concept was -0.119 which was significant at the $.01$ level and the standardized regression coefficient was -0.271 . This means that a one standard deviation change in age results in a decrease of 27.1 percent of a standard deviation change in self-concept. This is usually accepted as indicating a strong relationship between age and perceived self-concept. For the ideal self-concept, the correlation with age was $-.090$ which was significant at the $.05$ level. The standardized regression coefficient for the ideal self-concept was -0.245 indicating that for a one standardized deviation change in age there was a corresponding decrease of 24.5 percent of a standard deviation change in ideal self-concept. For both scattergrams, a negative linear relationship was noted. However, the number of cases within each monthly age grouping was very small.

In order to further investigate the effect of age on self-concept, an analysis was carried out using a one way analysis of variance. In order to increase the sample size, ages were grouped in four month intervals and the mean self-concept scores were analyzed. The information obtained from this analysis indicated that the relationship between age and both the perceived and ideal self-concepts was basically negative and linear. The relationship between age and perceived self-concept was significant at the .01 level and the relationship between age and ideal self-concept was significant at the .05 level. The mean self-concept scores for each 4-month age range are displayed in Figure 1. Both ends of each graph appear to deviate significantly from the general monotonic linear decrease represented by each graph. This can possibly be explained by the small number of cases at these ages--10 respondents at age 10 years 4 months and younger and 15 respondents at age 15 years 0 months and older.

As can be seen from Figure 1, the perceived self-concept was lower than the ideal self-concept and both decreased as age increased. The fact that self-concept decreased with age was to be expected based upon previous research. This research, however, measured age in 4-month intervals rather than the yearly intervals used by previous researchers [eg. Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973), Katz and Zigler (1967), Jorgensen and Howell (1969)] thus giving a more precise analysis of the data. However, is this effect on self-concept an age effect alone or is it, in part, caused by

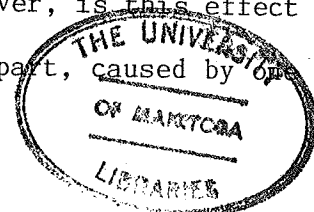
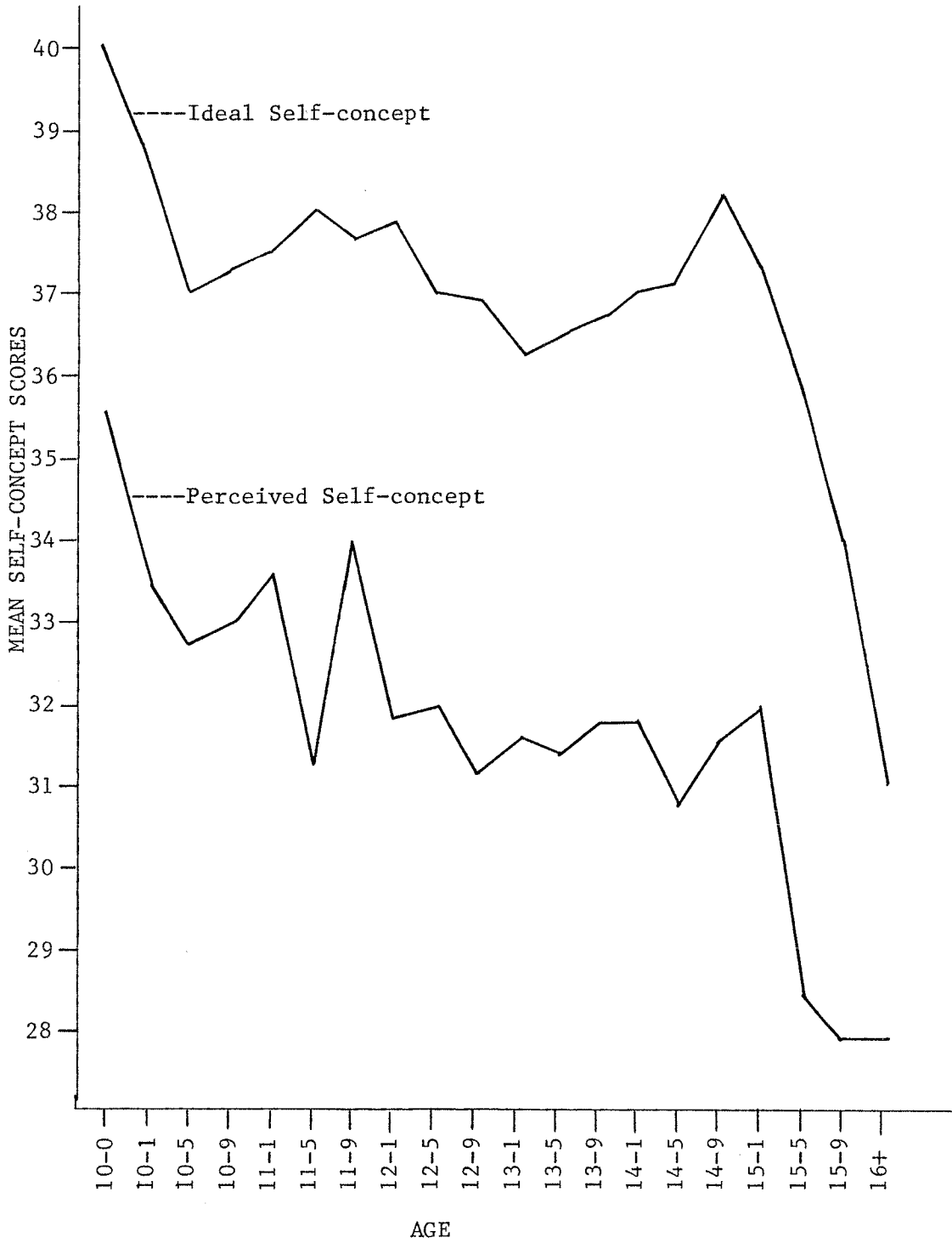


FIGURE 1

MEAN SELF-CONCEPT SCORES
BY AGE IN 4-MONTH INTERVALS



or more of the other personal and family variables in this study?

Age, Sex, and Self-concept

The above investigation measured the mean self-concept scores for each age interval. Is it not possible that the sex effect may increase or decrease the change in self-concept? The literature which was reviewed indicated that both boys and girls experienced disturbances in their self-concepts and that one of the major contributors to the disturbance appeared to be the onset of puberty with its accompanying physical and developmental changes. Literature has further indicated that the onset of puberty was related to both age and sex, beginning at approximately eleven years of age for girls and twelve years of age for boys (Crowe and Crowe, 1956; Dacus, 1963; Tanner, 1963). One would expect therefore that these two variables would affect the self-concept although the effects may be different.

Table 5 presents the effects of age and sex on perceived and ideal self-concept. The results are displayed statistically by the standardized regression coefficient (Beta), the probability that these variables are significantly different than chance (F) and the variance in the dependent variables as explained by the independent variables (R²). The standardized regression coefficients for the effects of age and sex on perceived self-concept were nearly identical with one standard deviation change in age resulting in a 11.8 percent of one standard deviation decrease in perceived self-concept and one standard deviation change in sex resulting in a

TABLE 5
 THE EFFECTS OF AGE AND SEX
 ON PERCEIVED AND IDEAL SELF-CONCEPT

| Independent Variables | Perceived Self-concept | | Ideal Self-concept | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------|-----------------------|----------|
| | Beta | F | Beta | F |
| Age | -0.118 | 7.188** | -0.089 | 4.102* |
| Sex | -0.125 | 8.066** | -0.153 | 11.963** |
| R ² | 3.0 | | 3.1 | |

*p > .05

**p > .01

12.5 percent of one standard deviation decrease in perceived self-concept. Both results are significant at the .01 level. The results further show that boys have significantly lower perceived self-concept than girls. Age and sex together account for 3 percent of the variance in perceived self-concept.

For ideal self-concept, the standardized regression coefficient for the effect of age is considerably lower than the standardized regression coefficient for the effect of sex which indicates that for the ideal self-concept, the effect of sex is more powerful than the effect of age. Further, the effect of age is significant at the .05 whereas the effect of sex is significant at the .01 level. As with perceived self-concept, ideal self-concept decreases with age and girls exhibit a higher self-concept than boys. Age and sex together account for 3.1 percent of the variance in ideal self-concept.

The analysis indicates that there are age and sex effects on both perceived and ideal self-concepts. This is to be expected based on the literature which suggested that girls generally enter puberty at younger ages than boys. Moreover, it was argued in the literature that puberty negatively affects self-concept because of the dramatic developmental changes which take place in the young adolescent.

Age, Family Size, Status in Family, and Self-concept

It has been shown that age affects self-concept by itself and together with sex, both results which were expected. However, what

effect do family size and status of the child in the family have on the self-concept of the early adolescent? Although there is a lack of research information on the effect of family size and the status of the child in the family, it is argued in the literature that single children have more positive self-concepts than children in families with two or more children. Further, it is noted that in multi-child families, the oldest child usually has a lower self-concept than younger children.

The effects of age, family size and status in the family on perceived and ideal self-concept are presented in Table 6. The standardized regression coefficients for the effects of family size and status in the family on perceived self-concept are $-.018$ and $-.052$ respectively. These results are not significant, which indicates that the two variables do not have an effect on perceived self-concept. The effect of age is significant at the $.05$ level and the standard regression coefficient is $-.108$ indicating that for one standard deviation change in age there is a corresponding decrease of 10.8 percent of one standard deviation of perceived self-concept. These three variables together account for 1.9 percent of the variance in perceived self-concept.

For the ideal self-concept, the standardized regression coefficients for family size and status in the family are not statistically significant. However, the effect of age on ideal self-concept has a standardized regression coefficient of $.084$ which is significant at the $.05$ level. These three variables together

TABLE 6

THE EFFECTS OF AGE, FAMILY SIZE, AND STATUS IN FAMILY
ON PERCEIVED AND IDEAL SELF-CONCEPT

| Independent Variables | Perceived Self-concept | | Ideal Self-concept | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|
| | Beta | F | Beta | F |
| Age | -0.108 | 7.708* | -0.084 | 3.377* |
| Size of Family | -0.018 | 0.067 | 0.020 | 0.080 |
| Status in Family | -0.052 | 0.550 | -0.074 | 1.097 |
| R^2 | 1.9 | | 1.2 | |

*p > .05

account for 1.2 percent of the variance in ideal self-concept.

Although the literature has indicated that the family size and the status in the family may have an effect on self-concept, this is not found to be the case in the present study. When the effects of age and these variables are examined, it is only the age effect which is significant for both perceived and ideal self-concepts. Thus, whereas the family size and the status in the family do not have a significant effect on self-concept, the effect of age on self-concept continues to persist. Will this age effect continue to persist in the analysis of the last personal and family characteristic, socioeconomic status?

Age, Socioeconomic Status and Self-concept

Research in the area of the effect of socioeconomic status generally shows that socioeconomic status does not necessarily affect self-concept. Although children from disadvantaged classes could have lower self-concepts, the fact that they belong to such a class is not always sufficient to produce lower self-concepts. However, children from lower socioeconomic classes are more likely to do less well in school and this is likely to affect their self-concepts. Furthermore, those who do very poorly are more likely to drop out when they reach the legal school leaving age of 16 years.

Table 7 shows the effect of age and socioeconomic status on perceived and ideal self-concept. For perceived self-concept, the effect of age has a standardized regression coefficient of -0.118

TABLE 7
 THE EFFECTS OF AGE AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS
 ON PERCEIVED AND IDEAL SELF-CONCEPT

| Independent Variables | Perceived Self-concept | | Ideal Self-concept | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| | Beta | F | Beta | F |
| Age | -0.118 | 5.812* | -0.089 | 3.293* |
| Socioeconomic Status | 0.026 | 0.275 | 0.031 | 0.403 |
| R^2 | 1.5 | | 0.9 | |

*p > .05

which is significant at the .05 level. However, the standardized regression coefficient for socioeconomic status is 0.026 which is not statistically significant. These two variables together account for 1.5 percent of the variance in perceived self-concept. For ideal self-concept, the effect of age has a standardized regression coefficient of -0.089 which is significant at the .05 level. For socioeconomic status, the standardized regression coefficient is 0.031 which is not statistically significant. These two variables together account for 0.9 percent of the variance in perceived self-concept.

This analysis demonstrates what the literature has indicated, namely that socioeconomic status does not necessarily affect the self-concept of early adolescents. However, the effect of age again has a significant effect upon the self-concept of early adolescents. Throughout the analysis of the personal and family characteristics, the effect of age on both perceived and ideal self-concept has persisted. The only other personal and family characteristic which has a significant effect on self-concept is sex. The remaining personal and family characteristics--family size, status in the family and socioeconomic status--did not have significant effects on self-concept.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND SELF-CONCEPT

The previous section examined the personal and family characteristics of children to determine the effect that these

variables had on perceived and ideal self-concepts. Although the major focus of this study is to examine the effect that institutional arrangements have on perceived and ideal self-concept, it was important to determine which, if any, of the personal and family characteristics affected the self-concept. If any of these variables were found to have a significant effect on perceived and ideal self-concept, then these variables must be controlled when examining the effect of institutional arrangements. That is, in order to determine if the institutional arrangements affected the self-concept of early adolescents, it is necessary to demonstrate that these effects do not result from personal and family characteristics which may covary with the institutional arrangements.

Age, which has been shown to have a significant effect on self-concept, does covary with the institutional arrangements. Specific ages are associated with specific grades; children enter kindergarten at age five and generally progress one grade per year. As grades are associated with specific institutions, particular ages often covary with particular institutional arrangements. It is necessary, therefore, to first examine the effects of institutional arrangements while controlling for age in an attempt to determine whether age, institutional arrangement, or both, affect the self-concept of early adolescents. Sex, which also has been shown to have an effect on self-concept will also be controlled. Following the analysis involving age and institutional arrangements,

the effects of institutional arrangements, age and sex on perceived and ideal self-concept are examined. The remaining personal and family characteristics--family size, status in the family and socioeconomic status--do not have significant effects upon self-concept, and therefore they are excluded from subsequent analysis. It must be noted that in the following analysis the age groupings are compressed into yearly intervals in order to increase the sample size (see Table 2).

Institutional Arrangement, Age and Self-concept

In order to determine if the different institutional arrangements affect the self-concept, a multiple classification analysis of the effects of the four institutional arrangements, controlling for age, on the perceived and ideal self-concepts was conducted. Table 8 presents the results of the analysis. As noted above, age is measured in yearly intervals and the number of respondents at each age level by institutional arrangement is reported in the table. Further, the mean self-concept score for each institutional arrangement by age group is reported for both perceived and ideal self-concept. Those age groups which produced significant results are indicated by the asterisk. It should be noted that not all ages are present in every institution because age is directly related to grade. For example, as children usually enter school (kindergarten) at age 5, ten and eleven year old students are generally still in the elementary grades, twelve year old students are most often found in grades six and seven, and older

TABLE 8
 THE EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
 ON PERCEIVED AND IDEAL SELF-CONCEPT
 CONTROLLING FOR AGE

| | | Perceived Self-concept | Ideal Self-concept |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>N</u> | | |
| <u>Age 10-0 to 10-11</u> | | | |
| Elementary | 28 | 33.50 | 37.93 |
| Elementary-Junior High | 32 | 32.87 | 35.50 |
| <u>Age 11-0 to 11-11</u> | | | |
| Elementary | 73 | 33.37 | 38.16 |
| Elementary-Junior High | 32 | 31.40 | 37.37 |
| <u>Age 12-0 to 12-11</u> | | | |
| Elementary | 27 | 32.03 | 36.48 |
| Elementary-Junior High | 37 | 32.48 | 38.18 |
| Junior High | 38 | 31.60 | 36.81 |
| Junior-Senior High | 19 | 29.89 | 34.57* |
| <u>Age 13-0 to 13-11</u> | | | |
| Elementary-Junior High | 58 | 33.36 | 36.98 |
| Junior High | 47 | 31.11 | 36.14 |
| Junior-Senior High | 42 | 30.00** | 36.97 |
| <u>Age 14-0 to 14-11</u> | | | |
| Elementary-Junior High | 13 | 32.92 | 38.39 |
| Junior High | 29 | 30.45 | 35.24 |
| Junior-Senior High | 21 | 30.81 | 38.38* |

*p > .05 **p > .01

students are usually found in junior high grades.

Table 8 illustrates certain trends within each age grouping. For perceived self-concept, ten year old students in the elementary school arrangement have a higher mean perceived self-concept (33.50) than those in the elementary-junior high arrangement (32.87). The same pattern holds for eleven year old students with those in the elementary arrangement having a mean perceived self-concept of 33.37 whereas those in the elementary-junior high arrangement have a mean perceived self-concept of 31.40. The twelve year old students are found in all the four institutional arrangements. In this age group, students in the elementary-junior high have a slightly higher mean perceived self-concept (32.48) than those students in the elementary school (32.03). However, twelve year old students in the junior high arrangement have a lower mean perceived self-concept (31.60) than the preceding two arrangements and twelve year old students in the junior-senior high arrangement have the lowest mean perceived self-concept (29.89). For thirteen year old students, those in the elementary-junior high arrangement have a mean perceived self-concept of 33.36 compared to 31.11 for students in junior high and 30.00 for students in junior-senior high. These results are statistically significant. For fourteen year old students, it is again students in the elementary-junior high arrangement who have the highest mean perceived self-concept (32.92) and those in junior high (30.45) and junior-senior high (30.81) are very similar. In essence, the results for perceived self-concept

demonstrate, in each age group, the larger and more complex the institutional arrangements, the lower the mean perceived self-concept.

If we examine the effects of institutional arrangement on ideal self-concept controlling for age, similar results as those for perceived self-concept are found for some age groupings. For ten year old students, those in the elementary arrangement have a higher mean ideal self-concept (37.93) than those in the elementary-junior high (35.50). Similar results are found for eleven year old students--38.16 in the elementary arrangement and 37.37 in the elementary-junior high arrangement. However, the remaining three age groupings have inconsistent results. For twelve year old students, those in the elementary-junior high have the highest mean ideal self-concept (38.18) followed by students in the junior high (36.81), students in the elementary school (36.48) and students in the junior-senior high with the lowest mean ideal self-concept (34.57). These differences are statistically significant. For thirteen year old students, those in the elementary-junior high arrangement and the junior-senior high arrangement have virtually identical mean ideal self-concepts (36.98 and 36.97) and this is not much different than the self-concept for students in the junior high school (36.14). For fourteen year old students, the results for those in the elementary-junior high and junior-senior high are again virtually identical (38.39 and 38.38) and considerably more positive than the self-concepts of students in the junior high school

(35.24).

The general trend for the results indicates that the institutional arrangement does have an effect on perceived self-concept when age is controlled. Specifically, students in the junior-senior high school have lower mean self-concepts than students in other institutional arrangements. Students in the elementary-junior high arrangement have, generally, the highest mean self-concepts for students in junior high grades. Although the results are not all statistically significant, possibly due to the small sample size at each age level, it has been noted that the more complex or larger the institutional arrangements, the lower the mean self-concept of the students. Whereas Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) only dealt with twelve year old students in grades 6 and 7 in two institutional arrangements, this study shows there is an institutional effect at each age level. The results for mean ideal self-concept are not as conclusive as those for mean perceived ideal self-concept possibly due to the fact that there is a ceiling beyond which the self-concept cannot be expressed. As noted earlier, 44.6 percent of the students indicated that they strived for the perfect ideal self-concept.

Institutional Arrangement, Age, Sex and Self-concept.

As was previously seen, sex also had an effect on the perceived and ideal self-concepts of early adolescents. Perhaps some of the institutional effects are in fact sex effects resulting from the

fact that girls mature earlier than boys. In order to determine the effects of institutional arrangements when both age and sex are included in the analysis, a series of analyses of variance were conducted. It was decided to not conduct the analysis by nesting sex within age because the sample size would be too small to provide meaningful results.

In an effort to distinguish the institutional effect from the effects of age and sex, a multiple classification analysis was conducted. This method permits the examination of each variable while controlling for the other two variables. For example, the effects of the institutional arrangement on self-concept can be examined while controlling for age and sex; the effects of age can be examined while controlling for institutional arrangements and sex; and the effects of sex can be examined while controlling for institutional arrangements and age. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 9. The number of respondents (N) is indicated for each institutional arrangement, each yearly age group and for males and females.

For perceived self-concept, the effect of the institutional arrangement becomes very evident when age and sex are controlled. Students in the elementary arrangement have the highest mean perceived self-concept (33.35), followed by students in the elementary-junior high arrangement (32.62), students in the junior high arrangement (30.82) and students in the junior-senior high arrangement (29.92) who have the lowest mean perceived self-concept.

TABLE 9

THE EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, AGE AND SEX
ON PERCEIVED AND IDEAL SELF-CONCEPT

| | | Perceived Self-concept | Ideal Self-Concept |
|--------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| | <u>N</u> | | |
| <u>Institutional Arrangement</u> | | | |
| Elementary | 133 | 33.35 | 37.99 |
| Elementary-Junior High | 162 | 32.62 | 37.34 |
| Junior High | 118 | 30.82 | 36.00 |
| Junior-Senior High | 87 | 29.92*** | 36.54* |
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| 10-0 to 10-11 | 44 | 32.19 | 36.33 |
| 11-0 to 11-11 | 106 | 31.55 | 37.27 |
| 12-0 to 12-11 | 121 | 31.69 | 37-06 |
| 13-0 to 13-11 | 151 | 32.37 | 37.05 |
| 14-0 to 14-11 | 63 | 32.19 | 37.52 |
| 15-0 to 15-11 | 15 | 30.64 | 35.81 |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | |
| Male | 243 | 31.14 | 36.31 |
| Female | 257 | 32.66** | 37.77** |
| <u>R²</u> | | 6.7 | 5.3 |

*p > .05

**p > .01

***p > .001

The results, which are significant at the .001 level, dramatically display the effects of the institutional arrangement on perceived self-concept. There is a monotonic decrease over the four institutional arrangements and clearly demonstrates that the smaller and less complex the institution, the higher the mean perceived self-concepts of the students. The age effect in this analysis is not significant. In fact, the age effect on perceived self-concept is rather ideosyncratic. Finally, the sex effect is significant at the .01 level and the results are consistent with earlier analyses--females have a higher mean perceived self-concept (32.66) than males (31.14).

For ideal self-concept, the institutional arrangement is significant at the .05 level and although the results are not quite as dramatic as for perceived self-concept, students in the larger and more complex institutions have lower mean ideal self-concepts than students in smaller and less complex institutions. The age effect on ideal self-concept is not significant and except for ten and fifteen year old students, the results are virtually identical. The effect of sex on ideal self-concept is again highly significant at the .01 level with females having a higher mean ideal self-concept (37.77) than males (36.31).

SUMMARY

The analysis originally investigated the effect of age on

self-concept, a phenomenon investigated by several researchers as identified in the review of the literature. Not surprising, self-concept of early adolescents decreases as age increases, a fact which was suggested by the previous researchers. The analysis continued with an examination of the effects of the other personal and family characteristics--sex, family size, status in the family and socioeconomic status. Only sex had a significant effect which was not totally unexpected although research had indicated that there would likely be little or no difference between the sexes. The analysis indicated that girls have significantly more positive self-concepts than boys.

The major concern of this study was to examine the effects of various institutional arrangements upon the self-concept of early adolescents and in particular the effect, if any, that the transition from elementary to various school arrangements for adolescent students had on their self-concept. The analysis indicated that the institutional arrangement has an extremely significant effect on the self-concepts. Students in elementary school displayed the highest self-concepts indicating that the smaller and less complex the institution the higher the self-concept. Further, the sex effect continued to be highly significant with girls having higher self-concepts than boys. The effect of age, so often mentioned by other researchers, disappeared when sex and institutional effects were controlled. This is perhaps

due to the fact that age and institutional arrangements are quite highly intercorrelated. In fact, the age effects which were reported by previous researchers may be institutional effects.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Previous research has indicated that several personal and family characteristics could affect self-concept. In particular, the age effect is mentioned most often by other researchers. The results of this study are discussed in this chapter. Particular attention is paid to the effect that institutional arrangements have on the self-concept of early adolescents. In addition, some important implications, practical and research, which may be derived from the research are pointed out.


DISCUSSION

The research which was reviewed earlier indicated that several personal and family characteristics might affect self-concept. Although research suggested that the number of children in the family and the status of the child in the family could affect the self-concept, this study did not find that these two variables had a significant effect upon the self-concept of early adolescents. The indication from previous research that socioeconomic status did not necessarily affect self-concept was found to be true for this study. As these three variables were found to not affect the self-concept

of early adolescents, they were not included in further analysis and are not discussed further.

However, the sex of the child was found to have significant effects on the self-concept in the preliminary analysis. Even though some previous research indicated that there were no significant differences between the sexes, Smith (1975) suggested, in fact, that boys had a more favourable self-concept than girls. The results of this study do not support this claim. Rather the results suggest that girls had more favourable self-concepts than boys. It is difficult to determine the reasons for this result although some possible reasons can be suggested. Conger (1973), for example, suggested that physical appearance is a greater concern to girls than boys. Nevertheless, the bipolar adjective beautiful-ugly, a measure of physical appearance and attractiveness, was eliminated from the study because this scale did not load on the evaluative dimension. This leads to the suggestion that physical attractiveness is no longer an important item when evaluating the self-concept of early adolescents. Or, is it possible that the conscious effort to eliminate or reduce sexism in schools, an ongoing concerted effort over the past decade, has assisted females in lifting their perceptions of themselves?

Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) suggested that the move from elementary school to junior high school affects the self-concept. This suggestion has been borne out by the current study as students in the institutional arrangements containing



junior high grades generally have lower self-concepts than students in the elementary schools. Also, students in the elementary school have mean self-concept scores which are the highest of those in all institutional arrangements. Furthermore, older students in the elementary-junior high arrangement have more positive self-concepts than students of identical ages in either of the other two institutional arrangements containing junior high grades. Moreover, it has been shown that different institutional arrangements have somewhat different effects on the self-concept of early adolescents. This suggests that smaller, more personal schools which provide for a gradual transition from elementary to junior high grades appeared to result in the least disturbance in the self-concept of early adolescents.

Why should this transition from a small, relatively simple institution to a large, complex one have such effects on the self-concept of early adolescents. Most people--children, adolescents, adults--can be afraid of the unknown. In the small, protected environment of an elementary school, the children are part of a "family" which can nurture them during their early school years. The child knows the teachers, the environment and the other children. He or she feels secure and safe. However, at the end of grade 6, for example, these children very often must move to a new environment, a junior high school, or a junior-senior high school. In this new environment, they may be in a departmentalized system where they change teachers, classrooms, and sometimes classmates

every 40 minutes. The students in grade 7 are the youngest and often smallest students in the school. Rather than have one teacher for the entire day who often acts as a counsellor, confidante and arbitrator, the student may have eight different teachers.

Children who move from grade 6 to grade 7 in the same institution may have less difficulty making the transition. They are still faced with the move from a self-contained classroom to a departmentalized system. However, being in the same institution as they were for their elementary school years, they have the opportunity to observe the procedures of the junior high. The junior high teachers are familiar with the children and any problems that a child may experience can be discussed with the preceding teachers.

Aside from the important results which arose regarding the effect of the institutional arrangement on the self-concept of early adolescents, another important finding was produced. Most of the current researchers who have examined the self-concept of early adolescents have concentrated their work at determining the time at which there is a decrease in the self-concept. The unfortunate part of the research is that the researchers did not attempt to determine why there was a decrease in the self-concept of early adolescents. They thought it was sufficient to simply state that there is a decrease in the self-concept of early adolescents between the ages of, for example, eight and fourteen. This study has shown that the age of the early adolescent does not affect their self-concept when

the effects of the institutional arrangement are controlled. The decrease evident in previous studies may be, in fact, due to the institution, the sex of the child, and not simply the age of the children.

Educational authorities are faced with policy decisions dealing with school closures caused by declining enrollments. Often it seems that decisions are based upon information which has not been obtained through research. It is important that officials who are charged with such decisions be made aware of the possible implications that their decisions may have upon the welfare of the students. If, as suggested by this study, the institution has profound effects upon the self-concept of children, these facts must be considered in making policy decisions. It is not sufficient to decide to close schools and amalgamate the students into larger complexes without considering this type of research. This study has clearly suggested that the more complex the institution, the lower the self-concept of the students. As such, when schools must be closed for financial reasons, school boards must carefully attempt to place students in institutional arrangements which would be most beneficial for them.

As long as the current institutional arrangements exist, administrators and educators must be made aware of the effect that the transition from elementary school to junior high school has on the self-concept of the early adolescent. Elementary teachers traditionally "teach children"--they are responsible for their total

education. In contrast, in the departmentalized junior high schools, teachers "teach subjects" and often do not have time, or possibly the expertise, to involve themselves with the students' problems. In order to assist the student adapt to the new environment, perhaps more counsellors could be assigned to junior and junior-senior high schools. However, with restraint in hiring, such a solution does not appear to be feasible.

Meanwhile, the self-concept of early adolescents is being affected as they enter grade 7. There is a possible, immediate solution which may not add staff or financial outlay to the overall school budget. With some internal reorganization, a transition programme could be established in junior high or junior-senior high schools. By establishing a school-within-a-school, the younger students may be located in a small section of the building where they may be separate from other students. By doing this, students may be grouped with teachers who understand the needs of early adolescents and, consequently, the transition can be accomplished with less disruption to their self-concepts. In addition, the number of teachers with which the child is faced each day could possibly be reduced and the transition from the self-contained classroom to the departmentalized structure could be accomplished in a gradual manner.

Also, it is possible that Faculties of Education should examine their teacher training programmes for junior high teachers. With

little adjustment in programmes, it may be possible to better prepare teachers to deal with the early adolescent. Graduating teachers, if they were more aware of the characteristics and needs of their students and the effects of institutional arrangements, could better assist their students to adapt to the junior high. In fact, the University of Florida currently offers a teacher certification programme for middle school teachers in order to ensure that they are competently trained to deal specifically with the problems of early adolescents.

FURTHER STUDY

Although this study demonstrated that it is the institutional effect, not the age effect, that has an impact upon the self-concept of early adolescents, it has left some questions unanswered. The study examined only three institutional arrangements for junior high students and these accounted for only 50 percent of the junior high arrangements in the Province of Manitoba. Is it possible that one of the remaining arrangements which were not included in this study may result in even more positive self-concepts of the adolescents? In addition, the study was conducted in a major urban centre. Social and economic conditions in such an environment do not necessarily exist in smaller urban centres and most likely do not exist in rural areas. It is possible that geographic location may affect the self-concept of early adolescents as they make the transition from elementary to junior high school.

The current study has suggested that the institution has a very

significant effect upon the self-concept of early adolescents. However, the study did not attempt to explain the underlying socio-psychological reasons for this effect. Are the results of this study due to interpersonal contact which occurs within the institution be they between students and students, or students and teachers? Are the number of students which are contained within the institution producing the varying self-concepts? Although it has been suggested that the institution has a dramatic effect upon the self-concept of early adolescents, research should be undertaken to determine the underlying causes for this effect.

Another area for possible study relates to a difference between the literature and some of the current findings. Previous researchers suggested that there were no significant differences between the self-concepts of boys and girls. However, this study found a statistically significant difference in the self-concept with girls exhibiting a more positive mean self-concept than boys. This result was clearly opposite to that which was expected. Although one could speculate as to the reason for the result--decrease in sexism in schools, women's liberation, loss of "traditional" values of female attractiveness--this finding does lead to the question: Why do early adolescent girls display a statistically significant, more positive self-concept than early adolescent boys?

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is part of a larger study which is being carried out in Winnipeg schools. I am interested in your opinions about yourself. The information you provide here will be held in strict confidence, and will not be available to your teachers, the principal, your parents, or other students.

The questionnaire has two sections. Part I asks you to give some information about yourself and Part II asks for your opinions about yourself. The questionnaire is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Work as quickly as possible and answer each question as fast as you can. PLEASE DO NOT OMIT ANY QUESTIONS.

THANK YOU for your cooperation. In you have any questions, please ask me.

R.N. McALPINE

PART I

INTRODUCTION

In this section, you are asked to provide some information about yourself. Read each question carefully and answer each.

1. What grade are you presently enrolled in (please check)?
 - a) Grade 5 _____
 - b) Grade 6 _____
 - c) Grade 7 _____
 - d) Grade 8 _____
2. When were you born? _____
Day Month Year
3. How many children INCLUDING YOURSELF are there in your family?

4. How many brothers and sisters are older than you? _____
5. Please indicate your sex (please check):
 - a) Female _____
 - b) Male _____
6. What is your FATHER'S occupation? Be specific.

PART II

INTRODUCTION

In this section you are asked to evaluate yourself. On the next two pages you will see a CAPITALIZED phrase and a group of words underneath called scales.

EXAMPLE

If you feel the CAPITALIZED phrase is very closely related to one end of the scale, you should place your check mark as follows:

SCHOOL, AS IT REALLY IS

Nice X _____ _____ _____ _____ Awful

OR Nice _____ _____ _____ _____ X Awful

If you feel the CAPITALIZED phrase is quite closely related to one end of the scale, you should place your check mark as follows:

SCHOOL, AS IT REALLY IS

Nice _____ X _____ _____ _____ Awful

OR Nice _____ _____ _____ X _____ Awful

If you feel the CAPITALIZED phrase is neutral or if the scale is completely irrelevant, then you should place your mark in the middle space.

SCHOOL, AS IT REALLY IS

Nice _____ _____ X _____ _____ Awful

DO NOT OMIT ANY SCALE. If you have a question, please raise your hand, and I will help you.

MYSELF, AS I WOULD MOST LIKE TO BE

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| Beautiful | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Ugly |
| Brave | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Cowardly |
| Awful | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Nice |
| Passive | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Active |
| Kind | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Cruel |
| Sad | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Happy |
| Relaxed | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Tense |
| Pleasant | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Unpleasant |
| Serious | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Humourous |
| Unfriendly | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Friendly |
| Agitated | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Calm |
| Good | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Bad |

APPENDIX B

Dear Parents,

In order to complete the requirements for a Masters Degree in Education, I am doing research into adolescent self-concept. Also I will be studying the effect that the move from elementary school to junior high school has upon the student's view of him or herself.

The purpose of this letter is to request your permission to allow your child or children to participate in such a study in the near future. As a parent and school principal, I can assure you that the information gathered in this study will be treated as confidential. Students will not be asked to identify themselves by name on any form and this will guarantee complete anonymity.

Your children will be asked to rate themselves as to the way they are and the way they would like to be on twelve sets of opposite words, i.e. good-bad, sad-happy, serious-humorous. This process will require approximately 15-20 minutes of your child's time.

This study has been approved by the school principal and the School Division Inter-University Research Review Committee.

Please indicate whether or not you wish your child or children to participate by completing the form below and returning the form to the school immediately. In order to prevent difficulties, it is necessary that the form is returned promptly.

Yours sincerely,

R.N. McAlpine

RETURN TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD PROMPTLY. THANK YOU

Name of Child _____

_____ My child may participate in the study
on adolescent self-concept.

_____ My child may not participate in the
on adolescent self-concept.

Parent Signature _____