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A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STUDENT SELF-CONCEPT,
TEACHER IMAGE, AND ABILITY GROUPING

by
Brian P. Miller

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Doctor of Education

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Ability grouping is a popular practice in American public schools today. Although the basic intent of ability grouping has been to increase academic achievement, the results of these attempts are questionable. Furthermore, little is known about the relation of ability grouping to academic self-concept which may be an even more important variable than academic achievement. The purpose of this study is to examine the relation between ability grouping and academic self-concept as well as other selected variables in a field setting.

Since the advent of Sputnik I, American public school curricula have become more technologically oriented. Development of the learner's cognitive and technical skills are given high curricular priority. For example, academic ability grouping, a cognitively oriented practice, became increasingly popular in American schools. A recent National Education Association survey (1968) indicated that three-fifths of American elementary school teachers approve of ability grouping and that the popularity of ability grouping is increasing.

The rationale generally given for the ability grouping practice is that the potential for achievement is increased when learners of similar abilities are grouped together for instruction. The intent of the grouping practice is to place students of like academic

abilities together and provide instruction tailored to the particular ability of the group. Theoretically, such "narrow range" groups would eliminate many of the problems associated with "wide range" groups: problems such as inappropriate materials, and varying work and comprehension rates.

Studies examining the relationship of ability grouping to achievement have reported contradictory findings. Some of these studies are discussed in Chapter II of the present study. Although considerable research has been conducted regarding grouping and achievement, few studies have been done to determine the relation of ability grouping to the academic self-concept of slow learners. Since self-concept is regarded by many to be such an important student variable, more data are needed to better understand the relation that ability grouping has to the student's academic self-concept.

Lafferty (1962:1) pointed out the need for a wholesome self-concept in these statements:

For the past decade it has been widely recognized among educators that a self concept was an important factor in the determination of how children act, learn, and later function in life. Hardly a publication exists in education today that does not, in some way, make reference to self concept as perhaps a more important predictor of success or failure than even the child's intellectual ability.

.....

There is overwhelming evidence that self concept is related to successful function in learning and later adjustment of live

Clearly, the schools have a significant responsibility in providing each student with the kinds of daily experiences that will

reinforce a positive view of self. Since self-concept is an important student variable and since little is known about the effect of ability grouping on academic self-concept, this study was designed to directly examine that relation. Specifically examined is the question, "Which grouping practice, homogeneous or heterogeneous ability grouping, is more positively associated with the self-concept of the slow learner?" Both homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping practices could, possibly, generate feedback that would have a negative effect on self-concept.

In the instance of homogeneous grouping, the low status of the slowest group may have a significant impact on the self-concept of the slow learner. Slow students may view their placement in such groups as evidence that they are less than normal and adequate students. Such a perception could lead to a negative regard for self. Consideration of an analogous case in point may help better to illustrate the nature of this type of feedback. In a given classroom situation a teacher may group students into two or more homogeneous ability groups, perhaps, labeling them the "Blue Birds" (non-slow learners) and the "Red Birds" (slow learners). In such a classroom situation it is possible that negative feedback could be identified as the stigma of being placed in the "Red Bird" group while being fully aware that this group contained only the slowest of students. The question examined in this study relative to homogeneous grouping is, "What relation does such a quasi-caste system have on the academic self-concept of those students at the bottom of the classroom academic hierarchy?"

Conversly, heterogeneous grouping could also have a negative effect on the self-concept. In a "wide range" ability group, the slow learner may view his low achievement status with disappointment. The feedback in question in the heterogeneous ability group situation is the knowledge that others in the group are clearly superior in ability, plus, the possible realization that regardless of how hard he applies himself, the slow learner is a "cut below" his more able peers and cannot compete with them. Therefore, the specific intent of this study is to determine, in a field setting, if homogeneous or heterogeneous ability grouping is more positively related to the development of the academic self-concept of slow learners.

It seems important to know which practice, homogeneous or heterogeneous grouping, is most conducive to the development of wholesome self-concepts of slow learners. Furthermore, it seems important to know if slow learners have lower academic self-concepts than non-slow learners regardless of the type of grouping practice applied. This question is also investigated in this study. Existing data as reviewed in Chapter II do not fully provide this information for various reasons discussed in that chapter. This study is an attempt to add to the existing literature regarding self-concept and ability grouping in a manner that further answers the above questions regarding ability grouping.

Another reason for educators to be concerned with the quality of self-concept is its relation with academic achievement. Voluminous research studies, some of which are cited in Chapter II

of this study, indicate self-concept and achievement to be highly related. Therefore, even the most cognitively oriented educators might show some concern for environmental variables that effect self-concept as they also may have an influence on achievement.

The investigator suggests that there may be classroom variables other than ability grouping that are related to academic self-concept. One specific variable examined in this study is the student's perception of the teacher as it related to self-concept. Symonds (1951:190) expressed the importance of positive attitudes subsequent feedback to children from teachers and others in this statement:

. . . Parents and teachers should be extremely sensitive to the attitudes they express toward children It is important that children be referred to with warmth, appreciation, encouragement, and confidence, rather than with criticism, disparagement, and disappointment

. . . The fact that concepts of the self are a reflection of the attitudes expressed toward a person by others indicates the power that parents and teachers have in determining the kind of selves that children will develop.

If the child holds a negative regard for the teacher, it could be a function of the type of relationship that exists between teacher and student. If the student holds such a negative view, does it serve as negative feedback and influence his self-concept? Furthermore, what relationship, if any, does teacher image have with ability grouping as it relates to self-concept? Would, for example, a positive teacher image offset the possible negative effects that a particular grouping practice might have on the self-concept of a

slow learner? The present study is an attempt to make these and other determinations regarding self-concept.

Purposes of the Study

The specific purposes of this study were to investigate the following questions:

1. Is there a relationship between academic self-concept of slow learners and the type of group in which they are instructed?
2. Is there a relationship between slow learners' perceptions of the teacher and their self-concepts?
3. Is there a relationship between the interaction of teacher image with instructional group type and student self-concept?
4. Is there a difference between the way slow and non-slow learners view the teacher?
5. Do slow learners have a different self-concept than non-slow learners?
6. Do slow learners have different self-concepts in particular school subjects than non-slow learners?
7. Is there a relationship between the student's perception of the teacher and the sex of the teacher?
8. Is there a difference between the academic self-concepts of slow learners in school subjects in which they are homogeneously grouped compared with those subjects in which the same students are heterogeneously grouped?

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was restricted to two predominately

middle class communities in southwestern Michigan. A total of 833 fifth- and sixth-graders from these communities took part in the study.

The study limited to five the number of variables that could have statistical relationships with the self-concepts of slow learners. The variables examined were: (1) instructional group type, homogeneous or heterogeneous, (2) the student's perception of the teacher, (3) teacher and student sex, (4) the academic achievement status of the student, and (5) academic subject type.

Because global self-concepts appear to be influenced by numerous environmental factors both in and out of school a specific measure of self-concept was taken. This construct was called the "self-concept of academic ability." This measure was derived from the student's feelings of competence in a particular school subject(s).

Definition of Terms

The following definitions were used throughout the study:

Slow learner: Any fifth- or sixth-grade student that was or would have been placed in the lowest skilled group in two or more academic subjects by his teacher(s).

Teacher image: The average impression a group of students had of a particular teacher.

Homogeneous ability group: A group of students in a particular school of similar academic ability, the members of which were instructed together in a given subject.

Heterogeneous ability group: A group of students in a particular school of varied academic ability, the members of which are

instructed together in a given subject.

Specific academic self-concept: The student's perception of his ability to achieve in a given academic subject.

Overview

The report is divided into five chapters. Chapter I, contains an introduction to the study. In Chapter II a rationale, based on data and opinions, for doing the study is presented. A description of the research design, methodology, and instrumentation is provided in Chapter III. Chapter IV contains the findings of the study, and Chapter V presents the related conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of related literature is presented in six sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Self-concept and ability grouping, (3) Self-concept and achievement, (4) Ability grouping and achievement, (5) Ability grouping and student attitudes, and (6) Rationale for the present study.

Introduction

This chapter includes a review of studies in which a number of diverse variables have been examined. In these studies, relationships among ability grouping and student attitudes, self-concept and ability grouping, and achievement and ability grouping were investigated. The reasons for discussing such a range of studies are as follow.

There were few studies found in the literature that showed an examination of the relationship among the specific variables researched in the present study. Furthermore, there were no studies found that were designed to examine these relations in the particular way this study was designed to examine them. There are, however, several studies cited that examined the relation between self-concept and variables related to this study.

A review of the literature indicated that there exists an apparent inter-relationship among self-concept, achievement, ability grouping and other important variables. There have been studies,

for example, that relate self-concept to achievement, self-concept to ability grouping, and self-concept to important student attitudes. There has, however, been little discussion given to the possible inter-relationships of the variables of these various studies. The review that follows attempted to report those findings in a way that would illustrate the possible inter-relationships of the variables mentioned above, and in a way that would depict the rationale for doing a multivariant investigation.

Of further importance to the reader is the knowledge that the general condition of self-concept research, particularly with respect to grouping, is underdeveloped. Because researchers have been unable to agree on several questions regarding self-concept research, a disjoint body of literature on self-concept has developed.

A main problem for self-concept researchers has been the question of what is self-concept and how is it measured? Various definitions of self-concept have led to voluminous self-concept measurement devices. Such an array of definitions and scales has given rise to a general state of ambiguity regarding the relation of self-concept to selective variables. Therefore, to avoid a replication of research of this type, this study defined and measured self-concept in a manner that hopefully would be understood by research consumers. For the purposes of this study self-concept was defined, succinctly, as a student's reported feelings of adequacy relative to achievement in various academic subjects.

Self-Concept and Ability Grouping

This section contains a discussion of studies that explore the relationship between self-concept and ability grouping. The section has relevance to the present study as it includes a review of studies similar in design to the present study.

The work of Luchins and Luchins (1948) and Mann (1960) indicated that students are quite aware of the level of the ability group they are placed in regardless of the teacher's or school's efforts to conceal such information. The veneer of unoffensive group labels and unmarked instructional materials did not deceive the students who took part in these studies. Members of the slow, average, and advanced ability groups were readily identifiable among the students.

Given the above information that students are aware of their ability group status, what relation does this perception have to self-concept? Findings regarding the desirability of ability grouping relative to its association with wholesome self-concepts were divided.

The National Education Association summarized the findings of fifty research studies in a survey (1968₈₃) of literature regarding ability grouping. In that report from the survey it was stated that ". . . voluminous literature and research fail to support a positive or a negative judgment with regard to the merits of ability grouping." The survey report also stated that ". . . for some children the practice of ability grouping may produce undesirable effects in areas other than academic achievement, in attitudes, self-concept, Little research has been done in these areas."

The following is a review of several studies which showed grouping to be positively associated with self-concept. Drews (1967), in a study of ninth-grade boys, found that boys of low, average, and high ability in respective homogeneous ability groups had higher self-concepts than did their academic equals in heterogeneous groups. Goldberg (1964) reported that elementary students placed in homogeneous groups held higher self-concepts than students in heterogeneous groups. Simpson and Martinson (1961), in an identical research project, found that eighth-graders assigned to homogeneous ability groups held higher self-concepts than did students of comparable intelligent quotients in heterogeneous groups. Olevarri (1967) reported that homogeneous grouped students of lower academic ability in grades seven through twelve had higher feelings of self-worth than did their academic equals in the heterogeneous classes. Olevarri concluded that apparently the stigma of group labeling was offset by the classroom atmosphere and process of the homogeneous group.

A comprehensive study presented findings contrary to those cited above. This study was made by Borg (1964). Borg reported that ability grouping was associated with the self-concept of slow learners in a negative way. His study tested students in grades four, five, six, and nine and utilized various types of self-concept instruments. The study took over four years to complete and involved 2,500 subjects from two school districts. In one district, ability grouping was widely practiced, while in the other district, it was a non-existent practice.

Borg's main findings relative to ability grouping and self-concept were:

1. Students in heterogeneous ability groups had better self-concepts at all achievement levels than did homogeneously grouped students.
2. Girls of slow ability were somewhat more negatively affected than were boys when placed in homogeneous groups.
3. Slow groups were the least negatively affected by homogeneous grouping.
4. Homogeneous ability grouping was regarded as harmful to at least some of the students in the study.

The findings of Borg's study (1964) have particular significance for several reasons. First, it is the only study found that reported a negative relationship to exist between homogeneous ability grouping and self-concept. Second, it is a very large study that incorporated several instruments for checks and cross validation, and it was done over a long period of time. These factors give this study (Borg, 1964) a greater weight than others of smaller magnitude.

Wiley (1961) in The Self-Concept - "A Critical Survey of Pertinent Research Literature", reported that the literature was "lacking and inadequate". She called for more sophisticated self-concept studies of multivariant design.

The review of literature in this section has illustrated contradictory findings regarding the effect of ability grouping on self-concept. This contradictory research points out the need for additional research which will more clearly determine the nature of

the relationship between these variables by: (1) using a specific definition of self-concept that is more conducive to measurement than other more gross definitions, and (2) controlling for variables such as the student's perception of the teacher, the sex of the teacher, the sex of the student and the achievement status of the student.

Self-Concept and Achievement

The following information had implications for the present study inasmuch as self-concept was the dependent variable in this study. Since student achievement level has considerable curricular priority in the American schools, the nature of the relationship of selected variables related to achievement needs to be understood. Relationships, therefore, between self-concept, the dependent variable of the present study, and achievement are reviewed in the following discussion of related studies.

Researchers who have examined the relation between student self-concept and achievement report findings that are explicit and consistent. Reader (1955), Coppersmith (1959), Paterson (1966), Brookover (1967), and Hayes (1967) reported very similar relations to exist between self-concept and achievement. These relations were such that self-concept was consistently related to achievement in a positive way.

The largest and most recent research project of this type was done by Brookover (1967). His study well illustrates the findings of similar studies. Brookover, in a six-year research project found

that the self-concept of ability of students was highly related to achievement. He found that students' grade point averages were highly associated with their academic self-concepts. Counselors were assigned to work with these slow achievers in an effort to raise their self-concepts. The specific purpose of this counseling was to enable the students to be more confident in themselves with specific regard to school work. There was no academic tutoring involved and subsequent gains in achievement were attributed exclusively to improved self-concepts. Over a period of time, the achievement of these slow learners raised considerably. Brookover concluded that this gain was directly related to the improved self-concepts of the slow learners.

The work of Brookover and others who have done similar work, is germane to the present study as it illustrated the close relationship between the self-concept of slow learners and achievement. If slow learners are to have a chance to maximize their achievement output in school, it seems important that they have a wholesome self-concept. Borg (1964) summarized the importance of this point. He said that a healthy self-concept does not insure that a student will achieve in school. However, he went on to say that it is certain that the lack of one will prevent optimum achievement.

Ability Grouping and Achievement

Investigations of the relationship between ability grouping and achievement have resulted in contradictory findings. There seem to be three different schools of thought relative to the relation

between achievement and ability groupings. Burt (1923), Justman (1967), and Lieberman (1968) found that there is no difference between homogeneous and heterogeneous ability groups relative to achievement. Billett (1928) and French (1960) found, however, that homogeneous grouping does increase achievement over heterogeneous grouping. Furthermore, Edminston (1949) and Bonar (1929) found that heterogeneous grouping was superior to homogeneous grouping in terms of achievement.

Ability Grouping and Student Attitudes

The importance of a review of literature that examined the relation of selective attitudinal variables to self-concept is based on the rationale that certain student attitudes may be related in important ways to self-concept. Two of the variables of this study are specific student attitudes. One of these measures is the student's attitude toward himself, the second, his attitude toward his teacher. It seemed germane, therefore, to explore the literature regarding such student attitudes and the ways in which they are related to ability grouping.

A study by Borg (1964) was designed to determine the relationships between grouping and various student attitudes. His first comparison revealed that the aspiration levels of pupils in heterogeneous ability and homogeneous ability groups did not differ. Students in the heterogeneous groups did, however, tend to have more positive feelings of belonging than did those in the homogeneous ability groups. Another comparison of slow learners in the

heterogeneous and homogeneous groups revealed no significant difference in feelings of inferiority. Also, no differences in student anxiety were observed by Borg between the two groups. Pupils in the heterogeneous groups consistently developed better study habits during the elementary school years than pupils in homogeneous groups. A further comparison by Borg of heterogeneously and homogeneously ability grouped slow learners indicated that slow learners appeared to have a far better chance of gaining social recognition in the homogeneously grouped classroom. Borg also reported that boys of slow ability developed more favorable attitudes toward school in homogeneously grouped classrooms than in heterogeneously grouped classrooms. Further, students in the homogeneous groups held a more favorable image of the teachers. A summary of this section seems to indicate that ability grouping has both positive and negative relationships with important student attitudes and variables.

Rationale for the Present Study

The present study attempts to add to the literature in a way which compliments the findings of the studies cited by providing new data relative to the academic self-concept of slow learners. It is suggested that these data will be complimentary in the following way:

1. Only one study (Borg, 1964) was found in which the relationship between teacher image and ability grouping was investigated. The findings of the present study should compliment this data.
2. The relationship between teacher image and self-concept.

appeared to be, as yet, not investigated in the literature. The study, herein, provides some preliminary data concerning the relationship between these two variables.

3. Previous studies that were designed to examine the relationship between self-concept and ability grouping showed findings that were contradictory from one study to another. Perhaps one reason for this contradiction in findings was the failure of the investigators to control statistically for intervening variables in their studies. One such intervening variable could be the student's perception of the teacher. Therefore, in this study, the student's perception of the teacher (teacher image) was incorporated as an independent variable to determine if it was related either singularly or in combination with ability grouping on the self-concept of the slow learner.

4. Previous researchers who investigated possible relationships between students' self-concepts and ability group types have utilized global self-concept scales. These scales are designed to measure a person's general feeling of adequacy. It is suggested that such scales were somewhat inappropriate as the general construct, self-concept, appears to be influenced by numerous intervening factors other than those controlled for by these studies. To avoid possible data contamination of this type, the self-concept scale instrument used is different from those used in most previous self-concept studies. The self-concept scale utilized measures the slow learners' specific feelings about their ability to achieve in a particular school subject. This more specific measure of self-concept

is defined as the self-concept of academic ability. The self-concept scale used showed a measure of self-concept that may be less affected by the students successes and failures outside of the classroom. A discussion of this instrument is presented in Chapter III.

5. Many of the previous studies on self-concept and ability grouping had not incorporated an investigation of the possible intervening effects of selective variables such as sex of the teacher, sex of the student, achievement status of the student and type of academic subject studied. This study represents an addition to the literature inasmuch as it was an attempt to incorporate and to study these variables as they relate to the self-concept of the slow learner.

Summary

First, a review of literature concerning self-concept and ability grouping indicated contradictory findings. Some investigators reported homogeneous ability grouping to be more positively related to self-concept than heterogeneous grouping, and others the reverse.

Second, studies attempting to ascertain the relation between self-concept and achievement reported consistent findings. In each study reviewed, self-concept was determined to be strongly related to achievement.

Third, the relation between ability grouping and achievement was unclear in the literature. Some studies reported no difference between homogeneous and heterogeneous ability grouping with regard for achievement. Other studies report homogeneous to be superior in

terms of achievement and still others found heterogeneous to be more positively associated with achievement.

Fourth, student attitudes such as aspiration levels, feelings of inferiority, and anxiety were not appreciably different in homogeneous and heterogeneous groups. Measures of feelings of belonging, social recognition, attitudes toward the teacher, and attitudes toward school were found to be better in the homogeneous groups. Conversely, students developed better study habits in the heterogeneous groups.

Fifth, a rationale for the present study mentioned the following points. Only one study has examined the relationship between teacher image and ability grouping. No studies investigated the relationships between teacher image and self-concept. In previous self-concept studies the student's perception of the teacher and other possible intervening variables such as teacher and pupil sex, achievement status, and type of academic subject had not been controlled for. A final rationale was based on the type of instrumentation used which allowed for a more specific measure of self-concept.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Review of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationships among the following selected classroom variables: ability grouping, teacher image, academic self-concept, pupil and teacher sex, and achievement status. The major analysis consisted of comparing the academic self-concept of slow learners in heterogeneous and homogeneous groups while controlling for teacher image through the use of a two-factor analysis of variance model.

Description of the Sample

The sample consisted of fifth- and sixth-grade children selected from two school districts with similar populations. The districts were Portage, Michigan, and Wyoming, Michigan. Both districts are suburban with mostly white, middle class populations.

A total of 833 fifth- and sixth-grade students was tested from these two school systems. A breakdown of this sample revealed that of the 833 students, 455 were boys and 378 were girls. There were 297 slow learners and 536 non-slow learners tested. Also, a total of thirty-three teachers took part in the study. The students made up twenty-seven separate school classes or instructional groups in ten elementary schools. The sample used in this study was not a random type in that all available fifth- and sixth-grade slow learners in the participating schools were tested.

Description of Variables and Instruments

Specific academic self-concept was the main criterion measure in this study. The theoretical definition of this variable is simply the student's feeling of adequacy relative to achievement in a particular school subject. The instrument¹ used to assess this variable was a variation of the Specific Subject Self-Concept of Ability Scale² (SCA scale) (Paterson, 1966). This instrument was originally developed by Paterson to measure the self-concept of elementary school children. The only revisions made in the instrument were changes in some of the school subjects listed in the scale. A copy of the original instrument may be seen in Appendix B.

An investigation of the SCA scale was undertaken in a study by Paterson (1966). In her dissertation, Paterson reported that the SCA scale, over a twelve month period, held stability reliability coefficients of .75 for males and .77 for females. Guttman scalograms, the Hoyt internal consistency procedure, factor analysis, and individual item analysis, all affirmed the basic homogeneity of the SCA scale. The coefficients for the Guttman analysis were above .95. The Hoyt coefficients were found to be .82 for males and .84 for females. The centroid factor analysis of the SCA scale items gave loadings ranging from .53 to .72 on the first factor, interpreted as self-concept of ability. A second factor the scale measured was identified as a time dimension. Weak item loadings of .06 to .40

¹See Appendix A

²See Appendix B

were given. Individual item analysis of the scale showed no item-total score correlation below .59; only two were below .65.

The other independent variable measured in this study was teacher image. The theoretical definition of teacher image was given in Chapter I as the average impression a group of students has about a particular teacher. The operational measure of this variable was defined as numerical averages of students' scores on the Elementary Teacher Image Questionnaire¹. This questionnaire is a modification of the Teacher Image Questionnaire² developed and used by the Educator Feedback Center at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. The only modifications made were designed to enable fifth- and sixth-graders to better understand the questions on the scale. Every effort was made to retain the original intent of each item in making the revisions.

Investigations by the Educator Feedback Center (Coats, 1969) of the Teacher Image Questionnaire resulted in the following data. It was found that the questions on the Teacher Image Questionnaire measured essentially the same factor. This factor was identified by using a factor analysis on the instrument. Sixty-one and one half per-cent of the variance was accounted for by this common factor. The common factor was called "teacher charisma" or, popularity. "Teacher charisma" is, evidently, a general personal element students react to in teachers when judging them. Regardless

¹See Appendix C

²See Appendix D

of the type of question asked about the teacher, the charismatic factor seemed to influence the response students gave. In doing the data analysis for this study, a single teacher image score was used. Seemingly, this statistical technique was justified based on the above findings regarding the Teacher Image Questionnaire. Chance half comparisons of fifty randomly selected classes of students resulted in item reliability coefficients ranging from .77 to .95 (Bryan, 1959). The Spearman-Brown formula was used to convert the chance half scores to reliability coefficients. Also, the correlational validity of the Teacher Image Questionnaire¹ is reported to be .95. The correlational validity was derived from data which were part of a continuing validity investigation on the Teacher Image Questionnaire available at the Educator Feedback Center, Western Michigan University from Dr. Coats.

A second independent variable used in the present study was ability group type. Two types of ability grouping practices were compared in this study. The first, called heterogeneous grouping, was defined in Chapter I as any group of fifth- or sixth-grade students of mixed academic abilities in a particular school subject who were normally instructed together in that subject. The second type of instructional grouping, homogeneous grouping, was defined in Chapter I as any group of fifth- or sixth-grade students of similar academic abilities in a particular school subject who were normally instructed together in that subject.

¹See Appendix B

The exact grouping status of slow learners was determined by information gained from their teachers. Before students were tested, a list of names of each slow learner in a classroom was obtained from the teacher. On this list each slow learner's name appeared in conjunction with all of the academic school subjects in which he was homogeneously grouped.

A third variable was the academic achievement status of the student. This status was either slow learner or non-slow learner, and was defined entirely by the perception of the teacher. Generally, teachers consulted records in making such decisions about the students.

Procedures

A consistent procedure was followed in the data-gathering process. Verbal contact was made in each school system with the director of elementary instruction to inform him of the nature of the sample needed and to determine if his school system used instructional practices necessary to qualify for this particular study. If permission to gather data was granted by the director of elementary education and the participating building principals, subsequent discussions were held with selected classroom teachers. It was pointed out in meeting with these persons that the information to be gathered was to be strictly confidential and would be used only for research purposes. The rationale and purposes of the study were then presented for questions from this group.

A pilot testing of the instruments¹ had demonstrated that particular care was needed for three considerations. First, students at the fifth- and sixth-grade level needed a complete and understandable set of directions for each questionnaire with specific attention to the method of completing the questions. For this purpose, a sample question was incorporated in the revised SCA scale as it was somewhat complicated for elementary students to fill out without an example. Students were asked, after completing the directions, to do a sample question. Some questions were asked by the tester to aid the students in determining if the directions had been correctly followed in the sample question. Examples of such questions were "How many 'X's' do you have circled in the sample question?", and "Do you have more than one 'X' circled in a row?".

Second, the pilot study also pointed out that students needed to be assured that their responses would be strictly confidential and that no one at their school would ever see their responses. A personal promise was given to them that this would be the case.

The third procedure used to assure stable test conditions and results was the teacher's absence from the room during the entire testing period. Students in the pilot testing group exhibited considerable anxiety over the above three factors. Little of this anxiety was observed in the actual sampling group and presumably the listed testing adjustments reduced such student concerns.

Before the testing, each teacher informed the students that they

¹See Appendix A and C

would be tested. On arriving, the teacher would introduce the investigator and then excuse himself from the room. An explanation was given to the students that they were going to help in an experiment that required about twenty minutes of their time. They were informed that they would be filling out two separate questionnaires during this period. The printed directions¹ were read separately before each questionnaire was administered. These directions were read aloud after each student in the room received a test. All subjects were tested regardless of their achievement level (slow or non-slow) or group status (homogeneous or heterogeneous).

After all subjects had completed the revised Specific Subjects Self-Concept of Ability Scale², the instruments were collected and copies of the Elementary Teacher Image Questionnaire³ were distributed. The printed instructions for this questionnaire were then read and the scale was completed and collected when all subjects were finished. As the tester collected each scale, a visual check was made to determine if the student had completed each question and placed his name and his teacher's name at the top of the scale. If not, he was asked to complete the unanswered question(s) and/or list the names required at the top.

To demonstrate the confidentiality of the questionnaires, all scales were then collected and placed in envelopes which were sealed

¹See Appendix E, 1 and 2

²See Appendix A

³See Appendix C

in full view of the class. It was again explained that the information received on the questionnaires would remain confidential and the students were thanked for their cooperation. The tester then sought out the teacher and received from him a list of names of the students in the class that indicated the students who were considered by the teacher to be slow learners and those who were considered to be non-slow learners. The teacher also indicated which were grouped and non-grouped. The teacher then was thanked and told that he would receive an abstract of the study when it was available.

Data Treatment

The three major hypotheses of this study are presented below:

- H₁ Ability grouping is related to the academic self-concept of slow learners.
- H₂ Teacher image is associated with the self-concept of slow learners.
- H₃ There is an interaction effect between the two independent variables of teacher image and ability group type on the academic self-concept of slow learners.

These hypotheses were tested using the two-factor analysis model shown in Figure I.

Teacher Image	Group Status	
	Grouped	Non-Grouped
	High	High
	Medium	Medium
	Low	Low

FIGURE I

TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE RESEARCH DESIGN MODEL

To test hypothesis one, the self-concept scores of slow learners from homogeneous instruction groups were compared with those of slow learners from heterogeneous instruction groups.

Hypothesis two as tested by comparing the student's perception of the teacher between slow learners in heterogeneous and homogeneous groups. The student's perception of the teacher or, teacher image, was the second variable used in the two-way analysis of variance model. Each classroom teacher received a teacher image profile score. It was the composite of all students' perceptions of a teacher that made up this score. Teacher image scores were classified into three categories; high, medium, and low. These three levels were developed in the analysis model to accommodate the three classifications of teachers. In the two-way analysis of variance model, the first, one-third of the thirty-three teachers with the highest scores were placed together. The next two levels were decided the same way with the next one-third of the teachers comprising the second group and so on. Using this technique, a total of six cells were formed. Three of these cells contained self-concept scores of slow learners who were homogeneously grouped with teachers of high, medium, or low self-concepts. The remaining three cells contained self-concept scores of slow learners who were heterogeneously grouped.

The third hypothesis tested for a possible interaction effect between ability grouping and teacher image as they relate to self-concept. The two-way analysis of variance model allowed for an isolation of variance that indicated if an interaction effect of this

type was operative.

A number of additional hypotheses and sub-hypotheses were tested using t-tests. A total of four major and seven minor t-tests was conducted.

- H_4 There is no difference between the way slow and non-slow learners view teachers.

Hypothesis four was tested by comparing the teacher image mean scores of slow learners and non-slow learners who had the same teacher. This comparison was made using a t-test of the mean score.

- H_5 Non-slow learners and slow learners have different academic self-concepts.

The self-concept scores of all slow learners were compared with the self-concept scores of all non-slow learners. The comparison was made using a t-test.

- H_6 The academic self-concept of the slow learner will be different in subjects in which he is grouped than in those subjects in which he is not grouped.

In this analysis the slow learner served as his own control. To test hypothesis six, a t-test was applied by comparing the mean scores from academic subjects in which the slow learner was grouped with mean scores from academic subjects in which the same slow learner was not grouped. If, for example, a slow learner was homogeneously grouped in math and social studies but not grouped in science and reading, his composite academic self-concept score from math and social studies was compared with his composite academic self-concept score from science and reading.

- H_7 Student sex and teacher sex are associated with the student's perception of the teacher.

- a. Both boys and girls show a preference for a particular teacher sex.
- b. Boys show a stronger preference for male teachers than girls show for male teachers.
- c. Girls show a stronger preference for female teachers than boys show for female teachers.

To test these hypotheses, three t-tests were conducted. First, all students' teacher image scores were added and averaged for male teachers. The same was done for those students who had female teachers. The mean scores were then compared using a t-test. The second comparison was made between the teacher image group mean scores of all boys versus all girls having male teachers. The same type of comparison was then made for all boys and all girls having female teachers. These comparisons indicated if boys or girls had a preference for a particular sex of teacher.

- H₈ Slow learners have higher academic self-concepts in some academic subjects than in others.

This hypothesis was tested by comparing the specific subject self-concept scores of the slow learners in all of the five subjects listed on the questionnaire with each other. Each score in each of the five academic subjects was compared with each of the other four subject areas using a t-test.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In Chapter IV results of the analysis of data are discussed. An introductory section is followed by a discussion of the findings. The findings are discussed in eight subsections; each research hypothesis and results of its analysis are presented in these subsections.

Rather than report traditional .01 and .05 significance levels in the tables of this chapter, the investigator reported the probability of observing the results that were observed in each analysis by chance if the null hypotheses were true. The reader can then deduce by inspection, if the results were significant at whatever confidence levels are of interest to him.

Introduction

The specific purposes of this study were to gain information relative to the following questions.

1. Is there a relation between academic self-concept and the type of group in which the slow learner is instructed?
2. Is there a relation between the student's perception of the teacher and student self-concept?
3. Is there a relation between the interaction of teacher image with instructional group type and student self-concept?
4. Is there a difference between the slow and non-slow learner's view of the teacher?

5. Is there a difference between the nature of the self-concept of slow and non-slow learners?
6. Is there a difference between the slow learners academic self-concept among different academic subjects?
7. Is there a relationship between the student's perception of the teacher and the sex of the student or teacher?
8. Is there a difference between the academic self-concept of the slow learner in academic subjects in which he is grouped and not grouped?

The findings relative to the eight hypotheses are presented below.

Findings and Discussion

- H_1 Ability grouping is related to the academic self-concepts of slow learners.

A two-way analysis of variance model was used to compare the academic self-concept scores of both sexes of homogeneously grouped slow learners with heterogeneously grouped slow learners. This comparison, shown in Table I, indicated that there was a significant difference between the two groups' self-concept scores. The slow learners who were instructed in two or more subjects in homogeneous classrooms had higher academic self-concepts in these subjects than did their academic equals in the heterogeneous groups. This difference in means was significant at the .005 confidence level as shown by the two-way analysis of variance results in Table I.

TABLE I
TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR HOMOGENEOUSLY GROUPED
VERSUS HETEROGENEOUSLY GROUPED SLOW LEARNERS

Source	df	ms	F	P
Teacher Image A	2.00	7.91	.06	.85
Group Type B	1.00	1285.66	10.70	.005
A x B	2.00	42.27	.35	.48
Error	291.00	120.19		

Because previous studies had indicated that possible differences in self-concept might be caused by sex differences, an identical analysis was conducted using first the academic self-concept scores of boys and then scores of girls. The first comparison, as shown in Table II, between slow learning boys in homogeneously and slow learning boys in heterogeneously grouped classrooms yielded results similar to the comparison shown in Table I. Once again, the self-concept scores of the slow learners in the homogeneous groups were higher. The difference shown in Table II, was significant at the .005 confidence level. This comparison of slow boys is shown in Table II.

TABLE II
TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR HOMOGENEOUSLY
GROUPED VERSUS HETEROGENEOUSLY GROUPED BOYS

Source	df	ms	F	P
Teacher Image A	2.00	30.66	.27	.50
Group Type B	1.00	1076.60	10.86	.005
A x B	2.00	33.84	.30	.50
Error	181.00	122.95		

When the self-concept scores of slow girls in homogeneous and heterogeneous groups were compared, a different outcome was observed. The results of this comparison can be seen then in Table III.

TABLE III
TWO-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR HOMOGENEOUSLY
GROUPED VERSUS HETEROGENEOUSLY GROUPED GIRLS

Source	df	ms	F	P
Teacher Image A	2.00	7.33	.05	.85
Group Type B	1.00	279.86	2.04	.15
A x B	2.00	14.88	.11	.70
Error	104.00	137.43		

There was a numerical difference in the self-concept means of the girls' scores in these two groups. This difference in means was significant at the .15 confidence level and is shown in Table III.

The relation of self-concept to heterogeneous ability grouping was not as pronounced for slow girls as it was for slow boys.

H₂ Teacher image is associated with the self-concept of slow learners.

This hypothesis was tested using the two-way analysis of variance test. Table I contains the results of this analysis. In Table I, teacher image was represented by factor A. The teacher image variable did not give a significant F ratio. The students' perception of the teacher or teacher image, did not have a significant relationship with the students' self-concept. Teacher images were not differentially related to the self-concept of slow learners. Hypothesis two was not supported by the findings of this test.

When the sex of the student was controlled for by separating the scores of boys and girls, the same results were observed. Data reported in Tables I and III indicated that there appeared to be no relation between the way slow learners viewed teachers and the way they viewed themselves.

H₃ There is an interaction effect between the two independent variables of teacher image and ability group type on the academic self-concept of slow learners.

The two-way analysis of variance model was used to test this hypothesis. The results of this test are shown in Table I in source A x B. There appeared to be no effect recorded by this test. The same results were yielded when student sex was isolated. These results are shown in Table II and III. Hypothesis three was not supported by these findings. There appeared to be no interaction effect between teacher image and ability group type in this study.

- H₄ There is no difference between the way slow learners and non-slow learners view teachers.

To test this hypothesis, the teacher image scores of all slow learners were compared with the teacher image scores of non-slow learners who had the same teacher. This comparison was made by using a t-test. The results of this comparison are shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV
t-TEST COMPARISON OF TEACHER IMAGE SCORES
OF ALL SLOW LEARNERS VERSUS
ALL NON-SLOW LEARNERS

Teacher Image Mean Slow Learners	Teacher Image Mean Non-Slow Learners	<u>t</u> -value	P
35.28	35.71	.77	.50

The data in Table IV supported the hypothesis that slow and non-slow learners did not seem to have different views of the teacher. Whether a teacher had a favorable or unfavorable image did not seem to be related to the academic ability level of the student.

- H₅ Non-slow learners and slow learners have different self-concepts.

To test this hypothesis, the self-concept scores of all slow learners were averaged and then compared with the averages of the self-concept scores of the non-slow learners. This comparison was made with a t-test and is presented in Table V.

TABLE V
COMPARISON OF ALL SLOW LEARNERS ACADEMIC
SELF-CONCEPT SCORES ALL NON-SLOW LEARNERS
ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT SCORES

Mean Self-Concept Scores of All Slow Learners	Mean Self-Concept Scores of All Non- Slow Learners	<u>t</u> -value	P
3.08	3.46	8.80	.0005

The comparison between the slow and non-slow learners' self-concepts as shown in Table V indicated that the slow learners have a lower academic self-concept than the non-slow learners. The data of this finding supported hypothesis five.

A further analysis of hypothesis five was done by comparing the specific subject academic self-concepts of slow and non-slow learners to determine if there existed a significant difference in self-concept in all of the five academic subjects in which they were tested. These subjects were arithmetic, social studies, science, reading, and language arts. The following table and accompanying discussion describe these comparisons between the various specific subject self-concepts of slow learners versus non-slow learners.

TABLE VI
COMPARISON BETWEEN SLOW LEARNERS' AND NON-SLOW
LEARNERS' SELF-CONCEPT OF ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

Academic Subject	Mean of Slow Learners	Mean of Non-Slow Learners	t-Value	P
Arithmetic	2.93	3.15	9.25	.0001
Social Studies	2.97	3.31	5.89	.0005
Science	3.15	3.38	3.63	.004
Reading	3.16	3.66	7.89	.0002
Language Arts	3.20	3.46	3.73	.003

The comparison between the academic self-concepts of slow and non-slow learners in five academic subjects indicated that a difference existed in the quality of the means. The quality of non-slow learners academic self-concepts was found to be higher than slow learners in all five academic subjects tested.

H_6 The academic self-concept of the slow learner will be different in subjects in which he is grouped than in those subjects in which he is not grouped.

This hypothesis was tested by comparing the self-concept of ability scores of a slow learner from two homogeneously grouped category academic subjects with that same slow learner's combined scores from two heterogeneously grouped category academic subjects.

TABLE VII
COMPARISON OF SELF-CONCEPT OF HOMogeneously GROUPED SLOW
LEARNERS' ACADEMIC SUBJECTS WITH HETEROGENEously GROUPED
SLOW LEARNERS' ACADEMIC SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Mean of Grouped School Subjects	Mean of Non-Grouped School Subjects	<u>t</u> -value	P
3.25	3.04	2.63	.025

Hypothesis six was supported by the t-test comparison of the two categories of academic subjects. The difference in means is significant at the .025 confidence level. This comparison is shown in Table VII. Slow learners in the present study held more positive academic self-concepts in academic subjects in which they were homogeneously grouped as compared to academic subjects in which these same slow learners were heterogeneously grouped.

- H₇ Student sex and teacher sex are associated with the student's perception of the teacher.
- a. Both boys and girls show a preference for a particular teacher sex.
 - b. Boys show a stronger preference for male teachers than girls show for male teachers.
 - c. Girls show a stronger preference for female teachers than boys show for female teachers.

This hypothesis was analyzed in three comparison of means. First, the average teacher image for all boys and girls with male teachers was compared with all student teacher image averages for female teachers. Second, all of the teacher image averages of all boys with female teachers were compared with the teacher image

averages of all girls with female teachers. Third, the teacher image averages of all boys with male teachers were compared with all girls with male teachers.

These three comparisons permitted a determination of possible preference for teacher sex that boys and/or girls might have. The results of these three comparisons are shown in Table VIII. Subsequent discussion is given for each comparison.

TABLE VIII
COMPARISON OF ALL FEMALE TEACHERS' TEACHER IMAGE
SCORES WITH ALL MALE TEACHERS' TEACHER
IMAGE SCORES

Mean Teacher Image Score for Male Teachers	Mean Teacher Image Score for Female Teachers	t- Value	P
3.05	2.91	3.09	.003

The comparison shown in Table VIII indicated that boys and girls, as a group, held a higher regard for male teachers than for female teachers.

When the sex of the student was isolated, the following results were observed. Table IX contains a comparison of teacher image score averages of boys with female teachers with the same scores of girls with female teachers.

TABLE IX
COMPARISON BETWEEN TEACHER IMAGE SCORES
OF BOYS AND GIRLS WITH
FEMALE TEACHERS

Mean of Boys' Teacher Image Scores	Mean of Girls' Teacher Image Scores	t- Value	P
2.71	3.02	5.24	.0001

The comparison in Table IX contained data that indicated that girls held a higher regard for female teachers than boys held for female teachers. A similar comparison for male teachers is shown in Table X.

TABLE X
COMPARISON BETWEEN TEACHER IMAGE SCORES
OF BOYS AND GIRLS WITH
MALE TEACHERS

Mean of Boys' Teacher Image Scores	Mean of Girls' Teacher Image Scores	t- Value	P
3.05	2.73	2.95	.003

The comparison shown in Table X indicated that boys with male teachers held a higher image of those male teachers than did girls.

H_8 Slow learners have higher academic self-concepts in some academic subjects than in other academic subjects.

The self-concept mean of all slow learners of a particular academic subject was compared with all other school subjects tested.

Comparisons were made between these academic subjects to determine if a significant difference existed between the means. Comparisons were made between the five school subjects; arithmetic, social studies, science, reading, and language arts to determine if any of the slow learners' specific subject academic self-concepts differed in any of these subjects. These comparisons are presented in Table XI.

Several significant differences among means were observed in the comparisons shown in Table XI.

1. Slow learners held a considerably lower self-concept of arithmetic than they held for science, reading, and language arts.
2. Slow learners' self-concepts of social studies was slightly higher than their self-concepts of arithmetic.
3. Slow learners held considerably higher specific subject self-concepts in science, reading and language arts than they held in social studies.
4. The differences among the specific subject self-concepts of slow learners in science, reading and language arts were very slight and not statistically significant. These differences are shown in Table XI.

In summary, the specific subject self-concept of ability of slow learners was lower in arithmetic and social studies than it was in science, reading and language arts.

TABLE XI
COMPARISONS AMONG MEANS OF VARIOUS SPECIFIC SUBJECT
SELF-CONCEPTS OF SLOW LEARNERS

Name of Subjects Compared	Mean of Subjects Compared	<u>t</u> -Value	P
Arithmetic vs Social Studies	2.93/2.97	0.63	.60
Arithmetic vs Science	2.93/3.15	3.49	.004
Arithmetic vs Reading	2.93/3.16	3.59	.004
Arithmetic vs Language Arts	2.93/3.20	4.28	.0005
Social Studies vs Science	2.97/3.15	2.81	.018
Social Studies vs Reading	2.97/3.16	2.97	.018
Social Studies vs Language Arts	2.97/3.20	3.65	.003
Science vs Reading	3.15/3.16	0.16	.65
Science vs Language Arts	3.15/3.20	0.79	.30
Reading vs Language Arts	3.16/3.20	0.63	.60

Summary

Computations based on the factorial analysis of variance model resulted in three F-ratios. The first ratio indicated that the students' perception of the teacher, or teacher image, had no meaningful statistical relation with student self-concept. The second F-ratio indicated that a significant statistical relation existed between the academic self-concept of the slow learner and the type of instructional group used. Slow learners in homogeneous ability groups held higher self-concepts than did slow learners in heterogeneous ability groups. The third F-ratio was a measure of the interaction effect. It indicated that there was no statistically significant interaction effect between teacher image and ability grouping as they relate to academic self-concept.

A series of t-ratios were computed to ascertain if relations existed between selected variables. The first of these t-tests indicated that slow and non-slow learners did not differ in their perceptions of the teacher.

They did, however, differ in that non-slow learners held higher academic self-concept than slow learners. Non-slow learners also held higher academic self-concepts in all five academic subjects tested. Also, slow learners were found to have lower academic self-concepts in school subjects in which they were not grouped than in those in which they were grouped.

Boys and girls did appear to differ in their perceptions of the teacher. Furthermore, boys and girls together appeared to hold a higher regard for male teachers than for female teachers, as do boys

singularly. However, girls when taken singularly showed a higher regard for female teachers than they did for male teachers.

Additionally, when the slow learners self-concept in particular school subjects was compared with his other academic subjects, differences were found. The slow learners academic self-concept of arithmetic and social studies appeared to be lower than in science, reading and language arts.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In this chapter, the study is discussed in three sections: 1) Summary of findings, 2) Conclusions and Interpretations, and 3) Recommendations for further research.

Summary of Findings

A review of the literature indicated that the relation between ability grouping and the academic self-concept of slow learners is unclear. Also unclear are the relations between self-concept and variables such as the student's perception of the teacher, the achievement status of the student and the type of academic school subject. The present study examined the above relations and found the following:

1. Homogeneous ability grouping was more positively associated with the academic self-concept of slow learners than was heterogeneous grouping. This relationship statistically had more significance for boys than for girls.

2. There was no relationship between the student's perception of teacher (teacher image) and his perception of self (academic self-concept).

3. No interaction effect was observed between the two independent variables of teacher image and ability group type in the academic self-concept of slow learners.

4. No difference was observed between the slow and non-slow learner's perception of the teacher.

5. Non-slow learners exhibited higher academic self-concepts than did slow learners in the combined subjects of arithmetic, social studies, science, reading and language arts. Non-slow learners also exhibited higher academic self-concepts than did slow learners in each of the school subjects treated separately.

6. The academic self-concept of the slow learner was higher in those academic subjects in which he was homogeneously grouped than in academic subjects in which the same slow learner was heterogeneously grouped.

7. Slow learners and non-slow learners held a higher regard for male teachers than they did for female teachers.

8. Girls held a higher regard for female teachers than did boys.

9. Boys held a higher regard for male teachers than did girls.

10. Slow learners held higher academic self-concepts in reading and language arts than they did in arithmetic and social studies.

Conclusions and Interpretations

The conclusions stated in this section are the investigator's personal observations which were based on the findings of the study and related research. They are intended to be of some assistance to the consumer and the practitioner in relating the study in a useful way to field problems.

The traditional reason for using homogeneous ability grouping has been to enhance achievement. Past research has indicated that

this rationale may be unjustified in that studies have shown contradictory findings. However, there may be a less questionable justification for homogeneous ability grouping in that it appears to be a favorable practice with regard to academic self-concept. Even though homogeneous ability grouping does present certain logistical problems for teachers and may not necessarily be related to achievement, it appears to be positively related to another important variable, the academic self-concept of the child. This finding alone may be ample justification for practicing homogeneous grouping in the elementary school.

It is difficult to ascertain why homogeneous grouping is more positively related to self-concept than is heterogeneous grouping. One factor which may differentiate homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping relative to their relation to self-concept is the degree of success associated with achievement. Previous studies found self-concept and achievement to be highly related. In homogeneous groups, slow learners are provided with the opportunity to achieve and even to excel relative to their immediate peers, whereas in heterogeneous groups, slow learners are often thwarted by assignments that are too difficult for them. Such failures could readily lead to a negative regard for self.

Perhaps the most important distinction with regard to self-concept is not between homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping, but, rather between achieving and failing. If wholesome self-concepts are to be encouraged in schools, educators need to provide slow learners with the opportunities for achievement that non-slow learners

experience daily. That is, if slow learners are to develop wholesome perceptions of themselves, it would seem that they must receive the same amount of positive feedback that non-slow learners are given in both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups.

A further finding of this study revealed that the slow learner's perception of the teacher is not related to his perception of self. This is quite surprising in that one would assume the student's perception of the teacher and of self would be highly related. Evidently, little concern need be shown for the student's perception of the teacher with regard to his own academic self-concept.

Although slow and non-slow learners hold similar views of teachers, slow learners hold lower academic self-concepts than non-slow learners in all of the five academic subjects tested. It is possible that no amount of manipulation of instructional practices would equate the academic self-concept of slow and non-slow learners. Although it seems a reasonable goal to maximize the academic self-concept of slow learners it may be impossible to raise them to a completely healthy condition.

The finding that boys hold a higher image of male teachers than for female teachers and that girls hold a higher regard for female teachers than male teachers could have significant implications for placing students. However, because the student's perception of the teacher and of self appear to be unrelated, this finding seems inconsequential with regard to academic self-concept.

Also of interest is the finding that slow learners hold a lower academic self-concept in arithmetic and social studies than in science,

reading, and language arts. No reason is apparent for this difference. But the fact remains that slow learners' academic self-concepts are at their lowest in these two subjects. Thus, it would seem that any effort made by educators to improve the academic self-concepts of slow learners might best be focused on these two academic subject areas.

Schools create the conditions in which academic self-concepts are formulated. Slow learners' academic self-concepts are often modified by these conditions in a way that is less than desirable. It follows, therefore, that educational leaders may be at least indirectly responsible for the low academic self-concepts of slow learners and perhaps for their poor achievement records. It may be that the findings of this and similar studies will enable educators to become more knowledgeable about techniques and practices related to the self-concept development process. Such an awareness might permit an improvement in school practices such as grouping that are related to self-concept.

Recommendations for Further Research

The gap between the findings of this study and the derived conclusions witness the need for more exacting research regarding academic self-concept. Future research could fill this gap by providing information not contained in this study. Such research should determine more specifically the ways in which self-concept is related to environmental influences within the school.

Ideally such research should be of an experimental type that

would allow for manipulation of variables. A variable which lends itself readily to manipulation is instructional media. Various types of materials and media could be tried by slow learners to determine which are more positively related to their self-concepts.

Another example of such research would be a study that would hold grouping constant while manipulating achievement success and failure. Such a study may indicate if achievement is, indeed, a critical factor in determining academic self-concept.

As a result of the findings of this study which showed a relation between ability grouping and academic self-concept it is recommended that the primary thrust of further research should not be to further ascertain which ability grouping practice is more positively related to self-concept, but, rather to determine what psychological factors are present in homogeneous grouping situations that are absent in heterogeneous grouping situations. If this were known, the positive element present in homogeneous grouping situations could be amplified by teachers in an attempt to improve the self-concepts of slow learners.

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APPENDIX A

Name _____

Circle the "X" under the heading which best answers the question.
Answer for all five subjects. (You will have one "X" circled on each
line.)

SAMPLE QUESTION:

How would you rank your ability to

	I am the poorest	I am below average	I am average	I am above average	I am the best
Run fast	X	X	X	X	X
Ice skate	X	X	X	X	X
Draw pictures	X	X	X	X	X
Shoot baskets	X	X	X	X	X
Spell words	X	X	X	X	X

1. How do you rate your ability in the following school subjects compared with your close friends?

	I am the poorest	I am below average	I am average	I am above average	I am the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

2. How do you rate your ability in the following school subjects compared with those in your class in school?

	I am the poorest	I am below average	I am average	I am above average	I am the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

3. Where do you think you would rank in your high school graduating class in the following subjects:

	among the poorest	below average	average	above average	among the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

4. Do you think you have the ability to do college work in the following subjects?

	no	probably not	not sure either way	yes, probably	yes, defi- nitely
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

5. Where do you think you would rank in your college class in the following subjects?

	among the poorest	below average	average	above average	among the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

6. How likely do you think it is that you could complete advanced work in college in the following subjects?

	most unlikely	unlikely	not sure either way	somewhat likely	very likely
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

7. Forget for a moment how others grade your work. In your own opinion how good do you think your work is in the following subjects?

	my work is much below average	my work is be- low average	my work is average	my work is good	my work is ex- cellent
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

8. What kind of grades do you think you are capable of getting in the following subjects?

	mostly E's	mostly D's	mostly C's	mostly B's	mostly A's
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X
Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X

APPENDIX B

SPECIFIC SUBJECT SELF-CONCEPT OF ABILITY SCALE

Circle the "X" under the heading which best answers the question.
Answer for all four subjects. (You will have one "X" circled on
each line.)

1. How do you rate your ability in the following school subjects compared with your close friends?

	I am the poorest	I am below average	I am average	I am above average	I am the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

2. How do you rate your ability in the following school subjects compared with those in your class at school?

	I am the poorest	I am below average	I am average	I am above average	I am the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

3. Where do you think you would rank in your high school graduating class in the following subjects?

	I am the poorest	I am below average	I am average	I am above average	I am the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

4. Do you think you have the ability to do college work in the following subjects?

	no	pro- bably not	not sure either way	yes pro- bably	yes, defi- nitely
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

5. Where do you think you would rank in your college class in the following subjects?

	among the poorest	below average	average	above average	among the best
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

6. How likely do you think it is that you could complete advanced work beyond college in the following subjects?

	most un- likely	unlikely	not sure either	somewhat likely	very likely
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

7. Forget for a moment how others grade your work. In your own opinion how good do you think your work is in the following subjects?

	my work is much below average	my work is be- low average	my work is average	my work is good	my work is ex- cellent
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

8. What kind of grades do you think you are capable of getting in the following subjects?

	mostly E's	mostly D's	mostly C's	mostly B's	mostly A's
Arithmetic	X	X	X	X	X
English	X	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X	X

(Paterson, 1966)

APPENDIX C

TEACHER-IMAGE QUESTIONNAIRE

Do not begin until told to do so by the person in charge.

USE LEAD PENCIL

	THE VERY WORST	FAIR	GOOD	THE VERY BEST
1. My teacher's knowledge about the subject he teaches is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
2. My teacher's ability to explain things so the class understands them is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
3. My teacher's ability to treat everyone fairly is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
4. My teacher's ability to keep order in the classroom is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
5. My teacher's ability to be friendly toward all his students is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
6. My teacher's ability to make school seem fun and interesting is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
7. My teacher's ability to enjoy his job of teaching school is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
8. My teacher's ability to get students to tell about their ideas in class is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
9. My teacher's ability to laugh and enjoy jokes in the classroom is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
10. My teacher's ability to assign schoolwork that is interesting to do is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
11. My teacher's ability to look neat and dress nice is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best
12. My teacher's ability to control his anger is	_____ worst	_____ fair	_____ good	_____ best

APPENDIX D

EDUCATOR FEEDBACK CENTER

Western Michigan University

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PERSON IN CHARGE OF CLASS

Before Meeting with Students

You will be in charge of this class for the 15 or 20 minutes needed by students to answer the Teacher Image Questionnaire.

Make sure that all the information called for on the face of the large, return envelope has been supplied.

While Administering the Questionnaire

Read the following instructions, exactly as written, to the class:

"Please answer the following questions honestly and frankly. Do not give your name. To encourage you to be frank, your regular teacher is absent from the classroom while these questions are being answered. Neither your teacher nor anyone else at your school will ever see your answers.

The person who is temporarily in charge of your class will collect all reports after you have completed them and seal them in an envelope addressed to Western Michigan University. Your teacher will receive from the University a summary of the answers by the students in your class. The University will mail this summary to no one except your teacher unless requested to do so by your teacher.

After you have completed this report, sit quietly or study until all students have completed their questionnaires. There should be no talking."

While administering this Teacher Image Questionnaire, exhibit the same attitude that is appropriate when administering any test or examination.

Make sure that students understand that they should answer the questions regarding their regular teacher and not concerning you, the temporary substitute in charge.

Students should be given all the time needed to answer questions 17 and 18. If students are hurried, they are inclined to omit answers to these questions.

It is desirable that you remain seated at the desk rather than circulate among the students while they are answering the questionnaire.

After all questionnaires have been answered, have one student collect all copies for delivery to your desk. Promptly seal the answered questionnaires in the envelope addressed to Western Michigan University in the presence of the students.

After the Envelope has been Sealed

You should mail the envelope to Western Michigan University unless envelopes from a number of classrooms are being collected at a central location for packaging. In the latter event, you should deliver the envelope to the "central location."

TEACHER-IMAGE QUESTIONNAIRE

Do not begin until you are told to do
so by the person in charge

USE LEAD PENCIL

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION CONCERNING THIS
TEACHER'S:

	POOR	FAIR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
1. KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT: (Does he have a thorough knowledge and understanding of his teaching field?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
2. CLARITY OF PRESENTATION: (Are ideas presented at a level which you can understand?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
3. FAIRNESS: (Is he fair and impartial in his treatment of all students in the class?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
4. CONTROL: (Is the classroom orderly but also relaxed and friendly?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
5. ATTITUDE TOWARD STUDENTS: (Do you feel that this teacher likes you?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
6. SUCCESS IN STIMULATING INTEREST: (Is this class interesting and challenging?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
7. ENTHUSIASM: (Does he show interest in and enthusiasm for the subject? Does he appear to enjoy teaching this subject?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
8. ATTITUDE TOWARD STUDENT IDEAS: (Does this teacher have respect for the things you have to say in class?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
9. ENCOURAGEMENT OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION: (Does this teacher encourage you to raise questions and express ideas in class?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.
10. SENSE OF HUMOR: (Does he share amusing experiences and laugh at his own mistakes?)	_____ poor	_____ fair	_____ avg.	_____ good	_____ exc.

Teacher-Image Questionnaire (continued)

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 11. ASSIGNMENTS: (Are assignments sufficiently challenging without being unreasonably long?) | <u> </u>
poor | <u> </u>
fair | <u> </u>
avg. | <u> </u>
good | <u> </u>
exc. |
| 12. APPEARANCE: (Are his grooming and dress in good taste?) | <u> </u>
poor | <u> </u>
fair | <u> </u>
avg. | <u> </u>
good | <u> </u>
exc. |
| 13. OPENNESS: (is this teacher able to see things from your point of view?) | <u> </u>
poor | <u> </u>
fair | <u> </u>
avg. | <u> </u>
good | <u> </u>
exc. |
| 14. SELF-CONTROL: (Does this teacher become angry when little problems arise in the classroom?) | <u> </u>
poor | <u> </u>
fair | <u> </u>
avg. | <u> </u>
good | <u> </u>
exc. |
| 15. CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS: (Is he patient, understanding, considerate, and courteous?) | <u> </u>
poor | <u> </u>
fair | <u> </u>
avg. | <u> </u>
good | <u> </u>
exc. |
| 16. EFFECTIVENESS: (What is your overall evaluation of your teacher's effectiveness?) | <u> </u>
poor | <u> </u>
fair | <u> </u>
avg. | <u> </u>
good | <u> </u>
exc. |

If you wish, please list one or more weaknesses of your teacher:

If you wish, please list one or more strengths of your teacher:

APPENDIX E

NUMBER 1

DIRECTIONS FOR THE REVISED
SPECIFIC SUBJECT SELF-CONCEPT OF ABILITY SCALE

To be read aloud to each class before testing

1. Place your full name at the top right-hand corner of the questionnaire.
2. There are eight questions on the questionnaire, do them all.
3. Please do the sample problem at the top of the page.
4. Please answer the questions honestly and frankly. To encourage you to do so, your regular teacher is absent from the room. Neither your teacher, not anyone else at this school will ever see your answers.
5. Take as much time as you need to finish the questionnaire. When you are finished, quietly take out some school work and wait for further instructions.
6. If you do not understand a word on the questionnaire, raise your hand and I will read it to you.

NUMBER 2

DIRECTIONS FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHER IMAGE QUESTIONNAIRE

To be read aloud to each class before testing.

1. Place your full name at the top right-hand corner of the questionnaire.
2. Place the name of the teacher being rated below your name. The correct spelling of your teacher's name is on the black board.
3. There are twelve questions on the questionnaire: please do them all.
4. Please answer each question honestly and frankly. To encourage you to do so, your regular teacher is absent from the room. Neither your teacher or anyone else at this school will ever see your answers.
5. Take as much time as you need to finish the questionnaire. When you are finished, quietly work on some school work and wait for further instructions.
6. If you do not understand a word on the questionnaire, raise your hand and I will read it to you.