A CLASSIFICATORY INVESTIGATION OF SELF-CONCEPT

DEVELOPMENT OF JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH

SCHOOL STUDENTS AS MEASURED BY

AUTODESCRIPTIVE RESPONSES

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to describe the normative patterns of self-concept development in adolescents. Responses from the "Who Am I?" questionnaire were categorized by frequency into consensual and nonconsensual statements. There was a total of 2,886 responses from 192 subjects in grades 7 through 12. The overall categories by frequency of response were: caring, Christian, nice, smart, friendly, and helpful. "Caring" and "Christian" occurred more frequently in the upper grades while "nice" and "smart" were more frequent in the lower grades.

The major categories were spearated into subcategories describing social interaction. Junior high school subjects responded more frequently with "friend" or "family" subcategories while senior high school subjects responded more frequently with a more general social field or "religion" category. "Student" appeared more frequently in the 9th grade in junior high and the 12th grade in senior high. In the "family" category the 11th and 12th graders referred at times not to the family of origin, but to the family they hoped to have one day.

The responses to the 21st question, which asked the

subject to rank the best description of self, second best, and third best, were difficult to analyze due to the idiosyncratic nature of the responses as only eight to 12 responses were in the same categories. More nonconsensual statements were made overall, but occurred with a higher frequency in the upper grades. Consensual statements remained fairly consistent across grade levels. The coding of the data was done by the investigator and coinvestigator and indicated a 90% reliability on the initial coding. After the computer printout was obtained, the data were checked and corrected for 100% accuracy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the life span, the time period designated
adolescence is, perhaps, the period most fraught with
change. For this reason it has also been the target of
much observation, study, and speculation. Biological
and psychosocial changes are greater during adolescence
than at any other time in life. The interaction with self
and the interaction with others, including family, peers,
and society in general, provide the developmental environ-
ment for the discovery of the self as an unique individual.

With the rapid change taking place within adolescents,
it is sometimes difficult to understand and evaluate the
developmental process. Many theorists have attempted to
identify and categorize behaviors, attitudes, and cogni-
tive abilities in order to facilitate an understanding
of this most important time.

Erik Erikson's theory of the eight stages of man
provides a basis of knowledge for the development of a
sense of identity, a self-concept formation during adoles-
cence, and postulates that a failure to accomplish that
task results in role confusion. The many changes in the
experience of self and the variety of roles and behaviors

can be overwhelming to the adolescent (Scipien, Barnard, Chard, Howe, & Phillips, 1975).

Jean Piaget also constructed a stage theory to help understand the cognitive learning process in children. He identified three periods of cognitive development, 2 to 7 years is called preoperational thought, 7 to 11 years is the stage of concrete operations, and between the ages of 11 and 15 is the time of formal operations that result in more abstract thinking. It was his belief that the individual is cognitively mature by the age of 15 (Scipien et al., 1975).

Much of what has been written and applied to adolescence has been of a general nature, agglomerating all age groups from 12 to 19 into one time frame, when in fact there may be definite developmental processes in each age group as the individual moves through adolescence. If, indeed, the rapid changes are taking place, it is important to identify and document when these change occur in the developmental processes that involve self-concept.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate normative patterns in self-concept development among junior high and senior high school students. This study addressed four areas related to self-concept development:

1. To identify the most prevalent responses to
    the "Who Am I?" statements.

2. To identify those statements with the highest
    ranking importance scores for each age category.

3. To examine the distribution of consensual and
    nonconsensual responses according to each
    grade level.

4. To investigate consensual responses to deter-
    mine possible patterns of fields of social
    interaction in different age groups.

Review of the Literature

The background for this study is drawn from a number
of theories of self-concept and adolescent development
including those of Stanley Coopersmith, George Mead, and
Herbert Blumer, but is based primarily on the works of
Manford Kuhn who is also the originator of the instrument
used in the testing procedure (Coopersmith, 1967; Kuhn,
1960, Natanson, 1956).

Coopersmith stated " . . . the self is an abstraction
that an individual develops about the attributes, capacities,
objects, and activities which he possesses and pursues"
(1967, p. 20). In regard to the interaction of self and
society, George Herbert Mead considered self to be an

"emergent from social experience" (Natanson, 1956, p. 12).
In social psychology, the theory of symbolic interaction
presents the self as the focus of the social interaction
(Kuhn & McPartland, 1954). Kuhn believed that the concep-
tualization of self remained ambiguous because of a lack of
empirical research on the subject. Out of the many designa-
tions of self (i.e., image, internalization, feelings, etc.)
he settled on the meaning of self as determined by self-
attitudes (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954). Mead philosophied
that the self is an object, like other objects, and the
object is a plan of action, translating into an attitude.
He further believed the concept of self could be tested
by measuring self-attitudes (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954).

Other studies have also centered on the interactional
approach to the development of self. Tinelli studied the
relationship of family satisfaction and interaction and the
degree of self-esteem of the members. She found a signifi-
cant correlation in the two, which would support the symbolic
interactionalism theory (Tinelli, 1981). Morris Rosenberg
found that adolescents who have a close relationship with
their parents have a higher degree of self-esteem than those
with more distant relationships (Coopersmith, 1967).

Coopersmith incorporated a multi-faceted approach in
his study and examined many factors that might be perceived
as influencing self-esteem, but in fact did not. He found
a nonsignificant relationship between social class and self-

esteem, also a nonsignificance in religion and self-esteem and in frequency of mother's employment and the child's self-esteem development. Coopersmith did report a significant finding in the influence of ordinal position (birth order) on an individual with the first born or only child ranking higher in self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967). O'Connor, however, found that birth order is not a significant factor in self-concept development (O'Connor, 1981). Physical attractiveness was determined to be unrelated to self-esteem in children (Coopersmith, 1967). A similar conclusion was reached by Molla, who hypothesized that "there is a significant difference in self-concept among children who do and do not have physical disabilities" (1981, p. 24). The result showed no significant difference in self-concept among the children (Molla, 1981).

Historical Perspective

For the historical perspective on self-concept development, the review of the literature will be into two schools of thought. The dichotomy of thought is necessary in order to examine the positions assumed by various theorists in connection with the development of self-concept. The first division will deal with theories and writings stemming from psychoanalytic theory and the second from social or symbolic interaction theory, which is the basis for the present study.

Psychoanalytic Theory

Sigmund Freud gave birth to psychoanalytic theory and spawned a whole group of students, collegues, and followers. Among the so-called neo-Freudians are Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget, Erich Fromm, Heinz Hartmann, and Karen Horney. According to these theorists, the building blocks of the personality are the id, the ego, and the superego. The formation of self emerged from the id with the ego and super-ego developing later, all influencing the self and all are instinctual by nature. Early childhood events are the significant factors in the development of the individual according to psychoanalists and the character of a person is more or less completely formed by the age of seven or eight years. During this time, emotional and cognitive processes developmentally parallel one another (Fromm, 1980).

Heinz Hartmann was a proponent of psychoanalytic theory who immigrated to the United States and was instrumental in developing ego psychology in the more orthodox tradition. Hartmann wrote of adaptation in connection with ego develop-ment, but central to this development was always the inner self. He used the concepts of alloplastic and autoplastic change. Autoplastic being the change with the self to fit the environment and alloplastic, the change the self effects in the environment. He adhered closely to the more bio-logical elements affecting the development of self

(Hartmann, 1958). Guntrip (1971) summarized the views of Hartmann, Donald Winnicott, and Edith Jacobson by stating, "The maturational processes are the biological given, the innate constitutional potentialities continuously unfolding as the individual lives" (p. 103).

The neo-Freudians drew from many of Freud's concepts and ideas, but modified, expanded, and elaborated on them, not entirely excepting Freud's idea that development of the self ceases in early or middle childhood, but continutes at least through adolescence.

Piaget trained for a short time in psychoanalytic theory which had an influential effect on the evolution of his cognitive theory of development. For example, he believed individuals possess an inner awareness relatively free from outside control or outside standards. He also believed past events influence present behavior (Evans, 1973). Piaget's concept of "mental growth" is a complex integration of experiences organized by an intellectual process. "Growth by integration means the progression from a primitive to a more mature, differentiated, and elaborate concept" (Evans, 1973, p. xxviii). Piaget dealt only with the adolescent years of 11 to 15, which he called the formal operational period. The hallmark of this period is the ability to generate hypotheses and by logical deduction, examine all alternatives and arrive at a conclusion that accepts or rejects the original

hypothesis. The individuals can then begin to generate

their own ideas and plans and determine how they fit as

members of society (Evans, 1973).

Harry Stack Sullivan was another neo-Freudian who

broke away from the purely psychoanalytical thought.

Sullivan recognized the tumultuous years of adolescence,

he called the juvenile period, during which:

> the child has many opportunities in non-family,
> interpersonal settings to resolve personality
> problems and unhealthy modes of emotional func-
> tioning. In relationships with non-family children
> and adults he can correct any paratoxic distortions
> he acquired in infancy and early childhood in his
> parental home. In the broader social environment
> outside his home he can develop healthier ways
> of viewing himself and others, and he can evolve
> new ways of interacting with people.
> (Chapman, 1976, p. 176)

So, although Sullivan held to the early formation of person-

ality theory, he left the way open for modifications and

changes to occur during the adolescent period.

> While the work of Karen Horney, Erick Fromm,
> Clara Thompson, and others revealed the onesided-
> ness of Freud's too exclusively biological theory,
> and forced social factors to be taken more specifi-
> cally into account, Harry Stack Sullivan's clear
> rejection of instinct as an adequate concept for
> human psychology, and his adoption of interpersonal
> relations experience as his basic concept . .
> was the first absolute breakthrough of object-
> relations theory. (Guntrip, 1971, p. 20).

Freud's theory, then served as a starting point from which

other theorists generated and synthesized new thoughts about

the development of self.

Guidano and Liotti bridged the two schools of thought

by stating,

> Although an infant at birth has a complex repertoire
> of inborn dispositions, he or she is not yet a self.
> Rather, through slow and gradual development, the
> infant has to become a self. Self-recognition, and,
> later, the acquisition of self-knowledge, cannot
> come about simply through direct self-observation.
> With adolescence, the individual progresses toward
> a noteworthy personal rearrangement. (1983, p. 15)

They further discussed the process of the rearrangement,

consisting of continual rehearsal and matching of beliefs

and theories that were collected during infancy and child-

hood and that during adolescence are arranged and rearranged,

forming a more stable structure. The structure is almost

completely separate from the original context from which

the elements were taken, by the end of adolescence

(Guidano & Liotti, 1983).

Symbolic Interactionism

The key ideas embodied in symbolic interaction theory

have to do with meanings that a group or society attach to

behaviors and objects. These meanings emerge from the

process of social interaction. One's identity is formed,

established, and maintained in and through the acts of

others and is influenced by the ways in which others respond

to the individual. The individual exerts some control over

these responses by actively recruiting needed responses from

others in order to be the kind of person they want to be

(Sampson & Marthas, 1981).

Charles Cooley was one of the earliest to write

extensively about the self in relation to society in his

Human Nature and the Social Order (1922). He described

the development of self as,

> The emotion or feeling of self . . . seems to exist
> in a vague though vigorous form at the birth of each
> individual, and, like other instinctive ideas or
> germs of ideas, to be defined and developed by
> experience, becoming associated or rather incorporated
> with muscular, visual, and other sensations; with per-
> ceptions, apperceptions, and conceptions of every
> degree of complexity and infinite variety of content,
> and, especially, with personal ideas. (1922, p. 171)

Cooley explained how this process undergoes differentiation

and refinement during maturation as, "Nearly everyone,

however, whose turn of mind is at all imaginative goes

through a season of passionate self-feeling during adoles-

cence, when, according to current belief, the social

impulses are stimulated in connection with the rapid

development of the function of sex" (Cooley, 1922, p. 200).

Therefore, even though Cooley was moving toward the idea

of societal impact on the individual's self-concept level,

there existed the underpinnings of Freudian biological

theory.

The beginning of social psychology was discussed by

Herbert Blumer in 1937, when a somewhat radical departure

from the intrapsychic theory was conceived and attention

was focused on the study of the "group mind" (Blumer, 1937).

In the group mind concept, the individual values and beliefs

were lost or merged into the group so that the group

possessed a mentality of its own; a group psychology.

Because the originators had difficulty substantiating the
theory, it virtually disappeared from social psychology.
From this concept, the study of the social development of
individuals within groups, emerged the influence that
social groups exert on the development of self (Blumer,
1937). In 1969, Blumer wrote:

> Symbolic interaction rests . . . on three simple
> premises. First, human beings act toward things on
> the basis of the meanings that the things have for
> them. Second, the meaning of such things is dervied
> from or arises out of, the social interaction that one
> has with one's fellows. Third, these meanings are
> handled in, and modified through, an interpretive
> process used by the person in dealing with the
> things he encounters. (Blumer, 1969, p. 6)

The environment that exists for individuals and for the
group(s) to which they are a part, is composed of objects
that are products of symbolic interaction. According to
Blumer, there are three categories of objects:

1. Physical objects--trees, books, chairs;

2. Social objects--students, mother, friend; and

3. Abstract objects--moral principles, philo-
   sophical doctrines or ideas of justice.
   (Blumer, 1969).

"From the standpoint of symbolic interaction, the organiza-
tion of a human society is the framework inside which social
action takes place and is _not_ the determinent of that action"
(Blumer, 1969, p. 87).

Seltzer refers to this framework as the peer-group
arena, in her descriptive writings on adolescent social
behavior (1983). Adolescents tend to function within a

peer-group arena in which they are free to try out different
roles and behaviors because of the nonjudgmental attitudes
of the others within the arena, who themselves are under-
going similar rehearsals. The absence of overt confronta-
tion of others appears to be an unwritten rule within the
arena which allows for the freedom of expression of each
member. "Intuitively, adolescents sense that the use of
one another is central to the quest of arriving at a dis-
crete picture of 'who' they wish to be and 'how' they can
be" (Seltzer, 1983, p. 133). As the self-concept forms
during adolescence, the selection process narrows to
prioritize the borrowed elements from peers with the con-
structed self-elements. All group members take part in
this process. "This simultaneous activity defines the
group as one of functional interaction" (p. 133).

Several authors speak to the prioritizing or differen-
tiating process that occurs during the ongoing development
of self. Ruth Wylie has devoted a great deal of study
focused on the self-concept and the appropriate methods of
measurement. She believes that the normal growth of person-
ality is not an autistic process, but part of a whole
development process, concluding with a balanced polarity of
ego and world. Differentiation of personality comes about
as the social world grows and differentiates (Wylie, 1974).
Werner's orthogenetic principles which stated, "Whenever
development occurs, it proceeds from a state of relative

globality and lack of differentiation to a state of increasing differentiation, articulation, and hierarchiac integration" (p. 126). He noted that adolescence in the advanced cultures is characterized by a slow, long-lasting, plastic transformation from one stage to the other because of the interdependence and interaction of the social life patterns (Werner, 1957).

In regard to the differentiation of self-concept, Scarlett, Press, and Crockett (1971) observed, in their study, a progression from egocentric to non-egocentric construct formation and from concrete to abstract constructs with boys in grades 1, 3, and 5. Montemayor and Eisen (1977) utilized the Twenty-Statements Test with 136 males and 126 females in grades 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 and found that an individual's increasing ability for abstract thinking results in the greater use of psychological and abstract constructs to describe both the self and others. Younger children primarily describe themselves in concrete terms such as physical characteristics, while adolescents describe themselves more in psychological and interpersonal terms. They also noted this may reflect the results of social inter- action. The authors found that while the adolescents used increasingly more abstract constructs they also continued to use some concrete descriptors, such as name and sex, which the authors interpreted to have some special, phenomeno- logical meaning for them. The continued use of some

concrete constructs resulted in a curvilinear change in the final analysis (Montemayor & Eisen, 1977). Montemayor and Eisen (1977) and L'Ecuyer (1981) noted that there is a process of expansion of self-observation onging with the process of differentiation, not simply the addition of constructs, but the formation of more complex and inter-related constructs and patterns during adolescence. L'Ecuyer's (1981) <u>Development of the Self-Concept through the Life Span</u> indicated not only the presence of developmental processes (expansion, differentiation, and refinements) during childhood and adolescence, but continuing through old age, from 60 to 100 years of age.

Both Engel (1959) and Carlson (1965) concluded in their studies that self-concept remained fairly constant throughout the adolescent period. Although some change occurs in the social-personal element with gender differences, Carlson's (1965) study showed a shift from more personal orientation to more social orientation among females during a six-year period from preadolescence through adolescence and an opposite shift from social orientation to more personal orientation among male subjects. Engle's (1959) longitudinal study was limited by the fact that it covered only a two-year period in adolescent development. She found stability and consistency in the individuals who exhibited negative self-concept on the first test and retained the negativity on the retest, two years later.

The individuals who persisted in the negative self-concept gave evidence of more maladjustment than those who persisted in a positive self-concept in the final analysis.

Norem-Hebeisen (1981) designed a maximization model of self-concept development which consisted of several variables, among which:

1. Self-concept is not the product of a simple sum of experiences. With advancing development, self-concept reflects increasing interaction and integration within an organized network of relationships.

2. Developmental changes in self-concept are reflected in the breadth of the context and quality of conceptual organization reflecting increasing abstraction, generalizability, and complexity.

3. There is likely a reciprocal feedback network between the concept of the world-at-large and self-concept and data matrices.

4. The concepts held by an individual at any point in time will be a product of past learning experiences and affective and cognitive processing. (Norem-Hebeisen, 1981, p. 145)

The studies of self-concept development have been primarily of a generalized nature with few studies directed toward adolescence in particular. Petersen (1981) noted, "While adolescence seems to be a good time at which to study the development of self-concept, few developmental theories or empirical studies exist" (p. 202). The lack of literature and research in the description of self-concept development during adolescence clearly indicates it to be a problem area which should be addressed.

Research Questions

1. What are the most prevalent responses by which adolescents describe their self-concept when answering the question, "Who Am I?"

2. What are the statements with the highest ranking importance scores for each age category?

3. What are the consensual and nonconsensual responses according to the Manual for the Twenty-Statements Problem (Who Am I?)?

4. What is the distribution of consensual and nonconsensual responses for adolescent age grade levels?

5. What are the predominate symbolic interaction subcategories of consensual statements for adolescent age groupings.

Definition of Terms

Self-Concept: Is composed of qualities and attitudes an individual attributes to the self, it includes the organization and internalization of past and current social experiences (George, 1982).

Consensual Physical: Statements referring to the physical self, vital statistics, or the immediate environment

(Hartley, 1970).

Consensual Social: Socially distinguishing references to
kinship, occupation, education, group membership,
etc. (Haroley, 1970).

Nonconsensual One: Statements of preferences, likes and
dislikes or statements that require some qualifica-
tion by the respondent to be understood (Hartley,
1970).

Nonconsensual Social: Broad statements in relation to
fields of social interaction, status, or position
references which are modified by evaluations (Hartley,
1970).

Nonconsensual Two: "Statements which are so comprehensive
that they do not limit behavior, or so vague that
they transcend social interaction" (Hartley, 1970,
p. 25).

Assumptions

1. In each age group there will be different
    patterns of statements adolescents use in
    describing their self-concept.

2. These patterns of statements may reflect norma-
    tive development in adolescent self-concept.

3. Self-descriptive statements will reflect
    normative adolescent cognitive development.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Subjects and Setting

The subjects for the study were adolescents ranging
in age from 12 to 18 years of age. They were stratified
by grade levels into groups (i.e., 7th graders in one
group, 8th graders in another, and so on), with a minimum
of 20 in each group. A nonrandom, convenience sample of
143 subjects was drawn from area junior high schools and
high schools. The sample consisted of both male and female
students currently attending school. Special education
students were not included in the study. Forty-nine Twenty-
Statements Test (TST) questionnaires, which consisted of
data gathered from adolescents attending a youth camp in
the summer of 1982, were merged with the data collected in
the junior and senior high schools to produce the total
of 192 subjects. When the students agreed to fill out the
questionnaire, it was accepted as a demonstration of their
willingness to participate.

Instrument

Manford Kuhn's Twenty-Statements Test (TST) was

administered to elicit responses from 192 students (see
Appendix C). It is a one-page, paper-and-pencil test with
brief, simple instructions at the top of the page and
numbered lines in the left margin from 1 to 20. The sub-
jects were instructed to write the first 20 answers that
came to mind in response to the question, "Who Am I?".
There was a 21st question at the bottom of the page that
asked the subject to rank three of the above items that
best described him/her in order of: best, second best,
and third best. A second page consisted of anonymous
demographic data (i.e., sex and grade level) (see
Appendix C).

The originator of the instrument reported the test-
retest reliability of the scale scores to be approximately
0.85 and the coefficient of reproducibility for the scale
to be 0.903 based on 151 respondents (Kuhn, 1954). Inter-
rater reliability was used in this study. The investigator
and coinvestigator applied the before mentioned operational
definitions to categorize consensual and nonconsensual
responses.

The TST has been used in over 100 reported studies,
including the NASA astronauts (George, 1982). In 1975,
Spitzer and Parker replicated an earlier study in which
they compared four self-concept instruments according to
the degree to which each permitted unrestricted self-
description. With an $\underline{N}$ = 127, 40.2% judged the TST to be

the most accurate measurement for self-description
(Spitzer & Parker, 1976). Wylie reported on the TST,
noting the problems with the unstructured test, but
conceding its potential value as an instrument based on
its wide usage. She adopted a "wait and see" attitude
toward the validity of the instrument (Wylie, 1974).

Data Collection Procedures

The District Program Director for the school district
in which the junior and senior high schools were located
was approached for permission to conduct the study in that
district. All necessary forms were completed and procedures
followed for approval to conduct the study. Approval was
granted and the next step was the gaining of permission
from the principals and teachers in the respective schools.
Parental consent forms were sent to those taking part in
the study. When these were returned, a time was set, at
the teachers' convenience, to administer the TST. The
investigator gave a brief introduction and purpose for the
study, stressing the anonymous nature of the test and the
fact that it was completely voluntary (see Appendix A).
The investigator distributed the test, remained in the
room, and collected the tests after the allotted 20 minutes.
Prospective participants retained their right to refuse to
be included in the study. All materials remained with the
investigator and confidentiality was assured. Anticipated

psychological risk to the participants was minimal.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Description of the Sample

The sample studied consisted of 192 subjects. The total number of responses from those 192 subjects was 2,886. The number of responses from any one subject ranged from 3 to 20. The 21st question, which asked the respondents to rank the importance of their responses as to which item best described him/her, then the second best and third best items, was occasionally not answered and resulted in fewer than 192 responses.

Among the sample of 192 subjects there were 79 (41%) males and 113 (59%) females. In the 7th grade there were 31 (16%) subjects, 8th grade 37 (19%) subjects, 9th grade 30 (16%) subjects, 10th grade 25 (13%) subjects, 11th grade 31 (16%) subjects, and 12th grade 38 (20%) subjects (see Table 1 on page 22).

The subjects were also asked to describe themselves in terms of an excellent, good, or fair student. The "excellent" ranking was chosen by 6 (19%) of the 7th grade subjects, 7 (19%) of the 8th grade subjects, 11 (37%) of the 9th grade subjects, 13 (52%) of the 10th grade

subjects, 9 (29%) of the 11th grade subjects, and 34 (13%) of the 12th grade subjects. The "good" ranking was chosen as a student descriptor by 16 (52%) of the 7th grade subjects, 22 (59%) of the 8th grade subjects, 17 (57%) of the 9th grade subjects, 9 (36%) of the 10th grade subjects, 16 (52%) of the 11th grade subjects, and 21 (55%) of the 12th grade subjects. The "fair" ranking was chosen by 9 (29%) of the 7th grade subjects, 8 (22%) of the 8th grade subjects, 2 (6%) of the 9th grade subjects, 3 (12%) of the 10th grade subjects, 6 (19%) of the 11th grade subjects, and 4 (11%) of the 12th grade subjects. The most frequent response was "good" from all grade levels with the exception of the 10th grade subjects who chose "excellent" as the most frequent response (see Table 1 on page 24).

Content Analysis and Reliability
of Data Categories

The consensual and nonconsensual responses were used as the major categories and then separated into minor categories of consensual physical and consensual social with subcategories of consensual social fields of interaction. The nonconsensual minor categories were nonconsensual one and nonconsensual two with subcategories of nonconsensual social fields of interaction. When coded they appeared as:

Table 1

Number and Percent of Subjects by Sex and Grade Level and Frequency

of Subject Responses to Perception of Performance in School

	$\underline{n}$	%						
<u>Sex</u>								
Male	79	41						
Female	113	58						

			Perception of Performance in School					
<u>Grade</u>			Excellent		Good		Fair	
			$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%
7th Grade	31	16	6	19	16	52	9	29
8th Grade	37	19	7	19	22	59	8	22
9th Grade	30	16	11	37	17	57	2	06
10th Grade	25	13	13	52	9	36	3	12
11th Grade	31	16	9	29	16	52	6	19
12th Grade	38	20	13	34	21	55	4	11

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C = Consensual--Those statements generally under-
stood without further explanation.

CP - Consensual Physical--Those statements that per-
tain to the physical being (e.g., I" am 5'3"
tall," "I live at . . ." "I have blond hair.").

CS = Consensual Social--Those statements that imply a
degree of social interaction but remain in the
consensual mode. In order to classify the social
interaction, the CS responses were further
separated into subcategories.

CS_1 = Consensual Friend (e.g., "I have a friend," "My
best friend is. . . .").

CS_2 = Consensual Family (e.g., "I am the brother of.
. . ." "I am a daughter.").

CS_3 = Consensual Heterosexual (e.g., "I have a boyfriend.").

CS_4 = Consensual Student (e.g., "I am in the 9th grade,"
"I am a student.").

CS_5 = Consensual Activity or Role (e.g., "I am a base-
ball player." "I am a member of the choir.").

CS_6 = Consensual Religion (e.g., "I go to church."
"I am a Baptist.").

CS_7 = Consensual Work (e.g., "I am a babysitter."
"I work at South Town YMCA.").

CS_8 = Consensual Social (e.g., "A lover." "A fighter.").

NC = Nonconsensual--Those statements that require some
interpretation or qualification by the respondent

to be understood.

NC_1 = Nonconsensual statements that reflect preferences, likes and dislikes, or include a qualifier (e.g., "I am a kind person." "I love sunshine."). The nonconsensual one statements (NC_1) were separated into social interaction subcategories, similar to the consensual subcategories.

NC_1 (1) = Nonconsensual Friend (e.g., "I am a good friend." "Need a friend when hurting inside.").

NC_1 (2) = Nonconsensual Family (e.g., "I am a good son to my mother." "I am a family person.").

NC_1 (3) = Nonconsensual Heterosexual (e.g., "I like guys." "I am in love with someone not my boyfriend.").

NC_1 (4) = Nonconsensual Student (e.g., "I don't like school." "I am a very good student.").

NC_1 (5) = Nonconsensual Activities (e.g., "I enjoy music." "I play basketball very well.").

NC_1 (6) = Nonconsensual Religion (e.g., "I am a Christian," in contrast to the consensual "I am a Baptist," has a religious implication but not necessarily attached to a particular church membership. Another example from the data was, "I believe in God.").

NC_1 (7) = Nonconsensual Work (e.g., "I hate to babysit." "I am a hardworking person.").

NC_1 (8) = Nonconsensual Social (e.g., "I am friendly."

"I am a person that loves people.").

NC_2 = Nonconsensual Global Statements--These would require additional information and did not indicate any physical or social interactional structure (e.g., "Ignorant of many things." "Believe in almost everything and everybody.").

Following the coding procedure, the data were entered into a computer data bank. When the printout was obtained, the responses were rechecked and corrected by the investigator and coinvestigator for 100% accuracy. The frequency of error by the investigator and coinvestigator before correction was less than 10% or better than 90% accuracy.

Table 2

Frequency of Error in Coding

Category	E	%
Consensual Physical	5	02
Consensual Social	40	14
Nonconsensual One	62	22
Nonconsensual Two	56	20
Nonconsensual Social	118	42
TOTAL	281	100

Total Responses	Total Errors	%
2,886	281	.097

Research Question 1

What are the most prevalent responses by which
adolescents describe their self-concept when
answering the question, Why Am I?

A total number of 2,886 responses were collected from
the 192 subjects. The frequency of one particular
response was difficult to analyze because several
responses appeared with close frequency. "Caring" had the
highest frequency with 38 responses, "Christian" followed
with 36, and "nice" with 35 responses. "Smart" was used
in 32 responses with "friendly" and "helpful" in 30 and
28 responses, respectively (see Table 3 on page 29).

"Nice" was used as an autodescriptive term more often
in the junior high level, while "caring" was used more
often by the senior high students. "Christian" was
another term used more frequently by the senior high
subjects. "Smart" was analyzed separately from
"intelligent," but the data suggested that the lower
grades may use "smart" to describe the self and the upper
grades may have responded with the term, "intelligent."
The 7th and 8th grade subjects did not use the term
"intelligent" at all. It was used by the 9th grade sub-
jects with a 36% frequency, by 10th grade subjects with a
29% frequency, by 11th grade subjects with a 7% frequency,

Table 3

Frequency of Nonconsensual Responses (R)

Grade	Caring		Christian		Nice		Smart		Friendly		Helpful	
	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%
7th	4	8	3	9	8	23	9	28	6	20	4	14
8th	4	13	6	17	8	23	6	19	3	10	6	21
9th	5	11	5	14	8	23	7	22	5	17	1	04
10th	2	08	7	19	5	14	3	09	2	07	2	07
11th	13	37	7	19	2	06	1	03	4	13	4	14
12th	8	24	8	22	4	11	6	19	10	33	11	40
TOTAL	38	100	36	100	35	100	32	100	30	100	28	100

and by the 12th grade subjects with a 29% frequency. The
11th grade was significantly low in the percentage of use
of either "smart" or "intelligent" with only a 3% fre-
quency of "smart" responses and a 7% frequency of the
term "intelligent." "Friendly" appeared more frequently
in the 7th grade and 12th grade but decreased in frequency
in the grades between. "Helpful" increased in frequency
in the senior year from a low of 7% in the 10th grade to
a high of 39% in the 12th grade.

Research Question 2

What are the statements with the highest ranking
importance scores for each age category?

The students ranking of the response which best
described them and the second best, and third best, were
varied and appeared idiosyncratic. Some of the same
responses that occurred in the highest frequency cate-
gories were noted, such as "nice" and "Christian," but
they just as often were completely different. An example
of the rankings: (a) "Total procrastinator," (b) "Slightly
irresponsible," (c) "Complain about things I don't really
want changed." Many of the rankings were drawn from the
preference categories (i.e., "I enjoy my family," "I like
school."). A number of subjects chose the consensual mode
for the ranking (i.e., "I am tall," "I am an American.").

The number of responses repeated were quite low. The most any one response was repeated was 8 to 12 times. Very few were repeated in any one category, therefore confirming the very individualistic nature of the ranking categories (see Table 4).

Table 4

Ranking: Best, Second Best, and Third Best Descriptions of Each Subject Frequency of Total Responses

Category	Best		Second Best		Third Best	
	R	%	R	%	R	%
Nonconsensual One	72	39	73	40	69	39
Nonconsensual Social	71	38	72	39	72	41
Nonconsensual Two	19	10	17	10	16	09
Consensual Physical	15	08	15	08	8	04
Consensual Social	10	05	6	03	12	07

Research Question 3

What are the consensual and nonconsensual responses according to the Manual for the Twenty-Statements Problem (Who Am I?)?

The major codes for the 2,886 responses were consensual 451 (16%) and nonconsensual 2,435 (85%). The

consensual resulted in 451 (16%) responses with 236 (52%) coded under the consensual physical, the actual physical description of the subject or the surrounding environment. Examples of categories of consensual physical include height, weight, race, and where their residence was located. Consensual social accounted for 215 (48%) responses. Those were divided into subcategories reflecting social interaction. Included in the consensual social were statements of roles that implied a degree of social interaction (i.e., basketball player, oldest child, boyfriend, student, lover, babysitter).

The nonconsensual major category, which resulted in 2,435 responses, was divided into nonconsensual one (NC_1) of which there were 1,130 (46%) responses. Those responses were characterized by preferences and opinions. Examples of the NC_1 statements included, "like to keep things neat," "I like to have fun."

The NC_2 statements accounted for 318 (13%) responses. The NC_2 responses were vague, difficult to interpret statements (i.e., "Someone that puts myself in certainty," "A horseback riding component."). The remaining category of nonconsensual social resulted in 987 (41%) responses. They were fairly evenly divided between the nonconsensual one and nonconsensual social with a few (13%) being incomprehensible (see Table 5 on page 33).

Table 5

Frequency of Consensual and Nonconsensual Responses

for the Total Sample of 192 Individuals

Category	$\underline{R}$	%
Consensual	451	
Consensual Physical	236	52
Consensual Social	215	48
TOTAL	451	100
Nonconsensual	2,435	
Nonconsensual One	1,130	46
Nonconsensual Two	318	13
Nonconsensual Social	987	41
TOTAL	2,435	100

Research Question 4

What is the distribution of Consensual and
Nonconsensual responses for adolescent grade
levels?

There were significantly more nonconsensual responses
made in all grade levels; however, the percentage of
totals indicated more consensual statements having been
made in all but the 7th and 12th grades. The indication
appeared to be that the subjects did not progress from

consensual to nonconsensual descriptions or statements, but remained fairly consistent in the use of each (see Table 6 on page 35).

When comparing male and female responses, males showed increased frequency of consensual physical responses in the 8th and 12th grade levels. Perhaps this is an indicator of physical growth or a focus on physical appearance. There was also an increased frequency of responses with males in the 8th, 10th, and 12th grades in the consensual social category. This may suggest that the physical self and the social self are more active with males in those grade levels. The nonconsensual responses indicated an increase in frequency with females in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade levels. In the nonconsensual two category, the 7th grade male and female subject had a nearly equal frequency of responses, while the 8th grade males showed an increase in response frequency. That equality of male and female response frequency was also evident in the 10th grade subjects. Perhaps it is at those grade levels, the 7th grade entry into junior high school and the 10th grade entry into high school, that the subjects feel less free to make those broad, sweeping statements that characterize the nonconsensual two category (see Table 7 on page 36).

Table 6

Consensual Physical (CP), Consensual Social (CS), Consensual (C), Nonconsensual One (NC_1),

Nonconsensual Two (NC_2), and Nonconsensual (NC)

Category	7th Grade (n = 31)			8th Grade (n = 37)			9th Grade (n = 30)			10th Grade (n = 25)			11th Grade (n = 31)			12th Grade (n = 38)		
	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%
Consensual Physical	0.76	22	56	1.80	54	45	1.48	43	47	1.00	29	53	1.30	38	55	1.70	50	65
Consensual Social	0.58	17	44	2.25	65	55	1.60	49	53	0.90	26	47	1.00	31	45	0.93	27	35
TOTAL	1.35	39	100	4.10	119	100	3.10	92	100	1.90	55	100	2.30	69	100	2.60	77	100
Nonconsensual One	4.60	133	73	5.00	147	62	5.90	171	72	4.80	139	86	5.50	160	82	11.40	330	86
Nonconsensual Two	1.69	49	27	2.46	91	38	2.32	67	28	0.79	23	14	1.10	34	18	1.82	54	14
TOTAL	6.30	182	100	8.20	238	100	8.20	238	100	5.68	162	100	6.7	194	100	13.3	384	100

Table 7

Frequency of Male and Female Consensual and Nonconsensual Responses

Category	7th Grade				8th Grade				9th Grade				10th Grade				11th Grade				12th Grade			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%
Consensual Physical	7	35	13	64	44	83	9	17	7	17	35	83	8	28	21	72	0	00	39	100	31	61	20	39
Total Male/ Female Responses	20				53				42				29				39				51			
Consensual Social	5	28	13	72	43	67	21	33	9	41	13	59	15	63	9	34	8	26	23	74	17	63	10	37
Total Male/ Female Responses	18				64				22				24				31				27			
Nonconsensual One	89	51	87	49	116	51	111	49	106	32	225	68	67	26	186	74	33	11	272	89	200	38	323	62
Total Male/ Female Responses	176				227				331				253				305				523			
Nonconsensual Two	25	51	24	49	65	73	24	27	15	22	52	78	12	48	13	52	8	31	18	69	21	39	33	61
Total Male/ Female Responses	49				89				67				25				26				54			

Research Question 5

What are the predominate symbolic interaction
subcategories of Consensual and Nonconsensual
statements for adolescent grade levels?

The symbolic interaction subcategories for both
consensual and nonconsensual are "friend," "family,"
"heterosexual," "student," "activity," "religion," "work,"
and "social."

In the nonconsensual data, the "friend" or "best
friend" seems to decrease in importance in the senior high
years, as does the social field Seltzer stated, "The
desire for a wide variety of friends . . . loses it
potency. The adolescent no longer needs friends in order
to borrow their elements, to assess them, or to be as
similar to them as possible" (1982, p. 179).

The family focus appeared to change also with a
decrease as the grade levels increased. This may happen
as the adolescent is moving out into the peer group and
is less dependent on the family for support. Hetero-
sexual responses seemed not to follow a consistent pattern.

At one point the 11th grade, "heterosexual" was
relatively high with 6% for the consensual and 5% for the
nonconsensual as compared with the 7th and 8th grades for
consensual of zero and nonconsensual 2% and 3%, respectively.

Activity responses increased at the 8th and 9th grade
levels in both consensual and nonconsensual and 10th grade
level in the consensual, while "religion" and "work"
responses peaked in the nonconsensual category in the 11th
and 12th grades. The social responses also increased in
the 11th and 12th grades (see Table 8 on page 39). It
appears that the family is more of a focal point for
social interaction in the 7th grade with a change in the
11th and 12th grades to a focus on the general social
interactional fields. This may suggest a broadening of
perception to include a great number of friends not just
a best friend or family interactional field. "Work" had
greater frequency in the consensual mode in the 7th and
8th grades. Those responses pointed to the industrious-
ness of those grade levels (i.e., "A babysitter" or
"duster."). The nonconsensual work showed a gradual
increase through the grade levels to a peak in the 12th
grade. Those work-related responses were more general in
nature (i.e., "I am willing to work," and "I want to be a
doctor."). "Student" took an interesting turn. In the
consensual mode it increased from 17% in the 7th grade to
35% in the 12th grade. The 9th grade had the highest
frequency in junior high and the 12th grade in senior high
school. This may indicate some prestige, or at least some
emphasis, placed on being at the highest grade level for
that particular school. Being a 9th grader or being a

Table 8

Frequency of Responses for Consensual and Nonconsensual Social Subcategories by Grade Level

Category	7th Grade (n = 31)			8th Grade (n = 37)			9th Grade (n = 30)			10th Grade (n = 25)			11th Grade (n =31)			12th Grade (n = 38)		
	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%	$\bar{X}$	R	%
Consensual																		
Friend	.00	-	00	.06	2	03	.10	3	06	.06	2	08	.06	2	06	.03	1	04
Family	.27	8	44	.48	14	21	.51	15	31	.17	5	19	.27	8	26	.20	6	21
Heterosexual	.00	-	00	.00	-	00	.03	1	02	.03	1	04	.06	2	06	.00	-	00
Student	.10	3	17	.41	12	18	.34	10	20	.17	5	19	.27	8	26	.34	10	35
Activity	.13	4	22	.90	26	39	.45	13	27	.41	12	46	.24	7	23	.27	8	29
Religion	.03	1	06	.00	-	00	.06	2	04	.00	-	00	.03	1	03	.06	2	07
Work	.06	2	11	.38	11	17	.10	3	06	.00	0	00	.00	-	00	.00	-	00
Social	.00	-	00	.03	1	02	.06	2	04	.03	1	04	.10	3	10	.03	1	04
TOTAL	.62	18	100	2.20	66	100	1.60	49	100	.90	26	100	1.00	31	100	.97	28	100
Nonconsensual Social																		
Friend	.27	8	05	.13	4	02	.34	10	05	.03	1	05	.00	-	00	.03	1	01
Family	.55	16	11	.55	16	08	.27	8	04	.34	10	08	.31	9	06	.31	9	06
Heterosexual	.13	4	03	.17	5	03	.20	6	03	.03	1	05	.27	8	05	.13	4	03
Student	.69	20	13	1.00	31	16.	.72	21	12	.41	12	09	.24	7	04	.45	13	08
Activity	1.60	49	32	2.40	70	35	2.10	61	34	.97	28	22	1.20	36	24	.97	8	18
Religion	.13	4	03	.24	7	03	.27	8	05	.34	10	08	.41	12	08	.51	15	09
Work	.13	4	03	.24	7	03	.10	3	02	.24	7	06	.31	9	06	.45	13	08
Social	1.50	46	30	2.00	60	.30	2.20	64	35	2.00	58	46	2.40	71	47	2.70	78	47
TOTAL	5.23	151	100	6.90	200	100	6.20	181	100	4.40	127	100	5.20	152	100	5.50	161	100

senior seems to be a focus by the frequency of responses.

The "family" focus appeared to increase and decrease in frequency of response in male and female subjects without a pattern through the grade levels. "Activity" statements were more frequent with males in the 8th grade and with females in the 9th and 11th grades. The "social" category was similar in pattern to the "activity" category, perhaps indicating some similar fields of social interaction (see Table 9 on page 41).

Table 9

Frequency for Three Categories of Nonconsensual Social and Consensual Social by Grade Level and

Frequency Totals for the Three Nonconsensual Social and Consensual Social Categories

Category	7th Grade ($\underline{n}$ = 31)				8th Grade ($\underline{n}$ = 37)				9th Grade ($\underline{n}$ = 30)				10th Grade ($\underline{n}$ = 25)				11th Grade ($\underline{n}$ = 31)				12th Grade ($\underline{n}$ = 38)			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%	$\underline{R}$	%
Nonconsensual Social																								
Family	5	31	11	69	14	87	2	13	2	25	6	75	00	10	10	100	2	22	7	78	5	56	4	44
Activity	22	45	27	55	55	79	15	21	22	36	39	64	11	39	17	61	3	08	33	92	10	36	18	64
Social	14	30	32	70	34	57	26	43	11	17	53	83	10	17	48	83	7	10	64	90	33	42	45	58
Consensual Social																								
Family	1	12	7	88	10	71	4	29	5	33	10	67	2	40	3	60	1	12	7	88	5	83	1	17
Activity	4	100	0	00	19	70	8	30	3	23	10	77	8	67	4	33	1	12	7	88	5	63	3	37
Social	0	00	0	00	1	100	0	00	1	50	1	50	1	100	0	00	3	100	0	00	1	100	0	00
TOTALS																								
Family	6	25	18	75	24	80	6	20	7	30	16	70	2	13	13	87	3	18	14	82	10	67	5	33
Activity	26	49	27	51	74	76	23	24	25	35	49	65	19	48	21	52	4	09	40	91	15	42	21	58
Social	14	30	32	70	35	57	26	43	12	18	54	82	11	19	48	81	10	14	64	86	34	43	45	57

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Summary

This study provided new data for describing normative
patterns of self-concept development through adolescence.
The 2,886 responses by 192 subjects were coded by consensual
and nonconsensual responses in answer to the question, "Who
Am I?". They were examined by sex and grade levels and
categorized into consensual and nonconsensual responses
first, then subcategorized by social interactional fields.

The sample consisted of 79 (41%) males and 113 (58%)
females who were students in junior and senior high schools.
Ages ranged from 12 to 19 years. All subjects voluntarily
completed the questionnaire.

Data analysis of the 2,886 "Who Am I?" responses
revealed that the most frequent category of response was
"caring" with 38 responses, "Christian" was next with 36,
followed by "nice" with 35. The next three categories
were "smart" with 32 responses, "friendly" with 30, and
"helpful" with 28. Some differences in response frequency
were noted with junior high and high school grade levels.
Junior high used "nice" as a response to "Who Am I?" more

frequently than high school. In contrast, "caring" was used more often by high school students.

The responses to the 21st question on the instrument proved to be so individualistic that a category (or categories) could not be ranked as best, second best, or third best description. Some of the most frequent responses were repeated, but only from 8 to 12 times in the total sample. The responses for the most part were idiosyncratic.

The major codes for the responses were consensual and nonconsensual. The consensual was separated into consensual physical and consensual social. Fewer consensual physical, which had to do with the physical self and surrounding environment, resulted with 236 responses. The consensual social, which related to fields of social interaction, had 215 responses, for a total of 451 consensual responses. The nonconsensual responses were separated into nonconsensual one and nonconsensual two. Nonconsensual one statements were subdivided into social categories identical to the consensual. In the nonconsensual one category there were 1,130 responses and 318 in the nonconsensual two category. Nonconsensual social had 987 responses. Nonconsensual one consisted of preference statements and opinions, nonconsensual two statements were vague and difficult to relate to the question of "Who Am I?". Nonconsensual social statements reflected fields of social

interaction.

More nonconsensual statements were made in all grade levels, but consensual statements were made in every grade level. No progression of responses from the consensual mode to the nonconsensual mode was indicated, perhaps supporting Piaget's theory that cognitive development is more or less complete by the age of 15 or that the differentiation process was established enough to allow for the freedom of expression in both modes.

Trends noted in fields of social interaction included a higher frequency of "friend" and "family" responses in the 7th grade and tapering off in senior high school with an opposite trend in social interaction. "Student" was a more frequent response in the 9th and 12th grades suggesting an association between being in the highest grade in junior or senior high and self-concept. In the 10th grade, "activities" had a high frequency of responses.

Trends also noted were fewer descriptions of "friends" (or "best friend") and "family" as the grade levels increased and a greater frequency of responses of "religion" and "work." Work-related issues may take on added importance as the adolescent prepares to finish school and move out into the world. The 11th grade had a low response to the "student" description but a very high response in the "caring" category. The 11th grade is the middle year of high school. The excitement of entering high school is

over and the enthusiasm generated by the senior year has
yet to begin.

The reference to religion occurred frequently in
this study, but differently than Kuhn and McPartland's
study, reported in 1954. They postulated that religious
group affiliation was very important to the more tradi-
tional and influential religious subcultures, such as the
Roman Catholics, Jews, and members of small sects, and was
reflected in the frequency of responses made identifying
the individual as a member of one of those differentiated
religious groups. Conversely, they found the less differen-
tiated "Christian" reference to be less important in what
they termed as the "social anchorage" of an individual
(Kuhn & McPartland, 1954). In this present study,
"Christian" appeared more frequently than any other
religious reference. Perhaps reflecting the changes in
the zeitgeist from the 1950s to the 1980s, from a more
differentiated religious affiliation to a less differen-
tiated, but no less important, social anchorage for the
individual.

The data indicated there may be identifiable patterns
in normative development. According to Kuhn & McPartland
(1954), " . . . human behavior is organized and directed
and . . . the organization and direction are supplied by
the individual's attitudes toward himself, it ought to be
of crucial significance to social psychology to be able to

identify and measure self-attitudes" (p. 68).

Implications for Nursing

Health maintenance and illness prevention have long been a part of nursing. When normative developmental patterns can be identified, those patterns can serve as a guide for the nursing process. They allow for the assessment of deviation from the norms and become directives for goal oriented therapy. This beginning description of social interactional fields could serve as a basis for the development of an assessment tool for use in nursing. The recognition that different fields of social interaction need to be addressed at each grade level can be beneficial to any individual interested in adolescent growth and development.
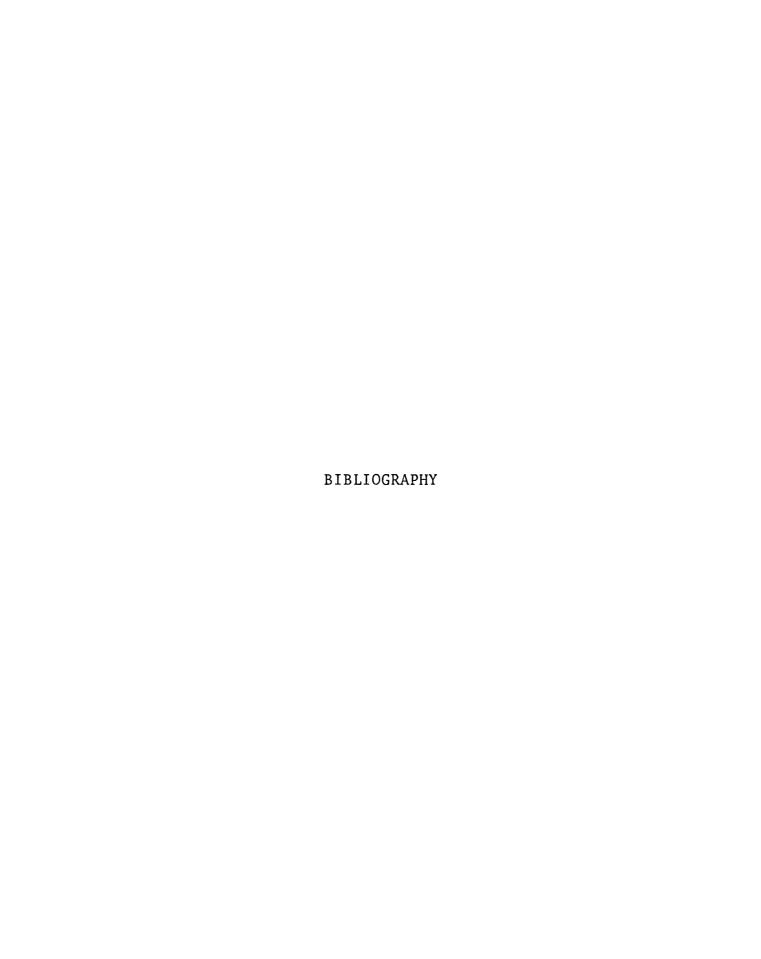
Recommendations for Further Research

More research is needed to describe adolescent development of self-concept and the relationship to social interactional fields. Suggestions for further study are:

1. This study should be replicated with a larger sample.

2. The statements could serve as a basis for the development of an instrument to elicit responses in a more structured form.

3. The study should be replicated with a

hospitalized inpatient adolescent sample to compare the
normative patterns of self-concept development.

  4. An investigation is needed to explore the
effects long-term psychiatric hospitalization has on
adolescent social fields of interaction.

  5. Further investigation is required to evaluate
the effects of religious affiliation on self-concept
development.

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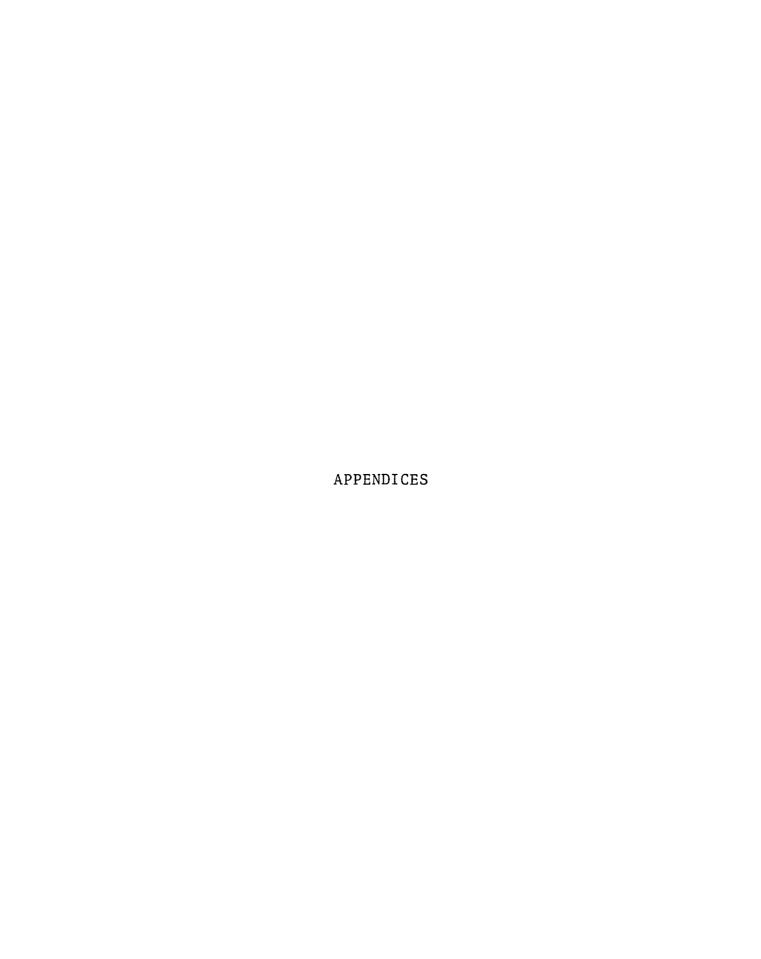
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

VERBAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Verbal Introduction to the Study

My name is Mary Flanagan and I am a graduate student at The University of Kansas. I am conducting a Master's thesis research in order to learn how adolescents describe themselves and how they feel about themselves. Often, it seems, there is a gap in communication between adolescents and adults, particularly parents, teachers, and nurses. Many of these adults would like to understand the younger person better, but do not know how to go about developing that understanding. This study is an effort to bridge that gap.

I would greatly appreciate your help in filling out the questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers. Please read the directions carefully and proceed to fill in the blanks. You will have 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. All answers will be confidential. The responses are strictly anonymous; there is no way any individual can be identified in this study. You may choose not to participate, it is entirely voluntary.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. I will remain in the room and collect the papers at the end of the allotted time.

Thank you very much. I appreciate your cooperation.

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Parental Consent Form

Dear Parent:

I am a graduate student at The University of Kansas conducting a Master's thesis research in order to learn more about how adolescents describe their self-concept.

I would appreciate your help by giving your permission for your son/daughter to participate in my study which has been approved by the Shawnee Mission School District. Your child will be asked to fill out a simple paper-and-pencil test and a completely anonymous data sheet. Neither the name of the school nor your child will be identified in any way.

After signing below, please have your son/daughter return this form to the office of his/her school as soon as possible.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary Flanagan, R.N., B.S.N.

_____
Child's Name

The above named child has my
permission to participate in
this research project. I   _____
understand that my child may   Signature of Parent/Guardian
decline to particpate without
affecting, in any way, regular
services received at the school. _____
All materials will be held   Date
in strict confidence.

APPENDIX C

TWENTY-STATEMENTS TEST: "WHO AM I?"

AND

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The Twenty-Statement Response
"Who Am I?"

In the blanks below, please make as many statements as possible in response to the simple question (addressed to yourself), "Who Am I?". Answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not to anybody else. Write your answers in the order they occur to you. Don't worry about the logic or importance. Go along fairly fast.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. Of the items you have listed, please indicate by listing in order, the three (3) items which describe you best (please indicate by the numbers above):

    The item which best describes me is _____

    The item which second best describes me is _____

    The item which third best describes me is _____

Student Demographic Data

Please check the blank that describes you:

1. Age at last birthday:

    _____12 years   _____16 years

    _____13 years   _____17 years

    _____14 years   _____18 years

    _____15 years   _____19 years

2. Sex:

    _____Male   _____Female

3. Your present grade level:

    High School   College

    _____5th   _____9th   _____Freshman

    _____6th   _____10th   _____Sophomore

    _____7th   _____11th

    _____8th   _____12th

4. What kind of a student are you?

    _____Fair

    _____Good

    _____Excellent

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLES OF CONSENSUAL AND

NONCONSENSUAL STATEMENTS

Examples of Consensual and

Nonconsensual Statements

Consensual Physical Statements

"I am a girl."

"I am a tall person."

"I have blondish-brown hair."

Consensual Social Statements

"I am the baby girl of the family."

"I am a lover."

"I am a soccer player."

Nonconsensual One Statements

"I like winning."

"I am funny."

"I am a talkative person."

Nonconsensual Social Statements

"I love to do things with my friends."

"I am a person involved in sports."

"I am a caring person."

Nonconsensual Two Statements

"I'm third."

"Prince of my own accord."

"In between almost everything."