THE EFFECTS OF THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT MYSELF ON SELECTED PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CONCEPTS

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Brunett, Norma J., The Effects of the Meaning of the Concept MYSELF on Selected Personal and Social Concepts. Master of Science (Clinical Psychology), May, 1971, 26 pp., 8 tables, references, 21 titles.

The present investigation was concerned with the effects that the meaning of the concept MYSELF had on the meanings of other selected personal and social concepts. Meaning of the concepts was measured by the semantic differential. Twelve bipolar adjective scales, with seven divisions each, were used to rate each concept. The adjectives were chosen according to their relevance to all of the concepts. The eight concepts whose meanings were measured consisted of four personal concepts: MYSELF, MY IDEAL SELF, HOME, and FREEDOM; and four social concepts: RESPONSIBILITY, SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY, and THE ESTABLISHMENT.

The subjects consisted of 100 students in freshman English classes at North Texas State University. There were 52 males and 48 females among the subjects, who were administered the semantic differential during their regular class periods. At this time, additional personal and biographical data was obtained through questions concerning the students' family income, frequency of church attendance, and hometown population. Two groups were formed by a hierarchical grouping analysis of the mean profiles of the concept MYSELF. This procedure allowed the selecting and pairing of persons

who were most alike on the meanings they attributed to the concept MYSELF.

Hotelling's T square was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean profiles of the two groups on the other selected personal and social concepts. A significant overall difference was found on the concepts MYSELF, MY IDEAL SELF, FREEDOM, and SOCIETY. In general, the groups had different meanings of the other selected personal concepts but not of the other selected social concepts. The only exceptions were that the social concept SOCIETY was significant, and the personal concept HOME was not significant. That is, the meaning of the concept MYSELF appeared to affect the meaning of other selected personal concepts but not the meaning of the other selected social concepts.

Variables that seemed to be related to the effects of the meaning of the concept MYSELF were hometown population and family income. A higher percentage of Group 1 (N = 71) members were from less densely populated areas and had higher family incomes than Group 2 (N = 29) members. Variables of age, sex, and religion did not appear to have any effects on the meanings the subjects attributed to the concepts.

Further research on the influence that the meaning of the concept MYSELF has on the meaning of other concepts could be improved in several ways. First, a larger sample with groups delineated by a grouping analysis could provide additional information. Also, groups could be formed on the

basis of an outside criterion with relevant variables, such as hometown population and family income controlled. Adjective scales for use with the semantic differential could be chosen to load high on an evaluative, potency, or activity factor. Also, the range of ratings could be extended on each scale to increase the discrimination of ratings possible for the subjects. Instead of forming groups by a grouping analysis of the mean scale scores, a hierarchical grouping analysis of standardized scale scores or factor scores could be used. To determine if environmental changes affect meaning of concepts, meanings could be assessed at different time periods with the same subjects.

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THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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Denton, Texas

May, 1971

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Introduction

Psychologists have many times theorized that behavior is the product of an interaction of personality characteristics and environmental factors. Before social factors were formulated to have any influence on behavior, personal or individual characteristics were stressed as the main determinant of behavior. Several personality theorists have emphasized the importance of social factors in determining an individual's behavior and have been instrumental in attracting attention to the importance of these social factors. Since social factors have been brought into some perspective, studies involving the effects of the interaction of particular social and personal factors could be beneficial in leading to both control and prediction of behavior. Examples of social factors influencing behavior are the family, peer groups, and cultural factors.

Early social psychological theories were proposed by Alfred Adler, Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, and Harry Stack Sullivan. The main similarity of these theorists was their emphasis on the importance of social factors in shaping personality. However, the major difference in these theories involved the different aspects of the social environment that were emphasized. Some emphasized the influence of a particular society on its members, others the influence of family

relations on behavior, and others placed more importance on human relationships occurring at different times in an individual's life (Hall & Lindzey, 1957, pp. 151-152).

Another theorist, Kurt Lewin, stressed the importance of the environment and its effects on the behavior of an organism at a given time. Hall and Lindzey (1957, p. 207) summarized characteristics of Lewin's position as follows: " . . . behavior is a function of the field which exists at the time the behavior occurs . . . ." Similarly, Henry A. Murray (Hall & Lindzey, 1957, p. 157) emphasized the importance of environmental factors as factors determining the individual's behavior. The importance of environmental factors on the behavior of animals has been demonstrated in an observational study by Washburn and DeVore (1961). Drastic changes were noted in behavior as the animals were observed in different situations. These investigators concluded that such behavioral change was a function of a change in the environment. This suggests that with humans there could also be drastic behavioral changes resulting from relevant social and environmental changes.

From the theories emphasizing social variables, or the importance of interpersonal relations, and those emphasizing environmental variables, a formulation of human behavior as a result of interacting factors can be conceived. Interactional effects of personal, social and environmental factors all contribute to the development of individual

values and interests which frequently manifest themselves in various behavior patterns.

Just as there is thought to be an interaction of personal and social factors in producing overt behavior, interaction of these factors may also greatly influence how an individual perceives or conceives of his environment, as well as other people. Tagiuri (1968) pointed out that the interactional process involved in perception of people and in interpersonal behavior is complex and not completely known. Indications of the complexity of the nature of the interactional process of perceptions and interpersonal relations have been given in several studies. In one early study, Chodorkoff (1954) found that the more inaccurate a subject was in perceiving his environment, the more inaccurate he was in his self-perception, and the more inaccurate self and environmental perception were, the more inadequate was the individual's personal adjustment. In another earlier study, Luria (1959) found that meaning of concepts, obtained by a semantic differential, of self and parents could differentiate control subjects from therapy subjects. In this study, therapy subjects tended to rate concepts of self and parents less favorably. In a more recent study, Lower (1967) found a high positive correlation between self-concepts of students and their perceptions of persons that were considered to be influential on others. In another study, dealing with the interaction of the organism and his environment, Pervin (1967)

found that students who perceived themselves and their environment similarly were more likely to be personally satisfied with their environment. Also, Pervin and Lilly (1967) found that subjects with high self judgments and small discrepancies between their self and ideal self judgments were high on social desirability scores. The previously cited studies indicate that personal factors, such as self concept, influence perceptions both of other people and the environment, as well as interpersonal behavior and interaction with the environment.

Individuals with similar personal characteristics, who have had similar experiences, will tend to have related conceptions and perceptions of their environment. Similar individuals also will tend to have meanings, feelings, and values that are related to and associated with their environment. As individual perceptions, conceptions and meanings are related, groups of people with similar personal experiences tend to have related perceptions of their environment. One important factor accounting for this could be the influence of learning. Hammond, Wilkins, and Todd (1966), in a study on the influence of learning on perception and interpersonal behavior, stated that the way people learn to relate to others is affected by their ability to learn to perceive the other persons accurately. Interpersonal behavior, then, is not only affected by an intsraction of personal and social factors but also by learning and its modification of the

perceptual process. However, the interaction of personal and social factors could also be a function of learning which would tend to compound any interactional effects on interpersonal behavior.

The present investigation was concerned with the effects of differences in meaning of a personal concept on other personal and social concepts. Specifically, the question asked in the present investigation was: Do groups differentiated on the meaning of the concept MYSELF attribute different meanings to other personal and social concepts? For an individual, meaning of a concept was operationally defined by ratings given on twelve bipolar adjective scales of the semantic differential. Similarly for a group, the meaning of a concept was obtained by the mean scores of the bipolar adjective scales on the semantic differential. Some recent writers (Warr & Knapper, 1968, p. 3) state that individuals possess a tendency toward consistency in judgments that they make of other persons and of objects of the environment. If a tendency toward consistency exists in the judgments made of other persons and the environment, then a tendency toward consistency would be expected in the meanings of concepts that an individual would have. In the present study, two groups, formed on the basis of similarity of meaning of the concept MYSELF, were expected to differ significantly on the meanings of other selected personal and social concepts.

The present study was different from most other studies of this kind in that groups were not distinguished on the basis of some outside criterion. Instead, two groups were formed on the basis of similarity of meaning of the concept MYSELF.

Method

Subjects

The subjects used in this investigation consisted of 100 students in English classes from North Texas State University. The group consisted of 52 males and 48 females. The mean age of the group was 18.86 with a standard deviation of 1.97. The members ranged in age from 17 to 28 years.

Instrument Used

Meaning of the concepts was measured by the semantic differential. Essentially, the semantic differential is a technique for distinguishing differences between concepts in terms of meaning. Subjects are asked to rate on bipolar adjective scales how they feel about a concept. According to Nunnally (1967, pp. 540-541), the meaning of concepts that is measured most distinctly by the semantic differential is the connotative or sentimental aspects of meaning. That is, implications the objects or concepts in question have for the particular person are measured. Factor analytic studies of bipolar adjectives used in semantic differential scales have generally yielded three major factors of meaning. In order

of frequency, the factors are evaluative, potency, and activity factors (Osgood, 1957, pp. 31-75; Nunnally, 1967, pp. 536-537).

In the present investigation, twelve bipolar adjective scales were used to measure the meaning of eight personal and social concepts. Each of the adjective scales was composed of seven positions, arbitrarily assigned digits, and scored as position 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7. Four was considered to be the neutral position on all of the scales. The adjective scales were chosen according to their relevance to the concepts to be defined. The scales consisted of four evaluative scales which were reliable-unreliable, honest-dishonest, good-bad, and destructive-helpful; four activity scales: active-passive, inflexible-adaptable, purposive-aimless, and dynamic-static; four potency scales: deep-shallow, powerless-powerful, large-small, and strong-weak. The eight concepts consisted of four personal concepts: MYSELF, MY IDEAL SELF, HOME, and RESPONSIBILITY, and four social concepts: DEMOCRACY, THE ESTABLISHMENT, SOCIETY, and FREEDOM. The concepts were combined into a booklet with standard instructions obtained from Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957, pp. 82-84). The order that the concepts were combined in the booklets varied to control for any effects on the responses that might occur as a function of a particular ordering. The scales were always in the same order for each concept and for each subject.

Procedure

During regular class periods, the subjects were given the booklets containing the instructions and concepts. Additional biographical and personal data was obtained before the subjects completed the booklets by asking them several questions. The subjects were asked to state the approximate population of their hometown, the total income of their family, and how frequently they attended church--regularly, occasionally, or never.

The subjects were differentiated into groups on the basis of a hierarchical grouping analysis on the concept MYSELF. Instead of forming groups on the basis of an external criterion, this procedure allows the selecting and pairing of subjects who are most alike on a particular variable and the grouping of persons into smaller numbers of mutually exclusive categories or classes (Ward & Hook, 1963; Ward, 1963). In this manner, groups that are most similar are formed. Another writer (Nunnally, 1967, p. 373) has stated: " . . . the purpose of the analysis is to 'cluster' persons in terms of their profiles of scores." In the present study, the profiles were obtained from the ratings on the twelve scales. According to Ward and Hook (1963), the basic premise that the grouping procedure is founded on is that " . . . the most accurate information is available when each individual constitutes a group. Consequently, as the number of groups is systematically reduced, k, k-1, . . ., 1, the clustering of increasingly

dissimilar individuals will yield less precise information." The inaccuracy of the information can be determined and reflected by an error term. The error term, in terms of knowledge about the groups, gives an indication of the homogeneity of the group members. In the present study, the error term for the two groups was 229.37. In the present investigation, two groups were delineated by the hierarchical grouping analysis; Group 1 with 71 members and Group 2 with 29 members. Two groups were chosen from the grouping procedure because of the small number of subjects involved in more than two groups. If more than two groups had been used in the present study, one of these groups would have had fewer members than there were variables in the study.

Results

Hotelling's T square was computed to determine if there was a significant difference between the two groups' meaning of the eight concepts. A significant difference was found between the profiles of the scales on four of the eight concepts.

The means and standard deviations of the semantic differential scales for the concept MYSELF can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept MYSELF

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	2.20	1.02	3.28	1.71
deep-shallow	2.39	1.12	3.07	1.71
inflexible-adaptable	6.44	0.65	3.97	2.13
reliable-unreliable	1.75	0.77	3.10	1.70
honest-dishonest	1.59	0.71	2.76	1.62
powerless-powerful	4.93	1.22	3.90	1.68
good-bad	2.10	0.90	2.55	1.24
purposive-aimless	2.01	1.02	3.41	1.90
large-small	3.49	1.37	3.83	1.79
destructive-helpful	5.76	1.09	5.07	1.56
strong-weak	2.45	1.12	3.35	1.72
dynamic-static	2.72	1.26	3.59	1.55

T square for the concept MYSELF was 247.24 and the F ratio was 18.29 with df = 12, 87. For the concept MYSELF, the difference was significant beyond the .001 level.

In Table 2 can be seen the means and standard deviations of the semantic differential scales for the concept FREEDOM.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept FREEDOM

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	1.76	1.18	2.17	1.51
deep-shallow	1.85	1.23	1.83	1.34
inflexible-adaptable	5.17	1.77	4.28	2.33
reliable-unreliable	2.39	1.50	3.07	1.77
honest-dishonest	2.06	1.30	2.86	1.94
powerless-powerful	5.94	1.46	4.86	2.23
good-bad	1.45	1.05	1.86	1.16
purposive-aimless	1.66	0.99	2.21	1.61
large-small	2.49	1.55	2.76	1.73
destructive-helpful	6.13	1.34	5.66	1.50
strong-weak	1.69	1.05	2.14	1.53
dynamic-static	1.97	1.32	2.00	1.31

T square for the concept FREEDOM was 21.81. The F ratio was 1.61 (df = 12, 87), which did not reach the .05 level required for significance.

Means and standard deviations of the semantic differential scales for the concept RESPONSIBILITY can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept RESPONSIBILITY

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	2.06	1.26	2.59	1.52
deep-shallow	2.21	1.26	2.66	1.37
inflexible-adaptable	5.01	1.82	4.28	1.96
reliable-unreliable	1.63	1.12	2.38	1.43
honest-dishonest	1.56	0.82	2.62	1.64
powerless-powerful	5.42	1.53	4.83	1.65
good-bad	1.96	1.33	2.66	1.42
purposive-aimless	1.73	0.97	2.86	1.62
large-small	2.68	1.35	3.72	1.73
destructive-helpful	5.69	1.66	5.10	1.45
strong-weak	1.89	0.99	3.21	1.84
dynamic-static	2.68	1.47	3.24	1.46

T square for the concept RESPONSIBILITY was 45.98 and the F ratio was 3.40 with df = 12, 87. The concept RESPONSIBILITY was significant beyond the .001 level.

In Table 4 can be seen the means and standard deviations of the semantic differential scales for the concept DEMOCRACY.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept DEMOCRACY

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	2.35	1.51	2.86	1.85
deep-shallow	2.69	1.54	3.10	1.57
inflexible-adaptable	5.41	1.66	4.52	2.08
reliable-unreliable	2.92	1.71	3.72	2.12
honest-dishonest	2.90	1.69	3.35	1.61
powerless-powerful	5.66	1.46	4.79	1.88
good-bad	2.44	1.72	2.55	1.48
purposive-aimless	1.90	1.22	2.59	1.74
large-small	2.31	1.33	2.59	1.32
destructive-helpful	5.38	1.57	5.45	1.35
strong-weak	2.11	1.36	2.66	1.50
dynamic-static	2.61	1.43	2.62	1.37

T^2 square, for the concept DEMOCRACY, was 24.18. The F ratio was 1.79 with df = 12, 87 and was not significant at the .05 level.

In Table 5 can be seen the means and standard deviations of the semantic differential scales for the concept IDEAL SELF.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept IDEAL SELF

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	1.44	1.05	1.90	1.29
deep-shallow	1.58	0.91	1.97	1.35
inflexible-adaptable	6.58	1.18	5.35	2.06
reliable-unreliable	1.16	0.47	2.07	1.67
honest-dishonest	1.18	0.52	1.66	1.23
powerless-powerful	6.01	1.29	4.79	2.06
good-bad	1.32	0.73	1.86	1.38
purposive-aimless	1.21	0.65	2.00	1.75
large-small	2.68	1.65	2.72	1.65
destructive-helpful	6.76	0.67	5.66	1.93
strong-weak	1.42	0.97	2.31	1.63
dynamic-static	1.48	0.94	2.07	1.46

T square was 50.03 for the concept IDEAL SELF. The F ratio (df = 11, 87) was 3.70, which was significant beyond the .05 level.

The means and standard deviations for the concept HOME can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept HOME

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	2.25	1.70	3.38	2.15
deep-shallow	2.32	1.50	3.38	2.16
inflexible-adaptable	5.42	1.82	4.93	1.94
reliable-unreliable	1.76	1.40	2.62	2.06
honest-dishonest	1.66	1.13	2.14	1.51
powerless-powerful	5.54	1.57	4.72	1.99
good-bad	1.63	1.26	1.86	1.38
purposive-aimless	1.80	1.10	2.66	1.95
large-small	3.11	1.80	3.48	2.21
destructive-helpful	6.18	1.14	5.41	1.84
strong-weak	2.04	1.44	2.83	1.85
dynamic-static	2.44	1.42	2.97	1.88

T square for the concept HOME was 18.78 and the F ratio (df = 12, 87) was 1.39, which was not significant at the .05 level.

In Table 7 the means and standard deviations of the semantic differential scales for the concept SOCIETY can be seen.

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept SOCIETY

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	3.35	2.06	3.17	2.09
deep-shallow	3.99	1.91	3.52	1.96
inflexible-adaptable	4.42	1.97	3.72	1.99
reliable-unreliable	4.47	1.99	4.31	1.82
honest-dishonest	4.70	1.54	3.35	1.74
powerless-powerful	5.79	1.26	4.52	1.83
good-bad	3.86	1.35	3.79	1.78
purposive-aimless	3.44	1.50	3.49	1.80
large-small	2.09	1.27	2.90	1.74
destructive-helpful	3.83	1.59	3.93	1.49
strong-weak	2.56	1.37	2.62	1.55
dynamic-static	3.56	1.57	3.28	1.62

T^2 square for the concept SOCIETY was 36.23. The F ratio (df = 12, 87) was 2.68 and was significant beyond the .01 level.

In Table 8 can be seen the means and standard deviations of the semantic differential scales for the concept ESTABLISHMENT.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations of the Semantic Differential Scales for the Concept ESTABLISHMENT

Scale	Group 1		Group 2	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
active-passive	3.13	2.09	3.24	2.12
deep-shallow	3.72	2.04	3.72	1.89
inflexible-adaptable	3.69	2.04	4.07	1.79
reliable-unreliable	3.58	1.78	3.89	2.01
honest-dishonest	4.01	1.62	4.52	1.48
powerless-powerful	5.87	1.18	5.69	1.17
good-bad	3.72	1.66	4.21	1.39
purposive-aimless	2.87	1.44	3.35	1.76
large-small	1.99	1.34	2.52	1.43
destructive-helpful	4.31	1.60	3.89	1.84
strong-weak	2.39	1.25	2.79	1.29
dynamic-static	3.63	1.73	3.72	1.46

T square for the concept ESTABLISHMENT was 11.03 and the F ratio (df = 12, 87) was .92. The difference did not reach the .05 level required for significance.

Discussion

The hypothesis that groups with different meanings of the concept MYSELF would have different meanings of other personal and social concepts was partially supported by this investigation. There were significant overall differences between the two groups on the meaning of three personal concepts, MYSELF, RESPONSIBILITY, MY IDEAL SELF, and one social concept, SOCIETY. However, because of the technique used in forming the two groups, the meaning of the concept MYSELF would be expected to be significantly different. The groups did not differ significantly on the meanings attributed to the concepts DEMOCRACY, ESTABLISHMENT, FREEDOM, and HOME. Generally, the two groups differed significantly on the meaning of the personal concepts but did not for the social concepts. Two exceptions were noted. The social concept SOCIETY was significant while the personal concept HOME was not significant. The implication of this finding is that the meaning of the concept MYSELF had an effect on the meaning of some other personal concepts but not on the meaning of some other social concepts.

After determining that there was an overall significant difference between the groups on some of the concepts, an estimate of where the greatest difference occurred on the scales was made by analyzing profiles of the concepts with the means of the groups plotted. Great differences were noted on several scales of the concept MYSELF. Again, the

great differences on the scales of the concept MYSELF could be a function of the technique used in forming the groups. Although some of the same scales had great differences on more than one of the significant concepts, no particular scale differed greatly on all concepts. Also, the largest difference did not occur only on an evaluative, potency, or activity factor. Each concept appeared to have an overall significance as a result of large differences occurring on different scales. This could have been a function of different scales being more relevant to particular concepts.

On the mean profiles of the significant personal concepts, MYSELF, MY IDEAL SELF, and RESPONSIBILITY, Group 1 (N = 71) was consistently more extreme in its ratings than Group 2 (N = 29). That is, Group 1 tended to check the extreme ratings 1 and 7 on the bipolar adjective scale more frequently than Group 2. Group 2 rated the scales in the same direction as Group 1 but Group 2 had mean scores that were consistently more neutral ratings, that is, closer to the neutral position 4. Group 1 tended to have stronger connotative meanings of the personal concepts than Group 2 did. On the significant social concept SOCIETY, neither group was consistently an extreme or neutral rater. It appeared from the profile that neither group had extreme connotative meanings attached to the concept SOCIETY. This finding tends to support the results that the meaning of the concept MYSELF affects some

other personal concepts and that its meaning does not have as great an effect on the meaning of some social concepts.

Although several studies (Arthur, 1966; Parsonson, 1969; Neuringer, 1961, 1963; Zax, Gardiner, & Lowry, 1964), have indicated that abnormal groups have tendencies to make extreme responses, no conclusions concerning the extreme raters in this study can be drawn. Another writer (Worthy, 1969) concluded that the midpoint response is also an extreme response. The tendency to make extreme responses was found by Worthy (1969) to be related to the tendency to make midpoint responses. Walkey (1969), who found delinquent boys to check neutral spaces consistently more often than a normal group, would support the hypothesis that the midpoint response is an extreme response tendency of abnormal groups. Costello (1968), with college students, found that anxiety was a factor affecting discrimination on the semantic differential but intelligence was not. In the present investigation, anxiety could have been a factor affecting the extreme responses of Group 1 and Group 2. Group 1, with tendencies for higher ratings on the personal concepts, could be an anxious group with high ratings on the semantic differential being indicators of particular life styles. Perhaps high self concepts, ideal self concepts, and personal values all contribute to more intense strivings in life that could result in an individual's becoming more anxious. Also, if anxiety was a factor affecting ratings and Group 2 was an

anxious group, then the members' tendency for more neutral ratings could have been a function of anxiety that limited their ability to make discriminations.

Since it was anticipated that personality and social factors characteristic of the individuals would interact to determine what meanings these concepts would have to them, pertinent factors of their personal and social status were considered. First, approximately equal percentages of males and females were found in each group. Secondly, there were similar percentages of persons at each age level in each group. With reference to religious practices, approximately equal percentages in each group stated that they attended church regularly, occasionally, or never. Thus, neither age, sex, nor religion appeared to be significant variables influencing how the groups defined the concepts.

Variables that did appear to influence or be related to how the concepts were defined were population of home town and family income. Thirty-nine per cent of the members of Group 1 and 58 per cent of the members of Group 2 were from cities of 100,000 or more in population. Twenty-two per cent of the members of Group 1 and three per cent of the members of Group 2 were from towns of 10,000 or less. Therefore, Group 1 members tended to be from less densely populated areas. Group 2 tended to be from families with less income. Group 1 had 20 per cent of its members with incomes of $10,000 or less while Group 2 had 27 per cent of its members

with the same income. Considering this information, a tendency for Group 1 members to have families with higher incomes living in less densely populated areas and Group 2 having families with lower incomes and from larger metropolitan areas appears.

A question that occurs is why the meanings of the concept MYSELF have an effect on the meanings of other concepts in the two groups. If the meaning of the concept MYSELF is thought of as an attitude toward self, or considered to be a self concept, then it would appear that persons in Group 2 have a somewhat lower self concept and are affected by socio-economic factors. Persons in Group 2, due to lower family income, would have less of a chance to develop their potentials. Lower family income would severely limit the outside activities that are necessary for some people to develop their potentials, confidence, and to be accepted by peers. Income would not only limit potentials that would be developed but it would also limit the peer group. In a more heavily populated area, persons with similar socio-economic status will tend to live together. In smaller cities young people from all classes are more likely to be associated together, especially in recreational activities and school. This type of interaction could lead small town people to develop more idealistic attitudes about themselves, and if their family incomes are higher, to develop more potentials or be involved in more activities that would aid in developing self esteem.

In further studies with larger groups, the variables of family income and home town population could be controlled to determine if there are significant differences between groups on meanings they attribute to other concepts. Also, groups formed on the basis of some outside criterion could be used to determine if there would be a great difference on the meanings they attribute to concepts. To study the effects of an environmental change on behavior, meaning of concepts of students could be assessed at the beginning of the Freshman year and then later to see if the environmental change had an effect on the meanings they gave to the concepts. In light of the present investigation, instead of grouping on the basis of mean scale scores the groups for future research could be formed by an analysis of factor scores or standardized scale scores. Another factor that could be considered would be the range of rating possible on each of the scales. In this study, seven ratings were possible which could have limited the amount of discrimination possible on the scales. A wider range of ratings would make it more probable that the subjects would not be as likely to check either extreme or neutral ratings and allow better discrimination of raters who would tend to cluster together.

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