CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF SELF
AS RELATED TO
FAMILY STRUCTURE AND FAMILY-CONCEPT

by

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A MASTER'S THESIS

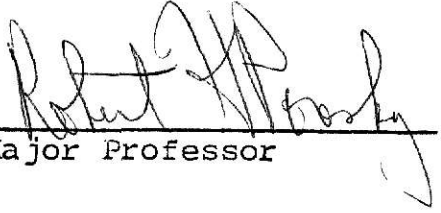submitted in partial fulfillment of the

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Joycelyn Gay Parish
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INTRODUCTION

Previous research related to the self-concept of children from various family structures has relied for the most part on fairly global measures of self-concept. The purpose of the present study is to take a closer look at the self-concept of children from various family structures. This will be accomplished by taking a less global and more multifaceted approach to self-concept (i.e. looking at the individual adjectives which children choose to describe themselves).

Self-concept has been described as a personal theory of the self (Dusek and Flaherty, 1981). The importance of the self-concept has been attested to by laymen and professionals alike. Thoreau noted more than a hundred years ago that public opinion is a weak tyrant compared to one's private opinion (Thoreau, 1854). More recent researchers have suggested that self-concept is a good index of one's mental health (Kappes, 1980), with Kappes and Parish (1979) reporting significant correlations between individuals' self-concept and 12 of the 16 factors on the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire developed by Cattell, Eber and Tatsuoka (1970).

Since self-concept appears to provide a gauge of social-emotional functioning, it is noteworthy that self-concept

has been found to vary under differing circumstances.
Differing family structures (i.e., intact, divorced, recon-
stituted) have been associated with variations in children's
self-concept scores. For instance, Parish and Taylor (1979)
investigated the self-concepts of fourth through eighth
grade students from Oklahoma and found that children who
came from divorced non-remarried families (hereafter referred
to as divorced families) had significantly lower self-concepts
than children from intact families. They also found that
children from divorced remarried families (hereafter referred
to as reconstituted families) had somewhat lower self-concepts
than those from intact families and somewhat higher self-
concepts than those from divorced families.

Parish and Dostal (1980) investigated the self-concept
of fifth through eighth grade Kansas students, and Nunn and
Parish (1982) investigated the self-concept of fifth through
tenth grade students from north-central Iowa. In both
studies, as in the Parish and Taylor (1979) study noted earlier,
students' self-concepts were highest among the group of child-
ren from intact families, lowest among the group of children
from divorced families, and at an intermediate point for those
from reconstituted families. Findings such as these have
prevailed not only among children, but have also been found
to occur among young adults (see young and Parish, 1977).
Hetherington (1972), Atkinson and Ogston (1974), Wallerstein

and Kelly (1980) and Kelly and Wallerstein (1977) have also
suggested an association between divorce and lower self-
concepts in children.

The association between family structure and self-concept
has not always been found, however. Parish, Dostal and
Parish (1981) and Raschke and Raschke (1979) found no sig-
nificant effect of family structure on children's self-
concept. In the Raschke and Raschke (1979) study, the Piers-
Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers, 1977) was used
to assess the self-concepts of third, sixth and eighth grade
children from southeastern United States. Since this self-
concept assessment instrument was different from that used
in previous studies by Parish and his associates, one might
suggest that the failure to find a significant effect for
family structure might have been due to the different in-
strument. This possibility has been refuted by Parish
(note 1) who reported that 3rd through 8th grade children
who completed both the Personal Attribute Inventory for
Children (Parish and Taylor, 1978) and the Piers-Harris
Children's Self-Concept Scale, showed significant differences
in self-concept as a function of family structure on both
instruments. Parish (note 1) found that the self-concept of
children from intact families as measured by the Piers-Harris
Children's Self-Concept Scale was, as in the Nunn and Parish
(1982) study, significantly more positive than that of children

from either divorced or reconstituted families.

A second study which found no significant effect for family structure is that of Parish, Dostal and Parish (1981) which looked at children's self-concept as it relates to both family structure and perceived family happiness. While they found no significant effect for family structure, they did find that children from happy families evaluated themselves more positively on the Personal Attribute Inventory for Children (PAIC) than did those from unhappy families. According to Parish (note 2), failure to find a significant family structure effect was probably due to the fact that in this study, family structure was defined as either intact or divorced, with the "divorced group" including children from both divorced and reconstituted families. In all other studies of elementary and middle school age children that have been reported by Parish and his associates, when comparisons separated divorced and reconstituted family structures, significant differences related to family structure were always found.

The explanation offered by Parish (note 2) might also be applicable to the findings reported by Raschke and Raschke (1979). While it is not possible to say with certainty why Raschke and Raschke (1979) failed to find a significant effect for family structure, it is possible that inclusion of children from reconstituted and even some children from never married single parent families with their intact group

may have affected their results. The procedure used by
Raschke and Raschke (1979) to determine family structure
required the children in their study to indicate from which
family structure they came by choosing among fixed alternative
answers. A child who indicated that he lived with both
parents may not have actually lived in an intact family.
Thus, in the Raschke and Raschke (1979) study, reconstituted
as well as some children from never married single parent
families who had a father substitute living in the home may
have been inadvertantly included with the intact group and
this possibly accounted for the lack of a significant family
structure effect.

It should also be noted that the Raschke and Raschke
(1979) study, which was conducted in southeastern United
States, included 60% Black children and that its sample
was possibly skewed toward lower socioeconomic status children
as a result of busing which encouraged many parents of higher
socioeconomic status children, according to Raschke and
Raschke (1979), to send their children to private schools.
Their sample may have been quite different from those used in
the previous studies noted above and this difference may
account for the discordant findings.

The bulk of the evidence seems to indicate that parental
divorce may impact negatively on the self-concept of children
who have experienced this potentially traumatic process. If

this is so, then the clarification of the relationship of children's self-concept and parental divorce would be important to both parents and professionals alike because divorce rates have been increasing for years and the number of children undergoing this potentially traumatic process has been rising accordingly. The divorce rate in the United States has increased 700% in the last fifty years (Horn, 1975). Of the one million divorces granted annually in the United States, 60% of the dissolved marriages involve children (Cox and Cox, 1979). Currently, more than 12,000,000 children live in single parent families and this figure is increasing by more than 1,000,000 annually (Brown, 1980). Not only will nearly half of the children born in 1980 be likely to live in a single parent family for an average of 3.2 years before they reach the age of 18 (Brown, 1980), but they will also be likely to be raised for a time in a reconstituted family since 75% of the mothers who divorce are likely to subsequently remarry (Parish and Frank, 1981). Thus, it appears imperative that we study the possible influences of these various familial structures so that we might a. better understand them, and b. learn how to remediate any negative effects that they might have.

Family process is another factor which has been receiving increased attention as it relates to children's self-concept. Family process basically refers to whether one perceives the

family unit, regardless of structure, as happy or unhappy, conflictful or not conflictful, etc. Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) and Hess and Camara (1979) suggest that both family process and family structure need to be considered if we truly wish to understand one's social-emotional development. Regarding self-concept development, both Parish, Dostal and Parish (1981) and Raschke and Raschke (1979) have reported that the factor of family process is related to self-concept with children from happy (Parish, Dostal, and Parish, 1981) or non-conflictful families (Raschke and Raschke, 1979) having higher self-concepts than children from unhappy or conflictful families.

Most of the research cited thus far has used an overall or somewhat global score as a measure of self-concept. For example, many of the studies by Parish and his associates have utilized the Personal Attribute Inventory for Children (Parish and Taylor, 1978), hereafter referred to as the PAIC, which requires children to choose 15 of the 48 adjectives on the PAIC which best describe themselves, their mothers, fathers, etc. Twenty four of these 48 adjectives are positive (e.g. kind, wise, etc.) and 24 are negative (e.g. angry, afraid, etc.). A child's self-concept score on the PAIC has been derived by counting the number of positive adjectives, out of 15, which the child chose to describe himself. Thus, the focus of the PAIC has been on the affective component of

self-concept, or the child's emotional attitude toward himself. This component of self-concept is often referred to as self-esteem in which the emphasis is on global feelings of self worth (Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg and Simmons, 1973; Scheirer and Kraut, 1979). The PAIC has been described by Parish and Taylor (1978b) as a measure of the affective component of self-concept. It does, however, have the capacity to move into the realm of assessing the multifacets of self-concept by considering the individual adjectives which comprise the scale (i.e. considering which adjectives the child chooses as descriptive of himself) rather than simply the number of positive adjectives chosen.

The value of looking beyond the overall positiveness or negativeness of self-concepts is consistent with recommen-dations by Wylie (1974) and Dusek and Flaherty (1981) who point out that self-concept is composed of a number of dimensions rather than any single factor. Scheirer and Kraut (1979) also suggest that the self-concept should not be conceptualized as a simple unitary phenomenon, but as a complex construct having descriptive, evaluative, comparative, and affective aspects.

Dusek and Flaherty (1981) suggest that the more "fine grained" a self-concept measure is, the more sensitive it is likely to be. The PAIC offers 48 attributes which here-tofore have simply been counted as positive or negative and combined into an overall score. In the present study, in

addition to looking at overall PAIC scores as they relate
to family structure and family concept, as has been done in
previous studies (e.g. Parish, Dostal and Parish, 1981), we
will take advantage of the more "fine grained" potential
of the PAIC by considering each adjective on the PAIC separately.
We will analyze the adjectives listed on the PAIC and determine
whether choice of each particular adjective is related to
family structure (intact/reconstituted/divorced), family-
concept and/or the interaction of these factors.

METHOD

Subjects:

Four hundred seventy two 5th through 8th grade school
children from eastern Kansas participated in this study.
The school districts from which these children came included
Independence, Humboldt, Pamona, Hillsburo, Council Grove
and Manhattan. They included 202 males and 268 females with
2 children failing to indicate their sex. Participation was
strictly voluntary and parental consent was obtained in advance.

Only subjects who came from intact families or those
who had lost fathers through divorce were included in this
study. Incomplete data for some subjects and the fact that
mother loss and father loss due to any other reason than
divorce were not considered in the present study reduced the
number of subjects to 426. Of these 426 children 347 came
from intact families, 63 came from reconstituted families and
16 came from divorced families.[1]

Instrument:

The Personal Attribute Inventory for Children (PAIC)
(Parish and Taylor, 1978a) was used in the present study

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[1]Census data related to the number of children raised by
mothers who have not remarried following divorce would have
lead us to expect that approximately 7.5% of the children in
the present study would have come from such divorced families
(U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1980). Human
subjects rights required that parental permission be obtained
in advance. It is suggested that a higher percentage of child-
ren from the more chaotic divorced families (Hetherington, Cox
and Cox, 1978) failed to return the parental consent forms and
therefore the number of children in the divorced sample is
lower than might be expected from the available census data.

to measure children's self-concepts and family-concepts. The PAIC consists of 24 positive and 24 negative adjectives arranged alphabetically. Children are asked to choose exactly 15 adjectives which in their opinion best describe various target groups. The PAIC has been found to have a test-retest reliability of .73 (Parish and Taylor, 1978a) and has been found to correlate .67 with the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Parish and Taylor, 1978a).

While there are a number of studies that attest to the validity and reliability of the PAIC (e.g. Parish and Taylor, 1978a,b), little information is currently available regarding the reliability and validity of the individual items of which the PAIC is composed. Information on the validity of the individual adjectives on the PAIC was derived in 1972 by Parish when he asked a group of kindergarten children to indicate if various adjectives were either positive or negative descriptors of people. Only those adjectives were selected for inclusion on the PAIC where a 95% consensus was achieved regarding the positive or negative nature of the adjective in question.

Procedure:

The 5th through 8th grade children who voluntarily participated in this study responded to the PAIC by checking on five separate forms the 15 adjectives that they considered most descriptive of themselves, their mothers, their fathers, their families, and where applicable, their stepfathers.

The order of presentation of the forms was counterbalanced
with the exception of the form related to family which was
always presented last. The aims of the present study re-
quire that consideration only be given to how students
described themselves and their families.

After completing the PAICs, the children were asked to
complete a questionnaire from which information related to
the children's family structure was obtained. A copy of
this questionnaire is included as Appendix A. A copy of
the PAIC is included as Appendix B.

Determination of level of family-concept:

A family-concept score of 13-15 positive adjectives
checked as descriptive of one's family defined a "high"
family-concept while a family concept score of 0-12 defined
a "low" family-concept. The cut-off of 0-12/13-15 to delineate
high and low family-concept was previously used in the Parish,
Dostal and Parish (1981) study where high family-concept was
used as a criterion for identifying a "happy" family and a
low family-concept was used as a criterion for identifying
an unhappy family. As a result of this cut-off, approximately
30% of the students in the present study were deemed to have
a low family-concept while approximately 70% of the students
were deemed to have a high family-concept. The mean family-
concept score was 13.73 (sd = 2.19) and the median family-
concept score was 14.56. The correlation between self-concept

and family-concept as measured on the PAIC is .371 overall
($p < .0001$), .357 in intact families ($p < .0001$), .348 in
reconstituted families ($p < .005$) and .310 in divorced families
($p < .10$).

RESULTS

Analysis of the data involved first, looking at the data
in terms of the overall PAIC self-concept score (just as
it has been used in previous studies), and, second, looking
at the students' responses to each of the 48 adjectives that
appear on the PAIC.

A 3 x 2 unweighted means analysis of variance was
used to test the effects of family structure (intact, divorced,
reconstituted) and family-concept (high, low) on overall
self-concept. This analysis yielded a nonsignificant effect
of family structure (F $/2,395/$ = .38, p $>$.05), as well as
a nonsignificant two way interaction between family structure
and family concept (F $/2,395/$ = .24, p$>$.05). A significant
effect of family-concept (F $/1,395/$ = 18.23, p$<$.0001) was
found, however, which indicated that the students with a
high family-concept ($\bar{X}$ = 13.47) demonstrated significantly
higher self-concepts than did those with a low family-concept
($\bar{X}$ = 10.96).

An analysis of categorical data was computed separately
for each of the 48 adjectives presented on the PAIC. This
analysis of categorical data (FUNCAT) (SAS Institute, 1979)
is a powerful nonparametric analogue to a 3 x 2 analysis of
variance. The FUNCAT analyses indicated a significant family

structure main effect for 46 of the 48 adjectives (afraid,
angry, *awkward, *bad, beautiful, bitter, calm, careless,
cheerful, complaining,*cowardly, cruel, dirty,*dumb, foolish,
friendly, gentle, *gloomy, good, great, *greedy, *handsome,
happy, healthy, helpful, honest, jolly, kind, lazy, *lovely,
*mean, nagging, nice, polite, *pretty, rude, *selfish, show-off,
strong, sweet, ugly, unfriendly, *weak, wise, *wonderful,
wrongful). The * marks adjectives for which a significant
interaction with family concept was found. Only the adjectives
brave and fairminded were not found to be related to family
structure. The percent of the children from the various
family structures who checked each of the 48 attributes is
presented in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here.

Significant main effects were also found as a function
of family-concept for 29 of the 48 adjectives. As shown in
Table 2, children with high family-concepts were significantly
more likely than those with low family-concepts to ascribe to
themselves the following attributes: cheerful, *handsome,
happy, helpful, honest, kind, *lovely, nice, polite,*pretty,
and *wonderful. Furtheremore, those children with low
family-concepts were significantly more likely than those
with high family-concepts to ascribe to themselves these
attributes: afraid, angry, *awkward, *bad, careless, complain-
ing, *cowardly, *dumb, foolish, *gloomy, *greedy, lazy, *mean,
nagging, rude, *selfish, showoff, and *weak.

For the adjectives marked with an asterisk above, significant two-way interactions (as a function of both family structure and family-concept) were found. The reader is urged to peruse Table 3 in order to more readily gain insight into the interactions associated with these adjectives. The percent of children with high or low family-concepts who checked each of the 48 attributes is presented in Table 2.

Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here.

If we go beyond the FUNCAT results related to each adjective and how they vary depending upon one's family structure and/or concept, even more information can be gained as we consider the composite picture of strengths and weaknesses ascribed to each group, by themselves, through their collective selection of self-descriptors. That is, if we define a "strength" as a positive adjective which is chosen more often or a negative adjective which is chosen less often by children from a particular family structure and a "weakness" as a positive adjective chosen less often or a negative adjective chosen more often by children from a particular family structure, then the following "strengths" and "weaknesses" related to children from divorced and reconstituted families are suggested by the analysis.

For instance, in terms of strengths, children from divorced families appeared to choose the following positive

adjectives more often than did children from either intact or reconstituted families: strong, beautiful, friendly, healthy, and jolly. They also appeared to choose the following negative adjectives less often: dirty, lazy, rude, bitter, complaining and cruel.

On the other hand, in terms of weaknesses, children from divorced families appeared less likely than children from either intact or reconstituted families to choose sweet, wise, wonderful, calm, cheerful, good, happy or polite as self-descriptors. Furthermore, they appeared more likely to choose selfish, ugly, afraid and careless to describe themselves.

Children from reconstituted families chose helpful and nice more frequently and selfish less frequently than did children from either intact or divorced families. In terms of weaknesses, they chose jolly and kind less frequently and angry and cruel more frequently than their counterparts.

With regard to family-concept, it should be noted that among those adjectives which showed a significant difference for family-concept, positive adjectives were chosen more often by children with high family-concepts and negative adjectives were chosen more often by children with low family-concepts.

In addition to the FUNCAT analysis, a chi square analysis of the data was also performed. Although frequently rendered inappropriate as a result of expected frequencies less than 5,

the latter analysis did reveal that children from divorced families as compared to children from intact families were significantly more likely to describe themselves as afraid (x^2 = 4.25, p< .05) and weak (x^2 = 5.45, p< .02), and as gloomy (x^2 = 4.49 overall, p< .05; and x^2 = 9.07, p< .01 in high family-concept children). Children from divorced families were less likely than children from intact families to describe themselves as cheerful (x^2 = 4.63, p< .05).

Chi square analyses revealed that children from reconstituted families as compared to children from intact families were more likely to describe themselves as cruel (x^2 = 7.11, p< .01) and less likely to describe themselves as gentle (x^2 = 8.55, p< .01) and kind (x^2 = 4.08, p< .05). The only positive word revealed by the chi square analysis as being chosen significantly more often by children from reconstituted families than by children from intact families was great (x^2 = 4.68, p< .05).

Chi square analysis also revealed that children from high family-concept divorced families were more likely than those from high family-concept reconstituted families to describe themselves as careless (x^2 = 4.38, p< .05).

DISCUSSION

Findings from the present study indicated that when respondents' overall scores on the PAIC were considered, their responses varied only as a function of family-concept and not family structure. When individual adjectives on the PAIC were considered, however, significant differences in self-concept were found to be associated with both family structure and family-concept.

The results related to overall scores reported here are in accordance with those reported by Parish, Dostal and Parish (1981) and Raschke and Raschke (1979) who also found significant differences related to family process but not family structure. However, it should be pointed out that the results of the present study, like those of Parish, Dostal and Parish (1981) are dependent upon at least one factor that may possibly threaten their external validity. Specifically, the number of children from divorced families in the present study fell substantially short of the number that would have been expected from national census data. It may have been that a higher percentage of children from divorced families were unable to participate in the present study as a result of their failure to return parental consent forms. One might therefore speculate that if all families had been well represented in this study then significant differences related to family structure may have been found. Support

for this notion is provided by Nunn and Parish (1982), Parish and Dostal (1980) and Parish and Taylor (1979) who found significant effects for family structure when they assessed entire groups of subjects and subject attrition was not a factor.

The FUNCAT and chi-square analyses of individual adjectives, unlike the analysis of overall scores, did demonstrate the effects of both family structure and family concept. That these findings were statistically significant despite small cell sizes in some instances and the lack of differences between groups when overall or global scores were considered seems to support the idea that a multifaceted approach to assessing children's self-concepts is, as suggested by Dusek and Flaherty (1981), more sensitive than a global approach.

The analyses of individual adjectives also provides insight as to which "strengths" and/or "weaknesses" are associated with which groups of respondents. The FUNCAT analyses showed that 46 of the 48 adjectives on the PAIC varied as a function of family structure (see Table 1) and that 29 of the same adjectives varied as a function of family-concept (see Table 2). Since the FUNCAT analysis is generally considered a more powerful statistic than the chi-square, it is quite understandable that the chi-square analysis revealed primarily a few weaknesses, while the more sensitive FUNCAT analysis revealed several more

weaknesses as well as some strengths associated with the divorced and reconstituted family groups.

Since the children who participated in this study used the PAIC to describe both themselves and their families, a question arose regarding whether or not the family-concept scores and the self-concept scores were largely dependent or overlapping, at least for some groups of children (i.e. intact/ reconstituted/divorced). To answer this question, family-concept scores and self-concept scores were examined and they were found to be only moderately correlated ($r = .371$, p .0001) and that this moderate correlation generally held across subgroups: intact $r = .357$, $p < .0001$; divorced $r = .310$, $p < .10$; reconstituted $r = .348$, $p < .005$. It appears that a unitary trait or concept has not been measured twice although family and self-concept are moderately related.

Finally, it should be emphasized that although the overall PAIC self-concept score (which is described as a measure of the affective component of self-concept) failed, in this instance, to reveal any significant differences in the self-concepts of children from intact, reconstituted and divorced families, consideration of the individual adjectives of which the PAIC is composed did. The 48 adjectives presented on the PAIC appear to provide a sensitive multi-faceted self-concept scale which can help to provide insight

into the strengths and weakness of children from various family situations and thus may prove useful to parents, counselors and other helping professionals as a tool which they might use to better understand the children's needs.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

A 3 x 2 analysis of variance revealed that overall PAIC
self-concept score was related to family concept (high/low)
but not to family structure (intact/reconstituted/divorced).
Consideration of the individual adjectives of which the PAIC
is composed, however, using an analysis of functional categories
for each individual adjective revealed a significant family
structure main effect for 46 of the 48 adjectives and a
significant family-concept main effect for 29 of the 48
adjectives. There was a significant family structure x
family-concept interaction for 13 of the adjectives.

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Table 1

PERCENT OF CHILDREN FROM
INTACT, RECONSTITUTED AND DIVORCED FAMILIES
WHO CHOSE THE FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES
AS DESCRIPTORS OF SELF

	Intact N = 347	Reconstituted N = 63	Divorced N = 16
Afraid ****	11	14	31
Angry ****	13	19	13
# Awkward ****	09	14	06
# Bad ****	07	14	06
Beautiful ****	21	17	38
Bitter ****	04	06	00
Brave	49	54	38
Calm *	56	59	31
Careless ****	23	24	44
Cheerful ****	72	67	44
Complaining ****	23	25	19
# Cowardly ****	05	05	06
Cruel ****	05	14	00
Dirty ****	03	03	00
# Dumb	06	06	06
Fairminded	46	41	50
Foolish ****	07	16	13
Friendly ****	91	86	1.00
Gentle *	64	44	56
# Gloomy ****	04	06	19
Good ****	65	65	44
Great ****	32	46	38
# Greedy ****	09	10	06
# Handsome ****	24	30	19
Happy ****	86	78	75
Healthy ****	87	87	1.00

Table 1 cont.

	Intact N = 347	Reconstituted N = 63	Divorced N = 16
Helpful ****	73	79	75
Honest ****	73	67	69
Jolly ****	32	21	44
Kind ****	71	59	75
Lazy ***	32	32	19
# Lovely ****	15	17	19
# Mean ****	10	14	06
Nagging ****	10	11	13
Nice ****	67	59	63
Polite ****	68	65	56
# Pretty ****	27	27	31
Rude ****	05	02	00
# Selfish ****	05	02	13
Show-off ****	14	14	19
Strong ****	37	41	63
Sweet ****	38	33	25
Ugly ****	07	08	13
Unfriendly ****	01	00	00
# Weak ****	06	10	25
Wise *	44	44	38
# Wonderful ****	32	30	19
Wrongful ****	02	03	00

Based upon FUNCAT analysis:

*	p < .05
**	p < .01
***	p < .001
****	p < .0001

These main effects may be of questionable validity since for these adjectives there were significant family structure x family-concept interaction effects. See Table 3 for percentages related to both family structure and family-concept.

Table 2

PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH
HIGH AND LOW FAMILY-CONCEPTS
WHO CHOSE THE FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES
AS DESCRIPTORS OF SELF

	High Family-concept N = 308	Low Family-Concept N = 118
Afraid ***	09	19
Angry **	06	27
# Awkward ***	07	15
# Bad ***	06	14
Beautiful	23	17
Bitter	02	11
Calm	58	50
Careless ***	18	41
Cheerful ***	77	53
Complaining ***	17	41
# Cowardly ****	05	07
Cruel	03	13
Dirty	02	04
# Dumb ****	03	14
Foolish *	06	18
Friendly	94	81
Gentle	66	47
# Gloomy ****	05	06
Good	68	57
Great	37	28
# Greedy **	06	18
# Handsome ***	25	25
Happy ***	88	79
Healthy	90	81

Table 2 cont.

	High Family-Concept N = 308	Low Family-Concept N = 118
Helpful **	78	65
Honest **	76	62
Jolly	34	20
Kind **	75	55
Lazy **	24	50
# Lovely ****	18	08
# Mean ****	07	18
Nagging *	08	18
Nice *	69	58
Polite **	72	56
# Pretty *	29	21
Rude ****	02	11
# Selfish ****	04	08
Show-off **	09	26
Strong	40	36
Sweet	40	29
Ugly	05	12
Unfriendly	00	02
# Weak **	07	08
Wise	47	35
# Wonderful **	33	25
Wrongful	01	04

Based upon FUNCAT analysis:

*	$p < .05$
**	$p < .01$
***	$p < .001$
****	$p < .0001$

\# These main effects may be of questionable validity since
for these adjectives there were significant family structure x
family-concept interaction effects. See Table 3 for percentages
related to both family structure and family-concept.

Table 3

PERCENT OF CHILDREN FROM
VARIOUS FAMILY CONFIGURATIONS
WHO CHOSE THE FOLLOWING ADJECTIVES
AS DESCRIPTORS OF SELF

		High Family-Concept			Low Family-Concept		
		Intact	Recon-stituted	Divorced	Intact	Recon-stituted	Divorced
		N = 259	N = 37	N = 12	N = 88	N = 26	N = 4
	Afraid	09	08	25	17	23	50
	Angry	05	11	08	26	30	25
#	Awkward	07	11	00	14	19	25
#	Bad	06	05	00	10	27	25
	Beautiful	22	24	41	19	07	25
	Bitter	02	03	00	11	12	00
	Calm	57	73	33	55	38	25
	Careless	17	11	41	40	42	50
	Cheerful	78	78	50	57	50	25
	Complaining	17	19	17	43	34	25
#	Cowardly	04	05	08	08	04	00
	Cruel	03	08	00	10	23	00
	Dirty	02	03	00	05	04	00
#	Dumb	03	03	08	16	12	00
	Foolish	05	05	08	14	31	25
	Friendly	95	86	1.00	80	85	1.00
	Gentle	70	41	58	47	50	50
#	Gloomy	03	08	25	07	04	00
	Good	68	73	42	58	54	50
	Great	34	54	33	25	35	50
#	Greedy	06	03	00	17	19	25
#	Handsome	24	35	25	26	23	00
	Happy	89	84	75	78	81	75
	Healthy	89	92	1.00	81	81	1.00

Table 3 cont.

	High Family-Concept			Low Family-Concept		
	Intact	Recon-stituted	Divorced	Intact	Recon-stituted	Divorced
	N = 259	N = 37	N = 12	N = 88	N = 26	N = 4
Helpful	77	81	75	61	77	75
Honest	77	68	75	61	65	50
Jolly	36	22	50	20	19	25
Kind	76	68	75	57	46	75
Lazy	25	22	17	52	46	25
# Lovely	17	24	25	09	08	00
# Mean	06	14	08	19	15	00
Nagging	08	08	08	18	15	25
Nice	70	62	67	59	54	50
Polite	72	70	67	57	58	25
# Pretty	30	24	25	17	30	50
Rude	02	00	00	13	04	00
# Selfish	04	00	08	08	04	25
Show-off	09	05	17	26	27	25
Strong	38	41	67	34	42	50
Sweet	42	35	25	28	31	25
Ugly	05	05	08	11	12	25
Unfriendly	02	00	00	00	00	00
# Weak	17	08	25	06	12	25
Wise	47	51	41	35	34	25
# Wonderful	34	32	25	26	27	00
Wrongful	02	00	00	03	08	00

For these adjectives there is a significant family structure x family-concept interaction (based upon FUNCAT analysis, $p < .05$).

Appendix A

A questionnaire used to obtain
Information related to children's
familial backgrounds

Questions to be asked students AFTER they have completed all the appropriate questionnaires:

1. Your age _____.

2. Your sex. M   F

3. Your grade _____.

4. Have you lost a parent?   Yes   No

5. Which parent is/was absent?   Mother or Father

6. What was the cause of loss?   Death/Divorce/Separation

7. What was your age at the time of parent loss?

8. Did your remaining parent remarry?   Yes/No

9. What was your age at the time of you remaining parent's remarriage?

10. Did both parents work before you lost your absent parent?

11. What is the birth order, composition and age of those in your family?
    B = brother   S = sister   M = me
    example: B   B   M   S
                 14   12   11   4 (age of children)

12. What is your birthdate?

Appendix B

The Personal Attribute Inventory for Children

Read through this list of words, then put an X in the box beside the
15 words which best describe you.

☐ Afraid		☐ Happy
☐ Angry		☐ Healthy
☐ Awkward		☐ Helpful
☐ Bad		☐ Honest
☐ Beautiful		☐ Jolly
☐ Bitter		☐ Kind
☐ Brave		☐ Lazy
☐ Calm		☐ Lovely
☐ Careless		☐ Mean
☐ Cheerful		☐ Nagging
☐ Complaining		☐ Nice
☐ Cowardly		☐ Polite
☐ Cruel		☐ Pretty
☐ Dirty		☐ Rude
☐ Dumb		☐ Selfish
☐ Fairminded		☐ Show-off
☐ Foolish		☐ Strong
☐ Friendly		☐ Sweet
☐ Gentle		☐ Ugly
☐ Gloomy		☐ Unfriendly
☐ Good		☐ Weak
☐ Great		☐ Wise
☐ Greedy		☐ Wonderful
☐ Handsome		☐ Wrongful

CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF SELF
AS RELATED TO
FAMILY STRUCTURE AND FAMILY-CONCEPT

BY

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B. S., University of Illinois, 1974

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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The self-descriptions of 426 5th through 8th grade
school children from eastern Kansas were obtained by having
the children complete the Personal Attribute Inventory for
Children (PAIC). A 2 x 3 analysis of variance revealed that
the overall PAIC self-concept score (obtained by counting
the number of positive adjectives, out of 15, which the
child chose as descriptive of self) was related to family-
concept (high/low) but not to family structure (intact/recon-
stituted/divorced). Consideration of the individual adjectives
of which the PAIC is composed, however, using an analysis of
functional categories for each individual adjective, revealed
a significant family structure main effect for 46 of the 48
adjectives of which the PAIC is composed and a significant
family-concept main effect for 29 of the 48 adjectives.
There was a significant family structure x family-concept
interaction for 13 of the adjectives.

Thus, although overall PAIC self-concept score (which
is described as a measure of the affective component of self-
concept) failed to reveal any significant differences in
the self-concepts of children from intact, reconstituted,
and divorced families, consideration of the individual
adjectives of which the PAIC is composed did. It is suggested
that the 48 adjectives presented on the PAIC provide a sen-
sitive multifaceted self-concept scale which can help to

provide insight into the strengths and weaknesses of children from various family situations and thus may prove useful to parents, counselors and other helping professionals as a tool which they might use to better understand the children's needs.