HOW THE ACQUISITION OF STABLE DISPOSITION LEADS TO A MORE REALISTIC SELF-CONCEPT

by

VICKI VANDERWEIDE

PSYCHOLOGY

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the

University Undergraduate Fellows Program

1985-86

Approved by:

William S. Rholes, Ph. D.

William S. Rholes

April 1986

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the understanding of stable dispositions and the development of a realistic self-concept. It was hypothesized that once children have acquired the understanding that traits and abilities are stable over time they will then have a more realistic self-concept. To examine whether children understand the stability of dispositions, they were given the Stable Dispositions Concept (SDC) measurement. Forty-three children ranging in age from 5 to 10 years were used for the study because of the indications that children begin to acquire SDC about 7 or 8 years. A secondary concern was to examine the relationship of gender constancy and SDC. The results of the study did not support the primary hypothesis. However, findings from previous studies were confirmed, and the SDC was validated. A discussion of these results and a suggestion for further research were also presented.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. William S. Rholes for his guidance and support during this project. He put in many hours of dedicated work to make this a very meaningful learning experience.

I am also extremely grateful to Merriweather School. The Staff, students, and parents were all very supportive and cooperative. Every effort was made to help the experiment run smoothly and to make it a very enjoyable experience.

I would especially like to thank the administrators of Merriweather School, Harold and Donna VanderWeide. For many years they have watched me grow and mature, and they have continually shown great interest and support not only for this project, but for many others throughout my life.

Finally, I would like to thank Kenneth Alger who has stood by me with love, strength and encouragement, always willing to listen to a hairbrain idea or support me when I didn't think I could continue.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As children develop, their views of themselves and others change; they become more realistic (Katz & Zigler, 1967). They begin to realize their abilities and their limitations. They have a realistic concept of themselves and others. They know who is good at kickball and who is good at math. Children begin to categorize themselves and others according to personality traits and to realize that these dispositions are good indicators of future behaviors (Heller & Berndt, 1981; Peevers & Secord, 1973; Rotenberg, 1982). However, this understanding of stable dispositions is believed to develop with age (Rholes & Ruble, 1984). If John is a bully and picking fights with everyone, children realize John will probably always be that way. Younger children do not see it that way. John may be a bully today, but not necessarily tomorrow. This can lead to a very optimistic and positive view of people, but unfortunately not very realistic. In this study, we are trying to see if the concept of stable dispositions is a prerequisite for a realistic self-concept.

Developmental Psychology has been used as the pattern for format and style.

In 1973, Peevers and Secord found that all individuals have definate ways of perceiving and describing others. So even very young children have formulated descriptions. In their study, Kindergarten, third, seventh and eleventh grade students were asked to describe three same-sexed people who they liked and one same-sexed person who they disliked. These descriptions were coded on four dimensions -- descriptiveness, the amount of uniqueness given to a person; personal involvement, the amount the describer was involved in the description; evaluative consistency, the consistency of like qualities assigned to "liked" people and vice versa; and depth, the degree to which the characteristics were seen as depending on the situation. All of these dimensions were found to increase in variety and descriptiveness as the child grows older. It was also found that the descriptions of liked people increased in variety more than for the disliked people. Therefore, it was shown that individuals have definate, unique ways of perceiving and describing others and that the variety of these descriptions increases with age. From the point of view of the present study, the key finding of this study was that older children used more personality traits and general ability terms to describe other persons.

Heller and Berndt (1981) also found that children as young as five or six years of age had definate views of people's personalities. They found that these children were able to describe people using personality traits. For their research they used subjects in Kindergarten, third and sixth grade, and college age students. By verbally predicting behavior and using rating scales, it was shown that these children were

able to attribute personality traits to characters presented in stories. Again the perceptions were shown to expand with the age of the child in that the attributes became more organized and more distinct as the child grew older. So because of the lack of restriction on verbal abilities, young children were shown to be more mature in their personality attributions than was originally thought.

Organization of attributes is one way in which the child's perceptions expand, but also the realization that their personality attributes are stable over time shows maturation in the child. Rotenberg (1982) discovered that children in Kindergarten and first grade were able to determine that a person's disposition would remain constant over time. Using Kindergarteners through third graders, Rotenberg conducted two experiments. The first hypothesized that character constancy would develop with age, develop in three fixed stages (identity, stability, and consistency), and correlate with the development of conservation of mass and numbers. Character constancy is the idea that traits and abilities remain stable over time and do not change despite changes in appearance. It was also hypothesized that a prediction of character-consistent behavior (or the ability to predict future behavior based on previous behavior) was part of character-constancy. These hypotheses were all supported. While the first experiment dealt with the development of character-constancy in others, the second experiment examined character-constancy development in self and had similar hypotheses to the first experiment. The second experiment showed that the number of traits used in the descriptions increased with age, character constancy correlated signifi-

cantly with conservation and Kindergarteners demonstrated more consistency. Character constancy was found to develop in stages that coincided with age.

However, Rholes and Ruble (1984) found that young children (5 to 6 years) do not view traits and abilities as stable over different situations. Two experiments were conducted with children 5 to 10 years old. The first study showed children vignettes (short stories) which depicted abilities and traits. The children were then asked to predict future behavior. The older children (9 to 10) found more stability in the behavior. In the second study the children were given oral descriptions of behaviors and were then told whether the behaviors had high or low consistency. The younger children (5 to 6) did not view stability as being affected by level of consistency. So it was shown that young children do not view dispositions as stable and that as children get older they are more able to generalize dispositions.

Another aspect of development that is related to age is self-image. Katz and Zigler (1967) did a study on self-image disparity. Self-image disparity was defined as being that mount of difference which is between a child's real self and ideal self; who the child is as opposed to who he wants to be. There were two factors that were hypothesized -- capacity for guilt and cognitive differentiation. As a child develops the demands on the child increase. The demands get so high that there is an inability to succeed and guilt develops. The other factor was the ability for cognitive differentiation in that with maturation more categories of personality with more distinctions are formulated. Using questionnaires

and adjective checklists it was found that self-image disparity was highest where both guilt and cognitive differentiation were found. It was also found that the number of extreme responses decreased with an increase in maturity level. The maturity level of the child was predictive of the amount of self-image disparity. As children grow older, they develop the ability to perceive themselves and others as having definate personality traits and that these traits are stable. Also as they grow older their real and ideal self-images grow farther apart.

Wade (1985) used these ideas to determine if there was a relationship between the development of the concept of stable dispositions and the use of more trait-like terms. There were two hypotheses formed. The first was that children who had acquired the idea of stable dispositions would have greater disparity or disagreement between their real and ideal self-images. The second hypothesis was that those children who had acquired the idea of stable dispositions would have the tendency to use more trait-like terms when describing others. Wade had children (age 7 to 8 years) describe themselves and three same-sexed peers. Then a test called the Stable Dispositions Concept (SDC) was administered. This is a test which measures whether a child understands traits and abilities as being stable over time. Following the SDC, the child's self-image was measured by a rating scale. The results show that children who have passed the SDC do use more trait-like terms in their descriptions. Although the second hypothesis was supported, the first hypothesis was only partially proven. There was a high correlation between real and ideal scores for subjects who had passed the SDC. So as children understand that traits and abili-

ties are stable over time they also begin to describe themselves and others in more realistic terms.

In the current study, as in Wade's study, children were assessed on their concept of stable dispositions. They were administered the SDC and they were assessed on their amount of real and ideal self-image disparity. This was accomplished by having the children rate themselves on various traits and abilities. To determine the accuracy of their ratings their teachers also rated them on these same traits. It was hypothesized that as children begin to realize that traits and abilities are stable over time and will remain unchanged, they should have a more realistic self-concept. This acquisition of understanding that traits and abilities remain constant over time should increase with age.

A secondary concern of the study was to examine the correlation between the SDC measure and a measure of gender constancy. Gender constancy is similar to character constancy in that it deals with the understanding that a person's gender will remain the same even if the person changes his appearance in some way. Children are able to "recognize that superficial changes in appearance or activities do not alter gender" (Hetherington & Parke, 1975, p. 580). Both SDC and gender constancy examine the idea of stability in children's concepts. As the SDC and gender constancy are similar, we wanted to examine their relation to each other.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were 5 to 10 year olds and both male and female subjects were used. There were 24 males and 19 females. The children were from a private school in Houston, Texas. Parental permission was secured for all subjects. The letter to the parents can be found in Appendix A.

Procedure

The children were taken individually to either an empty room or to a table set up in the hall. All the 5 and 6 year olds were tested in a private room to reduce distractions. Following the short introductory visit with each child, the experimenter described to each child the procedure of the experiment. It was emphasized that the results were not added onto their classroom grade and there were no right or wrong answers.

Following these preliminaries the Stable Dispositions Concept (SDC) questionnaire was administered. The SDC consists of 16 short vignettes which depict various traits and abilities. (See Appendix B). Some of the stories depict positive characteristics while others depict negative ones. There was a mix of male and female characters. The following is a sample from the SDC:

> One day some children were calling a little boy names on the playground. Tom did not call the boy any names.
> The next day some boys were fighting on the playground. Do you think that Tom was fighting?

With each story the child was shown a picture of either a girl or a boy

and told that this was the character named in the story.

Following the first half of the story which described the trait that Tom would not call the little boy names, the children were asked to tell the experimenter what happened in the story. If they were correct, the experimenter continued. If they were incorrect, the experimenter re-stated the first half of the story and again asked the child to describe what happened. If the child still could not recall the story, the rest of the question was read and the answer marked incorrect. This only occured once in the current experiment. This test for comprehension was administered for the first five questions and the discontinued if the child got all 5 of them correct. If the child was correct, the experimenter continued with the story and recorded the child's answer (1 for correct, 0 for incorrect). Periodically, if the experimenter believed that the child's attention was drifting, the child would again be asked to retell the first half of the story.

After the child completed the SDC, the child was asked to give descriptive statements about his answers to some of the SDC items. Using the example previously given about "Tom", the experimenter would ask the child: "Do you remember in the first part of the story when Tom did not call the little boy names? Why do you think that Tom did not call the little boy names? Now do you remember in the second part of the story when the boys were fighting on the playground? You thought that Tom (give child's prediction). Why do you think he would do that?"

These questions would be asked for 2 correct stories (one male, one female) and 2 incorrect stories (one male, one female) which were in random order. A correct statement was considered to be one in which the

child showed gender or character constancy. The answers were recorded on a tape recorder and were transcribed in order and were later rated. The first story in question would also be used to ask character constancy and gender constancy questioins. Character-constancy is realizing that the person will remain the same even if they cut their hair or move away. Gender constancy is realizing the person won't change sex even if they wear opposite sex clothes or play opposite sex games. Appendix C contains the full procedure for administering these constancy questions.

Following the gender constancy items, the child was then asked to rate himself on his various traits and abilities. An example of the questions is "how fast can you run?" or "how fast do you read?". This child was then asked to rate himself on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. (One meant very, very little; 2 meant a little bit; 3 meant o.k. -- not a lot, but not a little; 4 meant a lot; 5 meant very, very much.) The children were shown a rating scale with 5 squares which increased in size proportionantly by 1 inch. To get the child accustomed to the scale the experimenter had the child practice with questions such as, "how much do you like ice cream?" or "how much do you like Cabbage Patch Kids?". When the experimenter felt comfortable that the child understood the various stages, the child was then asked questions about traits and abilities. There were 22 questions on the rating scale and the answers were recorded. The complete rating scale can be found in Table 1 in the Results section. The teachers were also given this rating scale, appropriately modified. The child was then thanked for his participation in the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Average Correlation of Teacher and Child Ratings

The hypothesis stated that as children begin to realize that traits and abilities are stable over time they then have a more realistic self-concept. The results from this study did not confirm this hypothesis. The subjects were divided into groups for data analysis. The children were divided into high SDC (n = 27) and low SDC (n = 16), and by age -- young (n = 26) and old (n = 17). High SDC was determined by a score of 12 or more correct items on the questionnaire. The division in age was determined by older children being 91 months or older (approximately $7\frac{1}{2}$ years).

The rating scale was divided into four areas for analysis. The first area, A, consisted of Social Behavior questions which asked for ratings on niceness, sharing, friendships and play habits. The second category, B, asked sport-type questions about the child's ability to run, jump, throw, climb and about his general sports ability. Academic oriented quesitons made up the third area, C, and included a child's ability to do math, to read, to answer comprehension questions, to remember and a general ability to do well in school. The last area, D, deals with the child's moral development which includes hitting, bothering, obedience, attention span, following the rules, lying, and playing rather than not working. [See Table 1]

The average correlations were calculated between the teacher's and

TABLE 1

Self-Concept Rating Scale

Area A - Social Behavior

1. How nice are you to others?
2. How often do you share with others?
3. How many friends do you have?
4. How nice do you play with others?
5. How long can you sit and be quiet? *

Area B - Sport-Type

1. How fast can you run?
2. How high can you jump?
3. How far can you throw?
4. How high can you climb?
5. How good are you at sports and games?

Area C - Academic

1. How good are you with numbers?
2. How well do you read?
3. How well do you do school work?
4. How good are you about answering questions about stories or pictures?
5. How well can you remember things?

Area D - Moral

1. How often do you hit others?
2. How often do you bother others?
3. How well do you obey?
4. How well do you pay attention?

TABLE 1 (cont.)

5. How often do you tell things that are not true?

6. How well do you play by the rules?

7. How often do you play instead of doing you work?

* Indicates not included in analyses

child's responses in the various areas of the rating scale and both the SDC and age. No significant correlations were found. This indicates that neither age nor SDC scores causes a more similar perception between the teacher and child ratings. [See Table 2]

Relationship of Age, SDC, Gender Constancy, and Character Constancy

The results from this study replicated those results found in previous studies. A positive correlation was found between age and gender constancy ($r = .4197$, $p<.01$), and age and SDC ($r = .3037$, $p<.05$). These results indicate that as children grow older there is an increase in both their scores on the SDC measurement and their understanding of gender as remaining constant. Age was not found to be related to either character constancy or the child's ability to assign a proper disposition.

There was a very high positive correlation found between the two questions concerning gender constancy ($r = .8139$, $p<.001$). This indicates that these questions did test the child's understanding of gender constancy. However, the two questions which involved character constancy were not correlated. This could indicate that these two questions did not accurately measure character constancy. [See Table 3]

In addition to the hypothesis, there was a secondary concern of this study -- the relationship between gender constancy and SDC. It was predicted that there would be some correlation between SDC and gender constancy. It was found, however, that there was no significant relationship between them.

Correlations of Descriptive Statements to SDC and Age

The children's responses to the constancy questions were coded

TABLE 2

Relationship of Age, SDC, and Constancy Questions

	AGE	SDC	GEND CONST	APP DISP	CHAR CONST
AGE	-	-	-	-	-
SDC	.3073 **	-	-	-	-
GEND CONST	.4197 *	.0204	.8139***	-	-
APP DISP	.2299	.0028	.1890		-
CHAR CONST	.0056	.0385	.2494	.2112	.1746

Note. * indicates p<.01; ** indicates p<.05; *** indicates p<.001

GEND CONST = Gender Constancy; APP DISP = Appropriate Disposition;

CHAR CONST = Character Constancy

TABLE 3

Correlations Between Teacher and Child Ratings

	LOW SDC	HI SDC	YOUNG	OLD
Area A	.2559	-.0734	.0911	-.0496
Area B	.0951	.0385	.0914	.0380
Area C	.1772	.1324	.2270	-.0506
Area D	-.1949	.1227	.0380	-.0475
	N=16	N=27	N=26	N=17

Note. There were no significant correlations (p<.05).

separately by two experimenters. These questions were asked about the characters in the vignettes. There was an 86% agreement between the two ratings. The ratings were divided into three classes of explanation: 1 indicated that the child was describing the character by a clear trait; 2 indicated that the child was referring to the character's behavior in the first part of the vignette, the initial behavior described, (i.e. "shared her food"); the other descriptions were all placed into one general category.

It was found that the average between assigning a disposition (1) and referring to the past trait (2) was significantly related to SDC ($r = .3027$, $p<.05$). Trait assignment (1) was near significance ($r = .2323$, $p>.05$), and reference to previous behavior (2) was highly significant ($r = .3731$, $p<.01$). This indicates that the SDC is valid and is measuring the understanding of stable dispositions. Age was also found to be highly significantly correlated to trait assignment (1) and to reference to previous behavior (2) ($r = .4012$, $p<.01$). As age increases, the same implications that were found for SDC are also found for age. The two classes of explanation were also found to be significantly correlated ($r = .4049$, $p<.01$). This indicated that reasoning, the assignment of dispositions (1), and prediction, the incorporation of past knowledge with future behavior (2), are related. These results show that descriptions of actual characters in the SDC become more trait-like with an age increase.

Other results were found which are interesting, but speculative. When the data was further divided into high and low SDC, no correlation was found between the average of trait assignment (1) and reference to

previous behavior (2) and age for the low SDC subjects ($r = .0245$, $p > .05$), but a high correlation was found between the average and age ($r = .5135$, $p < .001$). It was also shown that there was not a correlation between trait assignment (1) and reference to previous behavior for low SDC ($r = .1455$, $p > .05$). For the high SDC subjects there was a high correlation between the two classes of explanation ($r = .4220$, $p < .01$). This difference was found to be even more striking when the subjects were divided by age. The younger children had no correlation between the two classes ($r = -.01$, $p > .05$), and the older children had a high correlation between them ($r = .72$, $p < .001$).

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the acquisition of the understanding that traits and abilities are stable over time leads to a more realistic self-concept. The results of this study did not confirm this hypothesis. No correlation was found between teacher's and child's ratings in either the SDC or age groups. Therefore the understanding of stable dispositions is not an indication of the child having a realistic view of himself.

Other results from this study confirmed previous studies. Older children passed the SDC more often than younger children and they also correctly answered the constancy questions significantly more often. This shows that as children grow older they begin to understand gender and dispositions to be constant (Hetherington & Parke, 1975: Rholes, 1984; Wade, 1985).

A third set of results indicate that the SDC is valid. From the codings of the children's descriptive statements it can be seen that a child's ability to assign dispositions and to refer to previous behaviors, which is what the SDC is supposed to measure, is positively correlated with SDC scores. Age was also highly correlated with the two classes of explanation.

These results can be interpreted to imply that although the understanding of stable dispositions increases with age, children's ratings of their own behavior and teacher's ratings of these same behaviors are

not related. So as children develop and pass the SDC, there is no increase in the correlation between the children's and teacher's ratings. The results also validated the SDC which implies that it is an accurate measure of children's understanding of stable dispositions.

One of the major limitations of this study was the setting from which the subjects came. The children attended a private school which has a very nurturing environment. The self-esteem of the children is encouraged to be positive and this could be a reason for an unrealistic self-concept of the children. Their attendance of a private school also indicates either higher income, more parental involvement in their child's education, or both. Perhaps a larger, more varied subject pool would have yielded more significant results.

Another limitation of this research could be the structure of the rating scale. The questions asked may not have actually examined the child's self-concept. Also the teachers may not have not been a good source for comparing the child's concepts, therefore indicating that perhaps the child's views may have been realistic, but the teacher's views may have been biased in some way.

To control for this rating scale problem in future research, children could be asked to predict their behavior in specific situations similar to the SDC. These predictions could then be related to teacher's predictions and perhaps more than one comparison scale could be used (a parent or perhaps another teacher) to predict the children's behaviors. This is just one suggestion to further the study in the relationship between SDC and self-concept, for this is an important aspect in the

understanding of the social cognitive development of children.

REFERENCES

Hetherington, E. Mavis, & Parke, Ross D. (1979). Child Psychology: A Contempory Viewpoint (Second Edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.

Heller, K.A., & Berndt, T.J. (1981). Developmental changes in the formation and organization of personality attributions. Child Development, 52, 683-691.

Katz, P., & Zigler, E. (1967). Self-image disparity: A developmental approach. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 5, 186-195.

Peevers, B.H., & Secord, P.F. (1973). Developmental changes in attribution of descriptive concepts to persons. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 27, 120-128.

Rholes, William S., & Ruble, Diane N. (1984). Children's understanding of dispositional characteristics of others. Child Development, 55, 550-560.

Rotenberg, K. (1982). Development of character constancy of self and other. Child Development, 53, 505-515.

Wade, Cindi L. (1985). The stable dispositions concept: Its relationships to self-image disparity and self/other descriptiveness in children. Unpublished thesis, Texas A&M University, College Station.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents:

My name is Vicki VanderWeide. I am a senior at Texas A&M University and have been accepted in the Undergraduate Fellows Program which is part of the University Honors Program. THe purpose of this program is for each Fellow to learn how to conduct research in his field. My particular field is psychology and I am especially interested in child development.

My advisor and I have developed a hypothesis that will examine the development of self-concept in children. We will be verbally administering a questionnaire entitled the Stable Dispositions Concept. This questionnaire consists of simple situations whose results will determine whether a child understands that traits and abilities are stable over time. The following is an example:

> Mary is at lunch. She sees Joe has nothing to eat. She asks him if he would like some of her chips and one of her Twinkies.
> A week later, Mary's teacher asks the class if anyone would like to give money to help the children in Mexico who lost their homes in the earthquake.
> Do you think Mary would give money?

If the child answers appropriately to these types of questions then we can assume that he understands that traits and abilities are stable.

The child will then be asked to rate him/herself on various traits and abilities. Some sample questions are as follows:

How nice are you? / How strong are you?

We want to compare the self-concept of those children who do and do not understand traits and abilities to be stable.

We would appreciate if you would allow your child to participate in this study. Your principal has approved this study to be conducted at your school. The questionnaire and rating scale will be administered during school. Your child's identity will be kept confidential and he/she will not be required to participate or to continue if he/she does not want to. Upon completion of the questionnaire and rating scale, your child will be given a small reward in appreciation for his/her participation. Please fill out the consent form and return it as soon as possible. The results of this research will help lead to a clearer understanding in the development of self-concept in children.

I consent that _____ may participate in the study described above. I understand that my child's name and responses will be kept confidential and at any time he/she will be allowed to discontinue the study if he/she desires.

_____

Parent's Signature

APPENDIX B

SDC MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

1. One day, Jennifer threw the basketball through the hoop almost every time she tried. The other children missed the hoop most of the time. The next day, everyone played baseball at Mr. Smith's house. When Mr. Smith pitched the ball, some of the children could hit it but others could not. Do you think Jennifer could hit the ball?

   Yes = 1

   No = 0

2. The teacher told the children to mold a face out of clay. Lisa made a pretty sculpture of a face. Even the teacher said it was the best. The next day, the children were told to draw a picture of an animal. The children judged the drawings and gave prizes to the winners. Do you think Lisa won a prize?

   Yes = 1

   No = 0

3. Father told James to put his toys away before dinner, but James never did pick up his toys.

   The next week, the teacher told James to do some arithmetic problems before going out to play. The teacher then left the room. James really wanted to go outside to play with the other children. Do you think James finished his arithmetic problems before going outside?

   Yes = 0

   No = 1

4. One day, the teacher asked for someone to help erase the blackboard and clean the classroom. Mary was the very first child to offer to help.

   The next week, Mary's best friend asked Mary to stop playing with some toys and help her rake leaves. Do you think Mary would do it?

   Yes = 1

   No = 0

5. One day at school, some children were calling a little boy names, but Tom did not call the boy any names.

   The next day, a group of boys got into a fight on the playground. Do you think Tom was fighting?

   Yes = 0

   No = 1

6. One day at recess, Mary said she was hungry, but Nancy would not share her food with Mary.

   The next day, the teacher at school asked the children to give money to help some sick children. Do you think Nancy gave any of her money?

   Yes = 0

   No = 1

7. One day, Bob was throwing his basketball at a hoop, but he missed almost every time he tried. The other children could hit the hoop most of the time.

The next day, everyone played baseball at Mr. Smith's house. When Mr. Smith pitched the ball, some of the children could hit it but some could not. Do you think Bob could hit it?

Yes = 0

No = 1

8. The teacher gave the children some arithmetic problems to work. The problems were hard for most children, but Paul got almost every one right.

   The next day, the children had anew reading lesson with lots of new words on it. Some children could not do the work, but others could. Do you think that Paul could do it?

   Yes = 1

   No = 0

9. Some children were climbing a big tree one day. Most of the children were afraid to climb to the top. But Sam climbed all the way to the top.

   The next week, the children were playing beside a dark, spooky house where no one lived. Some children went into the spooky house, but others did not. Do you think Sam went in?

   Yes = 1

   No = 0

10. Father told Kim to put her toys away before dinner. Kim picked up

her toys and put them into the toy box.

The next week, the teacher told Kim to do some arithmetic problems before going out to play. The teacher then left the room. Kim really wanted to go outside to play with the other children. Do you think that Kim finished her arithmetic problems before going outside?

Yes = 1

No = 0

11. The teacher told the children to mold a face out of clay. Tommy made a sculpture of a face, but the teacher did not say his sculpture was the best.

The next day, the children were told to draw a picture of an animal. The children judged the drawings and gave prizes to the winners. Do you think Tommy won a prize?

Yes = 0

No = 1

12. One day, the teacher asked for someone to help erase the blackboard and clean the classroom. Jane did not offer to help.

The next week, Jane's best friend asked Jane to stop playing with some toys and help her rake leaves. Do you think Jane would do it?

Yes = 0

No = 1

13. One day at school, some children were calling a little boy names. Johnny called the little boy names too.
The next day, a group of boys got into a fight on the playground.
Do you think Johnny was fighting?
Yes = 1
No = 0

14. Jill was hungry so Sally shared her lunch with Jill. The next day, the teacher at school asked the children to give money to help some poor children. Do you think Sally gave any of her money?
Yes = 1
No = 0

15. The teacher gave the children some arithmetic problems to work. The problems were easy for most children, but Jim got almost every one wrong.
The next day, the children had a new reading lesson with lots of new words on it. Some children could not do the work, but others could.
Do you think that Jim could do it?
Yes = 0
No = 1

16. Some children were climbing a big tree one day. Most of the children climbed all the way to the top. They were not afraid. Bill would not climb high up in the tree.

The next week, the children were playing beside a dark, spooky house where no one lived. Some of the children went into the spooky house, but others did not. Do you think Bill went in?

Yes = 0

No = 1

APPENDIX C

PROCEDURE FOR ADMINISTERING

GENDER AND CHARACTER CONSTANCY QUESTIONS

I. First select an appropriate vignette from the SDC. After the vignette has been selected, give the child the following instructions:

"I want to go back to a couple of the stories and ask you some more questions about them. The first story is the one about the (boy/girl) who (say what the character did in the first part of the story). The answer you gave was fine, I just want to ask you another question now. Why do you think (character's name) did (whatever he/she did)? [CHILD ANSWERS]

"Now you said that you thought he/she would (whatever prediction the child made for the character's behavior). Why do you think he/she would do that? [CHILD ANSWERS]

"Now let me ask you another question. The story says that (character's name) did (whatever he/she did in the first part of the story). Do you think that (character's name) is (give appropriate disposition)? Do you think that (character's name) would still be (disposition) if he/she moved to a new town and a new school?

"Do you think he/she would still be (appropriate disposition) if he/she always wore different clothes, sort of like the clothes that (opposite sex) usually wear?

"If (character's name) always wore (opposite sex)'s clothing, would (character's name) really be a boy or a girl?

"If (character's name) always played (opposite sex)'s games would (character' name) really be a boy or a girl?"

II. Select a second story.

"Now I want to ask you about another story. This is the story about the (boy/girl) who (describe character's actions). Why do you think (character's name) did (whatever he/she did)? [CHILD ANSWERS]

Now you said that you thought he/she would (whatever prediction the child made). Why do you think he/she would do that?" [CHILD ANSWERS]

III. Repeat Procedure II for two more stories.

IV. Order in which questions should be administered

TYPE A	TYPE B
1. Correct - Boy character	1. Incorrect - Girl character
2. Correct - Girl character	2. Correct - Boy character
3. Incorrect - Boy character	3. Correct - Girl character
4. Incorrect - Girl character	4. Incorrect - Boy character

TYPE C	TYPE D
1. Incorrect - Boy character	1. Correct - Girl character
2. Incorrect - Girl character	2. Incorrect - Boy character
3. Correct - Boy character	3. Incorrect - Girl character
4. Correct - Girl character	4. Correct - Boy character

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO TEACHERS

Dear Teachers,

I would like to thank you for helping me by participating in this research project. Your students will be asked various questions on their personalities and abilities. It is necessary to determine how accurate and realistic their self-concepts are. In order to do this I would appreciate it if you could take 10-15 minutes to fill out rating scales similar to the ones your students fill out. If you team teach please do not confer with your co-teacher. If both of you participate please divide the questionnaires between you and fill them out on your own. Please rate your students on a scale of 1-5 -- one being very little, 5 being very much. If you are not sure of an answer please rate the child to the best of your knowledge.

Thank you!

Vicki

Vicki VanderWeide

APPENDIX E

DATA SHEET

Subject Number _____ Name _____

M F Date _____

Age _____

SDC Measure		Rating Scale	
G 1.	1 0	Personality - Area A	
G 2.	1 0	1.	1 2 3 4 5
B 3.	1 0	2.	1 2 3 4 5
G 4.	1 0	3.	1 2 3 4 5
B 5.	1 0	4.	1 2 3 4 5
G 6.	1 0	5.	1 2 3 4 5
B 7.	1 0	Athletic - Area B	
B 8.	1 0	1.	1 2 3 4 5
B 9.	1 0	2.	1 2 3 4 5
G 10.	1 0	3.	1 2 3 4 5
B 11.	1 0	4.	1 2 3 4 5
G 12.	1 0	5.	1 2 3 4 5
B 13.	1 0	Intellectual Abilities - Area C	
G 14.	1 0	1.	1 2 3 4 5
B 15.	1 0	2.	1 2 3 4 5
B 16.	1 0	3.	1 2 3 4 5
		4.	1 2 3 4 5
Total	_____	5.	1 2 3 4 5

DATA SHEET (CONT.)

Moral - Area D

1. 1 2 3 4 5

2. 1 2 3 4 5

3. 1 2 3 4 5

4. 1 2 3 4 5

5. 1 2 3 4 5

6. 1 2 3 4 5

Misc.

1. 1 2 3 4 5