A Study of Various Factors in Terms of Attitudes Toward Reading.

Mary Lois coghlan Crews

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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A STUDY OF VARIOUS FACTORS IN TERMS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

in
The Department of Education

by
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B.A., Sacramento State University, 1962
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December, 1978
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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to investigate the attitudes toward reading of middle school students in terms of (1) grade level, (2) socio-economic status, (3) sex, (4) reading achievement, and (5) self-concepts. A ten percent random sample of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students comprised the sample (N = 405). The Estes Attitudes Scales was used as the measure of attitudes toward reading, the How I See Myself Scale as the measure of self-concepts, and the total reading score from the Metropolitan Achievement Tests as the indication of reading achievement. Socio-economic status was determined by eligibility or ineligibility to participate in the school free lunch program.

Analysis of variance and Pearson product-moment correlations were used to determine significance. The data for each factor were tested for significance at the .05 and .01 levels of confidence.

The following conclusions were reached:

1. Sixth grade students reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than seventh or eighth grade students.

2. There were no significant differences between the attitudes toward reading of students in terms of socio-economic status.
3. Female students reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than male students.

4. Attitudes toward reading and reading achievement were significantly correlated at the sixth grade level, but were not significantly correlated at the seventh and eighth grade levels.

5. Sixth grade students reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement than seventh and eighth grade students.

6. There were significant positive correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement for both high and low socio-economic groups.

7. There were significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and socio-economic status. The high socio-economic group reported higher reading achievement, but lower attitudes toward reading than the low socio-economic group.

8. No significant correlations were found between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of sex.

9. Differences in attitudes toward reading of females and males were not significant in terms of reading achievement.

10. Attitudes toward reading and self-concepts were significantly correlated at grades six, seven, and eight.

11. There were significant differences in attitudes
toward reading in terms of self-concepts and grade level. As grade level increased, attitudes toward reading and self-concepts became less positive.

12. There were significant correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of socio-economic status.

13. There were significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and socio-economic status. Students in the high socio-economic group had less positive attitudes toward reading and less positive self-concepts.

14. There were no significant correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of sex.

15. There were no significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and sex.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The skills components which have received major emphasis in reading programs have been word attack, comprehension, and study skills. Although not disputing the importance of these cognitive aspects in achieving success in reading, Alexander and Heathington (1975) have suggested that certain affective factors may be considered equally significant. One factor, attitudes toward reading, has seemed to be of particular importance. Estes (1975:4) stated: "... students' attitudes toward what they learn are more important than what they learn." Askov and Fischbach (1973), Rowell (1972), and Alexander and Filler (1976) have directed attention to the importance of attitudes toward reading and the need for substantive research focused on these attitudes.

Grade level, socio-economic status, sex, reading achievement and self-concepts have been thought to be associated with attitudes toward reading. However, generalizations concerning relationships among these variables have been difficult to validate because of the limited number of studies and the contradictory findings which have been reported (Alexander and Filler:1976)

A study of the relationships between attitudes toward reading and grade placement, sex, and achievement was conducted
by Askov and Fischbach (1973). Grade placement was not found to have a significant relationship to attitudes toward reading in grades one and three. In contrast, Johnson (1964) reported students in grade two to have more positive attitudes toward reading than students in grades four and six.

Alexander and Filler (1976) and Heimberger (1970) referred to the commonly held belief that attitudes toward reading of students from low socio-economic levels have been considered to be more negative than the attitudes of students from high socio-economic levels. In addition, these writers stated that there has not been sufficient research to support such an assumption. Ransbury (1971) studied the attitudes toward reading of fifth and sixth grade students. Results of this study indicated that attitudes toward reading and socio-economic status were not significantly related.

Although similar contradictions and confusing results have been reported concerning relationships among attitudes toward reading and other variables, generalizations concerning these relationships have become common (Alexander and Filler: 1976). Decisions affecting school programs have been influenced by these generalizations. Therefore, the need for reliable and valid data related to attitudes toward reading has become essential to improved reading instruction (Estes: 1975). The purpose of this study was to provide information concerning the attitudes toward reading
of middle school students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study was designed to investigate the attitudes toward reading of middle school students in terms of (1) grade level, (2) socio-economic status, (3) sex, (4) reading achievement, and (5) self concepts.

Questions To Be Answered

The following specific questions were considered:

1. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of grade level?

2. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of socio-economic status?

3. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of sex?

4. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of grade level?

5. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and grade level?

6. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of socio-economic status?

7. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and socio-economic status?
8. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of sex?
9. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and sex?
10. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of grade level?
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14. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of sex?
15. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and sex?

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to a sample of students in grades six, seven, and eight enrolled in five middle schools in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, at the time of testing in February and April of 1978. The schools involved were Central Middle School, McKinley Middle School, Northwestern Middle School, Park Forest Middle School, and Westdale
Middle School.

In addition to the above limitations, the following assumptions were fundamental to this investigation and the validity of the findings were grounded in the correctness of these assumptions.

1. Attitudes could be measured.
2. Self-concepts could be measured.
3. Reading achievement could be measured.
4. The attitudes and self-concepts expressed by the students in the sample were honestly stated.
5. The subjects used were representative of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students in each of the schools.
6. The test instruments employed had sufficient reliability and validity for the purpose of this study.
7. The variance due to test administration was negligible.

Definition of Terms

Terms pertinent to the study were defined as follows:

Attitudes toward reading. A system of feelings related to reading which cause the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation as measured by the Estes Attitude Scales (Estes:1975).

Grade level. Students assigned to grades six, seven, and eight.
High socio-economic level. Those students who were ineligible to participate in the school free lunch program.

Low socio-economic level. Those students who were eligible to participate in the school free lunch program.

Middle school. Grades six, seven, and eight.

Reading Achievement level. Total reading scores as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Tests.

Self-concepts. The student's view of himself, especially his perceptions of his value and ability as measured by the How I See Myself Scale (Gordon:1972).

VALUE OF THE STUDY

Alexander and Filler (1976) have attested to the importance of positive attitude development and maintenance. Positive attitudes were also considered essential to the mastery of reading by Wilson and Hall (1972). However, Greene (1976) indicated that only a limited number of studies which have focused on attitudes toward reading have been attempted. In addition, Marjoribanks (1976) concluded that studies which have been made of the relationships between school-related attitudes and achievement have remained inconsistent and inclusive. The results of this study will add to the body of research available concerning the attitudes toward reading of middle school students.
PROCEDURE

The official records of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board were employed to collect data relative to the study. Information concerning students, schools, and teachers involved was obtained from a computer report provided by the parish data processing department.

Description of the Sample

The population for this study was composed of students in grades six, seven, and eight in the five middle schools in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. These schools were Central Middle School, McKinley Middle School, Northwestern Middle School, Park Forest Middle School, and Westdale Middle School. From this population, a ten percent random sample by school and grade was computer selected. The sample was comprised of four hundred five students.

Sources of the Data

The intermediate level of the How I See Myself Scale, by Ira Gordon, identified perceived self-concepts. The Estes Attitude Scales by Thomas H. Estes was used to indicate attitudes toward reading. The total reading subtests of the 1970 edition of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests was used as an indication of reading achievement.

The self-concepts scale and the attitudes toward reading scale were administered by the researcher the last week of February, 1978. The reading achievement test was
administered by classroom teachers during the second week of April, 1978. The answer sheets were machine scored by the data processing department of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board.

Analysis of the Data

The data for the study were analyzed by the Department of Experimental Statistics, Louisiana State University. The statistical procedures used were multiple-classification analysis of variance and Pearson product-moment correlations. Significance was tested at the .05 and .01 levels of confidence.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 was devoted to introductory statements and background information of the study. Chapter 2 provided a review of research related to attitudes toward reading. The design of the study was explained in Chapter 3, which included information regarding the setting and population of the investigation, the experimental design, and the methods which were used in the collection and treatment of the data. An analysis and interpretation of the data collected were presented in Chapter 4. A summary of the findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations concluded the study in Chapter 5.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

A review of the literature has substantiated the finding of Alexander and Filler (1976) that there have been few studies which have focused on attitudes toward reading. As a preface to a study of the reading attitudes of students in the intermediate grades, Engin et al. (1976:309) summarized the status of research on reading with these statements:

Most reading investigations concerned with reading interests and/or attitudes have been focused on either the characteristics or the content of reading materials preferred by students. . . . However, these studies have not been particularly concerned with identifying the various dimensions of reading attitudes and relating these dimensions to achievement, academic aptitude, educational history, and other variables of potential relevance.

Estes (1975) suggested that the meager number of investigations concerned with attitudes toward reading might have been attributed to the overwhelming preoccupation of educators with emphasis on the cognitive domain. Similarly, Hutchinson (1971), Kemper (1970), and Alexander and Heathington (1975) pointed out that although the results of voluminous research have become available concerning the acquisition of reading skills there has been relatively little in the literature that has dealt with attitudes toward reading. In his analysis of recent research related to the measure-
ment of attitudes in reading, Summers (1976:18) stated:

The volume of information available on the assess-
ment of reading attitudes is scanty in light of the
considerable importance given to the relationship
between positive attitude and reading achievement in
the literature.

Although the number of reported studies which have
dealt primarily with the affective aspects of reading has
been limited, several variables have been identified as
being related to attitudes toward reading (Alexander and
Filler:1976). Identified variables were grade level, socio-
economic status, sex, reading achievement, and self-concepts.

ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND GRADE LEVEL

Studies which have dealt with attitudes toward
reading and grade level have reported conflicting results,
as did studies concerning attitudes toward reading and
reading achievement. A study by Askov and Fischbach (1973)
investigated the relationships among attitudes toward reading
and achievement, sex, and grade placement of seventy-five
first graders and ninety-five third graders. The students
were tested with the Primary Pupil Reading Attitude Inven-
tory and the word reading and paragraph meaning subtests of
the Stanford Achievement Tests. When achievement scores
were used as covariates, grade in school did not have a
significant relationship to attitudes.

In contrast, an investigation by Krim (1968) of
fourth, fifth, and sixth grade underachievers in reading
indicated that readers at earlier grade levels exhibited more positive attitudes than did problem readers in the higher grade levels. These findings were supported by an earlier study conducted by Johnson (1964). One aspect of Johnson's descriptive study was the investigation of the reading attitudes of second, fourth, and sixth grade students. The conclusions were that students in the lower grades indicated better attitudes toward reading than students in each successively higher grade tested.

Two studies referred to in the section on attitudes toward reading and achievement have added to the confusion. Uroff (1972) reported that high school seniors in remedial reading classes had more favorable attitudes toward reading than did remedial students in grades ten and eleven. However, Orr (1973), in a study of the effect of a diagnostic-prescriptive individualized reading program on attitudes toward reading and school, found no significant differences in the attitudes toward reading of seventh, eighth, and ninth grade remedial students.

Heimberger (1970) studied attitudes toward reading of ages six and one-half through eleven and one-half. The greatest interest in reading was demonstrated by students between the ages of eight and one-half and ten, and the least interest among students ten and one-half through eleven and one-half. These findings provided further support for the alleged inverse relationship between atti-
tudes toward reading and age.

Students enrolled in a summer reading program comprised the sample for a study by Rowell (1972) designed to determine the relationship between change in attitudes toward reading and achievement in vocabulary and comprehension, sex, socio-economic status, and age in grades four through eight. Reading achievement was measured by the Silent Reading Diagnostic Tests and the Gates Basic Reading Tests. Attitudes toward reading were measured by a specifically designed instrument which required the observer to record student responses to different reading situations. Forty students were in the experimental group and thirty in the control group. The researcher concluded that the attitudes toward reading of older students were as readily changed as the attitudes toward reading of younger students.

Summary of Research Related to Attitudes Toward Reading and Grade Level

Contradictions were found concerning the relationship between attitudes toward reading and grade level. The studies that reported a positive correlation between attitudes toward reading and grade level were Heimberger (1970), Krim (1968), and Johnson (1964). The studies that reported no relationship were Askov and Fischbach (1973), Orr (1973), and Rowell (1972). Krim (1968) and Johnson (1964) reported younger students had more favorable attitudes toward reading
than older students. In contrast, Uroff (1972) reported that older students had more favorable attitudes toward reading than younger students.

ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

No definition of socio-economic status or demarcation of socio-economic levels has been universally accepted. In the studies cited below, numerous indicators were used to determine socio-economic status, including education of the father, occupation of the father, family income, source of income, type of neighborhood, or a combination of these characteristics. Regardless of the way socio-economic status was described, the research that has focused on attitudes toward reading and socio-economic status has not supported the assumption often made that students from higher socio-economic levels have more positive attitudes toward reading than students from lower socio-economic levels (Heimberger:1970).

The reading attitudes of students as influenced by the home literacy environment was investigated by Hansen (1969). From a total population of fourth graders in a community including urban, suburban, and rural characteristics, twelve males and twelve females with the most positive attitudes, and an equal sample with the least positive attitudes, were selected for analysis. Reading attitudes were determined by a researcher-designed instrument, and socio-
economic status was determined by occupation and education of the father. No significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitude scores was found.

Heimberger (1970) assessed the attitudes toward reading of one thousand ninety-three students from lower, middle, and upper income levels using Sartain's Reading Attitude Inventory. An attempt was made to select a sample proportional to the general socio-economic levels nationally. There were no significant differences in the norms for the three socio-economic levels. Similarly, in a study of the attitudes toward reading of seventh grade students, Kemper (1970) found no significant differences in attitudes toward reading in schools serving high percentages of low income families and in schools serving low percentages of low income families.

The findings of Kemper and Heimberger were supported in a study conducted by Ransbury (1971). The relationships of socio-economic level, intellectual capacity, personality, reading level, and sex to students' attitudes toward reading were examined in this study. Reading level, sex, personality, and intellectual capacity appeared to be related to attitudes toward reading, while socio-economic status did not seem to be strongly related to the attitudes toward reading of fifth and sixth grade students. Additionally, Jacobson (1967) found that relationships between attitudes and comprehension were unaffected by socio-economic status.
However, the studies cited above were in contrast with the findings of Krim (1968). This researcher reported that fifth grade underachievers in reading from lower socio-economic levels registered more positive attitudes toward reading than students from higher socio-economic levels.

Summary of Research Related to Attitudes Toward Reading and Socio-economic Status

A commonly held belief that students from lower socio-economic levels have more negative attitudes toward reading than those from high socio-economic levels (Heimberger: 1970) was not supported in this review. A majority of the studies examined by the researcher reported no relationship between attitudes toward reading and socio-economic status (Ransbury:1971; Heimberger:1970; Kemper:1970; Hanson:1969; Jacobson:1967). Of the studies reviewed, only one (Krim:1968) reported a significant relationship between attitudes toward reading and socio-economic status.

ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SEX

Although teachers were cautioned concerning the danger of assuming that males have more negative attitudes toward reading than females by Alexander and Filler (1976), several researchers have reported evidence in support of this position. Hansen (1969), Askov and Fischbach (1973), Johnson (1964), and Kemper (1970) have all reported that females had more favorable attitudes toward reading than males.
Hansen (1969) reported that fourth grade males in a community reflecting urban, suburban, and rural characteristics demonstrated significantly poorer attitudes toward reading than did fourth grade females. Attitudes were assessed by a reading attitudes questionnaire designed and validated by the researcher. In addition to having poor attitudes toward reading, the males in the study were also reported to have read a significantly smaller number of books than the females.

Askov and Fischback (1973) reported the mean attitude scores for females in both grades one and three as significantly higher than scores for males. The difference was found to be true even after the effects of achievement were removed.

One aspect of Johnson's study (1964) was to determine if there were differences in attitudes toward reading of pupils in grades two, four, and six. Significantly different mean attitude scores for males and females were reported. At each level the mean scores for females were higher than those for males.

A significant relationship was found between sex and attitudes toward reading by Kemper (1970). In a descriptive study of over five hundred seventh grade students, females demonstrated significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than males.

In contrast, some studies have reported the attitudes of males toward reading as more positive than the
attitudes of females. For example, fourth grade males in a deprived urban area were reported by Greenberg et al. (1965) to have more positive attitudes than females. Attitudes, for this study, were measured by a semantic differential developed by the researcher.

Orr (1973) conducted a study of the effectiveness of a diagnostic-prescriptive reading program on the attitudes toward reading of remedial junior high school students. One hypothesis of this study was that females would show more positive change in attitudes toward reading than males. Two attitude inventories were used as pretests and post-tests. The attitudes toward reading of seventh, eighth, and ninth grade females did not improve more than the attitudes toward reading of the males.

Neale, Gill, and Tismer (1970) used a semantic differential to investigate the relationship between attitudes toward school subjects and achievement. They found that attitudes and achievement were significantly correlated with reading, social studies, and arithmetic for males. However, attitudes and achievement were significantly correlated only with reading for females.

Rowell (1972) also examined the relationship between sex and attitudes toward reading in grades four through eight. No significant relationship between these variables was found for forty students in a special remedial reading program or for thirty students in a control group.
Summary of Research Related To

Attitudes Toward Reading and Sex

The results of studies concerned with attitudes toward reading and sex were inconclusive. There were studies which reported that females demonstrated more positive attitudes toward reading than males (Askov and Fischbach: 1973; Kemper: 1970; Hansen: 1969; Jacobson: 1967; Johnson: 1964). However, there were also studies that reported males had more positive attitudes toward reading than females (Neale, Gill, and Tismer: 1970; Greenberg: 1965). Adding to the complexity of making generalizations, Orr (1973) and Rowell (1972) reported no correlations between attitudes toward reading and sex.

ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT

Attitudes toward reading have merited particular attention in relation to achievement in reading (Estes: 1975). The assumption that favorable attitudes toward reading and high reading achievement have been positively correlated was supported by the majority of the studies in this review of the literature. However, in a review of related literature, Alexander and Filler (1976: 6) concluded:

Although relationships are sometimes found between achievement and attitudes, there is not always a positive correlation between high achievement and favorable attitudes.

One conclusion reached by Weidner (1976) was that attitudes toward reading influenced performance in reading.
The study was designed to investigate the effects of teacher oral reading on listening and reading achievement of fourth grade students. Four classrooms were randomly assigned a specific treatment which consisted of reading to the class for specified amounts of time and frequency from a selected set of books. Pretests and post-tests of attitudes toward reading and reading achievement were administered. Results indicated that attitudes toward reading was positively correlated with reading achievement.

A study by Cramer (1975) yielded similar results. This researcher investigated the relationships among ability to comprehend printed prose, vividness of self-reported mental imagery, and attitudes toward reading. The sample included one hundred twenty-four eleventh and twelfth grade students randomly selected from six classrooms. The Davis Reading Test and the Estes Attitude Scales were used as indications of reading achievement and attitudes toward reading. A significant positive correlation was found between reading comprehension and reading attitudes for these students.

The effect of a diagnostic-prescriptive individualized reading program on attitudes toward reading of remedial junior high school students was studied by Orr (1973). The results indicated that, although reading achievement increased during the treatment period, attitudes toward reading were less positive at the end of the treatment. The sample for this study included males and females in grades
seven, eight, and nine.

Stevens (1974) conducted a study of the relationships between attitude toward reading and reading skills of a population of adult readers. Two hundred adults enrolled in a course designed to improve comprehension and speed were pre-tested and post-tested with a reading test and a semantic differential measuring attitudes toward reading. The researcher hypothesized that: (1) attitudes toward reading were positively related to reading skills, and (2) improvements in reading skills were positively related to improvements in attitudes. Results indicated that attitudes toward reading and reading skills were positively related. However, the second hypothesis was not supported.

A study of the efficacy of a state-mandated remedial reading program was made by Uroff (1972). One hundred thirty-seven tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students involved in a one semester remedial reading course comprised the sample. The purpose of the study was to determine if there were significant differences in reading achievement growth in relation to the interaction of attitudes toward school and grade. Significant differences were found in attitudes toward reading with regard to grade and sex. High school seniors made the most gains in reading achievement, with males making greater overall gains than females. The seniors also reported more favorable attitudes toward reading than did the students in grades ten and eleven.
Convinced that underachievement was significantly related to attitudinal variables, the North Carolina Advancement School based its program on the belief that academic success cannot be successfully achieved without attention to the self-concepts and attitudes of underachievers. Godfrey (1971), in a study of one thousand two hundred sixteen sixth and seventh grade students in fourteen schools, reported positive changes in self-concepts, attitudes, and achievement.

As a result of studying the relationships between attitudes toward school subjects and school achievement, Neale, Gill, and Tismer (1970) found that, for males, attitudes and achievement were significantly related for reading, social studies, and arithmetic. However, for females, significant correlations were found only for reading.

In a study of attitudes, feelings, and self-concepts as they related to ability grouping in the teaching of reading, Levenson (1972) concluded that ability grouping in the teaching of reading reinforced negative attitudes toward reading and negative self-concepts. Thirty sixth grade students from high reading groups and thirty from low reading groups were randomly selected. For these students, there was a positive correlation between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement, as well as between self-concepts and reading achievement.
A massive descriptive and analytic study of compensatory reading programs in grades two, four, and six in two hundred sixty-three schools was reported by Waller, Trismen, and Wilder (1977). The results of this investigation showed significant differences in attitude gains in favor of compensatory reading students over attitude gains made by students not in compensatory programs. In contrast to the study reported by Levenson (1972), more negative attitudes toward reading were not developed when students reading below grade level were grouped together for instruction. In fact, whether grouped together or not, compensatory reading students (defined as students reading below grade level) showed greater gains in attitudes toward reading than non-compensatory reading students. However, achievement gains were greater for compensatory reading students in grades two and four when heterogeneously grouped than when homogeneously grouped. Conversely, in grades four and six, few of the achievement comparisons yielded statistically significant differences among the groups of compensatory and non-compensatory students.

Kemper (1970) designed a descriptive study of seventh grade students' attitudes toward reading. The sample was composed of more than five hundred students from twenty-three seventh grade classrooms. The students were classified according to sex, reading achievement (standardized reading test scores above or below grade placement), and school
attended (schools serving high and low percentages of low income families). The reported data indicated that students in the study had favorable attitudes toward reading. Subjects classified as reading above grade placement were found to have significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than did subjects classified as reading below grade placement.

Jacobson (1967) concluded that the importance of attitudes in improving comprehension was debatable in grades four, five, and six. The study was designed to discover the effect of attitudes toward reading on the literal and interpretive comprehension abilities of the subjects. Attitudes toward reading did not appear to function measurably when different variables were controlled.

Summary of Research Related to Attitudes Toward Reading and Reading Achievement

The available research appeared to indicate the following conclusions. Although the preponderance of research has shown a positive relationship between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement (Weidner:1976; Cramer: 1975; Levenson:1972; Uroff:1972; Godrey:1971; Kemper:1970; Neal, Gill, and Tismer:1970), the magnitude of the correlations has ranged from low to highly significant. Additionally, a sufficient number of studies has reported conflicting conclusions (Waller, Trismen, and Wilder:1977; Stevens:1974; Orr:1973; Jacobson:1967) to support the appeal
for more carefully designed research in this area.

ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS

The relationships between reading and self-concepts were examined in *Self-concept and Reading*, an International Reading Association interpretive paper. In this publication, Quandt (1972:6) defined reading self-concepts as, "Those perceptions which are related specifically to reading . . . ." However, no references to investigations focused on attitudes toward reading and self-concepts were provided. Alexander and Filler (1976) also attested to the fact that there has been little research in this area.

A number of studies has sought to determine the relationship between reading achievement and levels of self-concepts (Butcher:1967; Williams:1973; Kokovich and Matthews: 1971; Williams and Cole:1968). Green (1976), in a review of the literature concerned with tools for measuring attitudes toward reading, concluded that the studies examined, with their conflicting findings, cast uncertainty on the existence of such an association in the primary grades. However, both Quandt (1972) and Green (1976) concluded that the preponderance of research has given evidence to the presence of such a relationship in grades four, five, and six.

For example, Padelford (1969) reported a positive relationship between reading achievement and self-concepts among pupils in grades three through six regardless of sex,
socio-economic levels, or ethnic background. However, the gains in reading achievement reported in this study were not correlated with gains in self-concepts. Likewise, Williams and Cole (1968) found a correlation between self-concepts and reading achievement of sixth grade students in urban and rural schools.

With students in grades four and six as subjects, Bledsoe (1967) studied the self-concepts in relation to intelligence, academic achievement, interests, and anxiety. No appreciable difference was found between the self-concepts of males in the two grades or for females in the two grades. Self-concepts and intelligence were found to be low to moderately related for males, but not for females. Correlations between achievement and self-concepts for males were also significant and positive, while for females they were not significant. Anxiety and self-concepts were found to be correlated negatively.

One aspect of a study by Marker (1975) was the determination of the relationship of self-concepts to academic ability of seventh grade boys in three groups: achieving readers, readers with difficulties primarily in comprehension, and readers with difficulties primarily in word recognition. All groups were reported to have at least average intelligence. There were no significant differences in the self-concepts of the two groups of students with reading difficulties. There was a significant difference in the self-concepts of
the good readers and both groups of poor readers. Students with difficulties in word attack or comprehension had lower self-concepts than the achieving groups.

The relationship between reading achievement and self-esteem of ninth grade students was studied by Herbert (1968). It was found that the large majority of students with low self-concepts also had low reading comprehension scores. Likewise, those students with high self-concepts had high reading comprehension scores.

In a dissertation study, Hutchinson (1971) reported on the relationships between self-esteem and attitudes toward reading of intermediate-grade students. The sample consisted of four hundred seventy-six fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students enrolled in three school districts. Significant positive relationships were found between attitudes toward reading and self-esteem. When correlations were analyzed in terms of grade level and sex, it was found that regardless of the combination of these factors, attitudes toward reading correlated significantly with self-esteem. However, Cotler and Palmer (1970) and Ruhly (1970) reported somewhat different results. Cotler and Palmer found the self-concepts and achievement of females to be positively and significantly related, but the self-concepts and achievement of males were not significantly related. Ruhly, in a study of second grade males, found no difference between the self-concepts of high achievers in reading and low achievers in reading.
Summary of Research Related to Attitudes Toward Reading and Self-concepts

Inconsistencies were found in the reports concerning self-concepts and attitudes toward reading. Cotler and Palmer (1970) and Ruhly (1970) reported a positive correlation between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts of females, but not for males. In contrast, Hutchinson (1971) reported correlations for both males and females. Quandt (1972) and Green (1976) considered the relationship between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts doubtful at the primary level. However, the majority of the evidence seemed to indicate a positive relationship between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts at the middle school level (Marker: 1975; Hutchinson: 1971, Padelford: 1969; Herbert: 1968; Williams and Cole: 1968).

SUMMARY

Recently published reviews of literature concerning attitudes toward reading (Greene: 1976; Summers: 1976) have attested to the need for additional studies, as well as the need for the development of more valid and reliable measuring instruments. Generalizations have been subject to dispute since the meager findings reported often have been contradictory. In addition, most of the reported results have been based on correlational data. Alexander and Filler (1976:3) stressed the following cautions when interpreting
such data:

First, the results of many of the studies are based on correlational data which does not suggest a cause or effect relationship—merely that one variable has been found present with (or absent from) another variable. Second, the variables do not necessarily function independently, but their interrelationships have not been established.
Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This investigation was concerned with the attitudes toward reading of middle school students in terms of (1) grade level, (2) socio-economic status, (3) sex, (4) reading achievement, and (5) self-concepts. In this context, a population was selected, instruments for measuring attitudes toward reading and self-concepts were chosen, procedures for collecting the data were developed, and methods for treating and analyzing the data were specified. The purpose of Chapter 3 was to present data regarding these factors.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population for this study was selected from the five middle schools in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. From the total population of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students enrolled in Central Middle School, McKinley Middle School, Northwestern Middle School, Park Forest Middle School, and Westdale Middle School, a ten percent random sample by school and by grade was computer generated. A total sample of four hundred five students was selected. The subjects in the sample were identified by school, grade level, and sex in Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Grade Six Females/Males</th>
<th>Grade Seven Females/Males</th>
<th>Grade Eight Females/Males</th>
<th>School Totals Females/Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Middle School</td>
<td>18 11</td>
<td>23 11</td>
<td>16 19</td>
<td>57 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKinley Middle School</td>
<td>15 16</td>
<td>14 15</td>
<td>14 17</td>
<td>43 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern Middle School</td>
<td>9 7</td>
<td>7 10</td>
<td>8 11</td>
<td>24 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Forest Middle School</td>
<td>9 12</td>
<td>16 17</td>
<td>15 23</td>
<td>40 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westdale Middle School</td>
<td>8 13</td>
<td>15 11</td>
<td>10 15</td>
<td>33 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals by Grade and Sex</td>
<td>59 59</td>
<td>75 64</td>
<td>63 85</td>
<td>197 208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOURCES OF THE DATA

Descriptions of the instruments used as measures of attitudes toward reading, self-concepts, and reading achievement were included. Attitudes toward reading and self-concepts were measured by semantic deferentials. Reading achievement was measured by a standardized achievement test.

Attitudes Toward Reading

The Estes Attitude Scales (Estes: 1975) provided the measure of attitudes toward reading. The scales consisted of seventy-five Likert-type items in five content areas developed for middle school through senior high school subjects. Only the items concerned with attitudes toward reading were used in the analysis of the data for this study. The summation of the values on the fifteen item reading scale totalling between fifteen and seventy-five, was viewed as a quantitative representation of the global attitudes toward reading. The Manual for Administration and Interpretation includes data for content, factorial, convergent, and divergent validity. A split-half reliability of .94 was reported.

Self-concepts

The How I See Myself Scale, intermediate level (Gordon: 1972), was used to measure self-concepts. The items included in the scale were based on descriptions of the re-
responses made by children to questions about themselves (Jersild: 1952). The summation of the values on the forty-two item scale, totalling between forty-two and two hundred ten, was viewed as a quantitative representation of self-concepts. In view of the lack of agreement concerning the use of self-report as a legitimate means of measurement, self-concepts was operationally defined in the Test Manual as the reported portion of one's self. Included in the Test Manual was information concerning reliability and validity. Normative data for grades three through twelve, by sex, race, and socio-economic status were described. Test-retest reliabilities ranging from .78 to .89, with an average of .84, were reported by Yeatts (1967).

**Reading Achievement**

The total reading standard scale scores from the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (1970) were used as the measure of reading achievement. Reliability and validity data were found in the Manual for Interpreting. Total reading reliabilities for grades six, seven, and eight ranged from .89 through .97, with an average of .94. Reviews in the Seventh Mental Measurement Yearbook (Buros: 1972) described these tests as adequate measures of reading achievement with validity and reliability data within acceptable limits.
COLLECTION OF THE DATA

The How I See Myself Scale and the Estes Attitude Scales were administered by the researcher during the last week of February, 1978. The Metropolitan Achievement Tests were administered by school personnel as a part of the annual system-wide testing program during the third week of April, 1978. Answers for all measures were marked on answer sheets which were computer scored by the data processing department of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board.

Data concerned with school attended, sex, grade in school, participation in the school free lunch program, and reading achievement scores were compiled, coded, and recorded on IBM code sheets by the researcher for transfer to computer cards. The information derived from the two affective measures was stored on tapes. All data were taken to Louisiana State University for analysis.

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The data for the study were analyzed by the Department of Experimental Statistics, Louisiana State University. The statistical procedures used were multiple-classification analysis of variance and Pearson product-moment correlations. Significance was tested at the .01 and .05 levels of confidence. Subgroups of students were delineated on the basis of (1) grade level, (2) socio-economic status, (3) sex, (4) reading achievement, and (5) self-concepts.
Chapter 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of Chapter 4 was to present and to analyze data concerning attitudes toward reading among middle school students in terms of (1) grade level, (2) socio-economic status, (3) sex, (4) reading achievement, and (5) self-concepts.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

This investigation was designed to consider the following questions:

1. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of grade level?

2. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of socio-economic status?

3. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of sex?

4. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of grade level?

5. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and grade level?

6. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of socio-economic

34
status?

7. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and socio-economic status?

8. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of sex?

9. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and sex?

10. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of grade level?

11. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and grade level?

12. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of socio-economic status?

13. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and socio-economic status?

14. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of sex?

15. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and sex?
DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING
IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVEL

Differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of grade level were significant at the .01 level of confidence (Table II). An examination of Table III revealed that the mean attitudes toward reading scores decreased as grade level increased. Mean attitudes toward reading scores of 54.094, 50.816, and 50.211 were reported for grades six, seven, and eight respectively. Students in grade six reported higher attitudes toward reading scores than students in grades seven and eight. Students in grade seven reported higher attitudes toward reading scores than students in grade eight.

TABLE II
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING
IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVEL, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, AND SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>995.270</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>108.249</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1811.816</td>
<td>16.52</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE III
MEANS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING
IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>54.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>50.211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING
IN TERMS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

No significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of socio-economic status were found. An F value of .99 and a probability of .321 were reported in Table II. The mean attitudes toward reading score of 51.162 for the high socio-economic group was nonsignificantly lower than the mean score of 52.229 for the low socio-economic group (Table IV).

TABLE IV
MEANS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING IN TERMS
OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Socio-Economic Group</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>51.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Socio-Economic Group</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>52.229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING IN TERMS OF SEX

Differences significant at the .0001 level of confidence were found in attitudes toward reading in terms of sex (Table II). Females reported more positive attitudes toward reading than males. A mean attitudes toward reading score for females of 54.021 and for males of 49.409 were reported in Table V.

TABLE V
MEANS OF ATTITUDE TOWARD READING IN TERMS OF SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>54.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>49.409</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVEL

A positive correlation significant at the .01 level of confidence was found between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement at the sixth grade level. No significant correlations were found at the seventh and eighth grade levels. Coefficients of correlation of attitudes toward reading and reading achievement were reported by grade levels.
in Table VI. A correlation of .26 for grade six, .10 for grade seven, and .15 for grade eight were reported.

**TABLE VI**

**COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Coefficients of Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>0.225*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>0.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>0.152</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

**DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING IN TERMS OF READING ACHIEVEMENT AND GRADE LEVEL**

Differences significant at the .01 level of confidence were found between the attitudes toward reading of sixth grade students and the attitudes toward reading of seventh and eighth grade students in terms of reading achievement and grade level. The difference between the attitudes toward reading mean scores of seventh and eighth grade students was not statistically significant. Mean attitudes toward reading scores for grades six, seven, and eight were reported in Table VII as 54.094, 50.816, and 50.211 respectively. Mean reading achievement scores for the three grades were reported
in Table VII as 76.534, 78.367, and 86.098 respectively.

TABLE VII
MEANS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
<th>Reading Achievement Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>54.094</td>
<td>76.534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50.816</td>
<td>78.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>50.211</td>
<td>86.098</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Attitudes toward reading and reading achievement were positively correlated at the .05 level of confidence for both high and low socio-economic groups (Table VIII). A correlation of .15 for the high socio-economic group and .18 for the low socio-economic group was reported.
TABLE VIII

COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Coefficient of Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Socio-economic Group</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>0.149*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Socio-economic Group</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>0.176*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level of confidence.

DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING IN TERMS OF READING ACHIEVEMENT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Differences significant at the .05 level of confidence in attitudes toward reading were found when the data were analyzed in terms of reading achievement and socio-economic status. Students in the high socio-economic group reported less favorable attitudes toward reading, and higher achievement, than students in the low socio-economic group. Mean attitudes toward reading scores of 51.162 for the high socio-economic group and 52.229 for the low socio-economic group were reported in Table IX. A mean reading achievement score for the low socio-economic group of 86.512 and for the high socio-economic group of 71.810 were reported in Table IX.
TABLE IX
MEANS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
<th>Reading Achievement Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Socio-economic Group</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>51.162</td>
<td>86.512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Socio-economic Group</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>52.229</td>
<td>70.810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF SEX

No significant correlations were found between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement when the data were analyzed in terms of sex. A correlation of .14 for females and .11 for males was reported in Table X.

TABLE X
COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Coefficient of Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>0.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>0.113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING IN TERMS OF READING ACHIEVEMENT AND SEX

No statistically significant differences in attitudes toward reading were found in terms of reading achievement and sex. The mean attitudes toward reading score for females was 54.021 and for males 49.405. The mean reading achievement score for females was 80.597 and for males 80.628 (Table XI).

TABLE XI
MEANS OF ATTITUDE TOWARD READING AND READING ACHIEVEMENT IN TERMS OF SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
<th>Reading Achievement Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>54.021</td>
<td>80.597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>49.409</td>
<td>80.628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVEL

The correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts were significant at the .01 level of confidence for grades six, seven, and eight. A correlation of .25 for grade six, .26 for grade seven, and .37 for grade eight was reported in Table XII.
TABLE XII
COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND
SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF
GRADE LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Coefficient of Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>0.247*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>0.255*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>0.365*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING
IN TERMS OF SELF-CONCEPTS AND
GRADE LEVEL

There were differences in attitudes toward reading significant at the .01 level of confidence in terms of self-concepts and grade level. Mean self-concepts scores and mean attitudes toward reading scores decreased as grade level increased (Table XIII). The attitudes toward reading of sixth grade students were more positive than the attitudes toward reading of seventh and eighth grade students. The attitudes toward reading of seventh grade students were more positive than those of eighth grade students. Self-concepts of sixth grade students were more positive than those of seventh grade students, and those of seventh grade students more positive than the self-concepts of eighth grade students. The mean self-concepts scores for grades six, seven, and eight
were 144.568, 143.610, and 142.584 respectively. Mean attitudes toward reading scores were 54.094 for grade six, 50.806 for grade seven, and 50.211 for grade eight.

**TABLE XIII**

MEANS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF GRADE LEVELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
<th>Self-Concepts Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>54.094</td>
<td>144.568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>50.816</td>
<td>143.610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>50.211</td>
<td>142.584</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Correlations significant at the .01 level of confidence between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts were found for the high socio-economic group and the low socio-economic group. The coefficients of correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of socio-economic status were reported in Table XIV. A correlation of .36 for the high socio-economic group and of .21 for the low socio-economic group was computed.
TABLE XIV

COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND
SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Coefficient of Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Socio-economic</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>0.358*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economic Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Socio-economic</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>0.213*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economic Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .01 level of confidence.

DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING
IN TERMS OF SELF-CONCEPTS AND
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Differences significant at the .01 level of confidence were found in attitudes toward reading when the data were analyzed in terms of self-concepts and socio-economic status. The low socio-economic group indicated more positive attitudes toward reading and more positive self-concepts than the high socio-economic group. A mean attitudes toward reading score of 51.162 was recorded for the high socio-economic group and a mean score of 52.229 for the low socio-economic group. A mean self-concepts score of 140.199 was recorded for the high socio-economic group and a mean score of 149.047 for the low socio-economic group.
TABLE XV
MEANS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
<th>Self-concepts Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Socio-economic Group</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>51.162</td>
<td>140.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Socio-economic Group</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>52.229</td>
<td>149.047</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF SEX

No significant correlations were found between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of sex. Coefficients of correlations of .06 for females and .04 for males were reported in Table XVI.

TABLE XVI
COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Coefficient of Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>0.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD READING IN TERMS OF SELF-CONCEPTS AND SEX

No significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and sex were found. Self-concepts means and attitudes toward reading means were reported by sex in Table XVII. The difference in the 144.206 mean self-concepts for females and 142.923 mean self-concepts score for males was statistically insignificant.

TABLE XVII
MEANS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND SELF-CONCEPTS IN TERMS OF SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attitudes Toward Reading Mean</th>
<th>Self-Concepts Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>54.021</td>
<td>144.206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>49.409</td>
<td>142.923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUMMARY

A summary of the findings of the study were as follows:

1. Differences in attitudes toward reading existed in terms of grade level. Sixth grade students reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than seventh and eighth grade students. The difference was significant at the .01 level of confidence. Seventh grade students reported more positive attitudes toward reading than eighth grade students. The difference between the attitudes toward
reading of seventh and eighth grade students was not statistically significant.

2. No significant differences in attitudes toward reading existed in terms of socio-economic status.

3. Differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of sex, significant at the .0001 level of confidence, existed. Female students reported more positive attitudes toward reading than male students.

4. A positive correlation of .26, significant at the .01 level of confidence, existed between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement at the sixth grade level. A positive, nonsignificant correlation of .10 existed between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement at the seventh grade level. A positive, nonsignificant correlation of .15 existed at the eighth grade level.

5. A difference, significant at the .01 level of confidence, existed between the attitudes toward reading of sixth and seventh grade students in terms of reading achievement. No significant difference existed between attitudes toward reading of seventh and eighth grade students in terms of reading achievement.

6. Positive correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement existed in terms of socio-economic status. There was a correlation of .15 for the low socio-economic group, and .18 for the high socio-economic group. These correlations were significant at the .05 level.
7. Differences significant at the .05 level of confidence existed between the attitudes toward reading of the two socio-economic groups in terms of reading achievement. The high socio-economic group reported less favorable attitudes toward reading and higher reading achievement than the low socio-economic group.

8. No significant correlations existed between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of sex.

9. No significant difference in attitudes toward reading existed in terms of reading achievement and sex.

10. Positive correlations, significant at the .01 level of confidence, existed between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts at grades six, seven, and eight. The correlation was .25 for grade six, .26 for grade seven, and .37 for grade eight.

11. Differences between attitudes toward reading, significant at the .01 level of confidence, existed in terms of self-concepts and grade level. Sixth grade students reported more positive attitudes toward reading and more positive self-concepts than seventh and eighth grade students. Seventh grade students reported more positive attitudes toward reading and more positive self-concepts than eighth grade students.
12. Positive correlations, significant at the .01 level of confidence, existed between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of socio-economic status. The correlation was .36 for the high socio-economic group and .21 for the low socio-economic group.

13. Differences significant at the .01 level of confidence existed between attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and socio-economic status. The low socio-economic group reported more positive attitudes toward reading and more positive self-concepts than the high socio-economic group.

14. No significant correlation existed between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of sex.

15. No significant differences in attitudes toward reading existed in terms of self-concepts and sex.
Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

This study was concerned with the attitudes toward reading of middle school students in terms of (1) grade level, (2) socio-economic status, (3) sex, (4) reading achievement, and (5) self-concepts. Specifically, the study was designed to consider the following questions:

1. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of grade level?

2. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of socio-economic status?

3. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of sex?

4. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of grade level?

5. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and grade level?

6. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of socio-economic status?
7. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and socio-economic status?

8. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of sex?

9. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement and sex?

10. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of grade level?

11. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and grade level?

12. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of socio-economic status?

13. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and socio-economic status?

14. Were there correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of sex?

15. Were there significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and sex?

Attitudes toward reading was measured by the Estes Attitude Scales, self-concepts was measured by the How I See Myself Scale, and reading achievement was measured by the total reading subtests of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests. Socio-economic status was determined by participation or non-participation in the school free lunch program. The low socio-eco-
nomic group was defined as those students who participated in the free lunch program. The high socio-economic group was defined as those students who did not participate in the free lunch program. The sample used in this investigation consisted of four hundred five randomly selected students in five middle schools in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. The schools involved were Central Middle School, McKinley Middle School, Northwestern Middle School, Park Forest Middle School, and Westdale Middle School.

The statistical procedures used were multi-classification analysis of variance and Pearson product-moment correlations. The data for each factor were tested for significance at the .05 and .01 levels of confidence.

CONCLUSIONS

From a consideration of the data presented and within the limitations of this study, the following conclusions appeared to be supported:

1. Sixth grade students reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than seventh and eighth grade students. However, viewed in terms of maximum possible scores, sixth grade students did not report strongly positive attitudes toward reading. The attitudes toward reading of seventh grade students were nonsignificantly more positive than those of eighth grade students.

2. There was no significant difference between atti-
tudes toward reading of students in the high socio-economic group and attitudes toward reading of students in the low socio-economic group.

3. Females reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than males. This was true for each grade level and for each socio-economic group. The most positive attitudes toward reading were reported by sixth grade females in the low socio-economic group.

4. Attitudes toward reading and reading achievement were significantly correlated at the sixth grade level. Low positive correlations were also found at the seventh and eighth grade levels, with a higher correlation at eighth grade level than at seventh grade. However, these correlations were too low to be considered statistically significant.

5. Sixth grade students reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading in terms of reading achievement than did seventh and eighth grade students. The small difference in the means of the seventh and eighth grade students indicated the attitudes toward reading of these two groups to be similar.

6. There was a significant positive correlation between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement for each socio-economic group. There were no differences in the attitudes toward reading of the two socio-economic groups when reading achievement was not included in the analysis of data. It would appear that attitudes toward reading may be influenced
more by reading achievement than by socio-economic status.

7. There were significant differences in attitudes toward reading of students in terms of reading achievement and socio-economic status. There was little difference in the attitudes toward reading means for the two groups. However, there was a greater difference in the means of reading achievement. The high socio-economic group reported significantly higher reading achievement scores, but slightly lower attitudes toward reading scores.

8. No significant correlations were found between attitudes toward reading and reading achievement in terms of sex. However, when reading achievement scores were not included in the analysis of data, females reported significantly more positive attitudes toward reading than males.

9. Differences in attitudes toward reading of females and males were not significant in terms of reading achievement. However, in every situation where attitudes toward reading were reported by sex, males reported less positive scores than females. The least positive attitudes toward reading were reported by seventh grade males.

10. There was a significant positive correlation between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts at grades six, seven, and eight. While there was a significant positive correlation at each grade level, the higher the grade, the more significant the correlation reported.

11. There were significant differences in attitudes
toward reading in terms of self-concepts and grade level. As grade level increased, attitudes toward reading and self-concepts decreased. Sixth grade students reported the most positive attitudes toward reading and the most positive self-concepts. Eighth grade students reported the least positive attitudes toward reading and the least positive self-concepts.

12. There were significant positive correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of socio-economic status. A higher coefficient of correlation was computed for the high socio-economic group than for the low socio-economic group.

13. There were significant differences in attitudes toward reading in terms of self-concepts and socio-economic status. The students in the high socio-economic group had less favorable attitudes toward reading and less positive self-concepts than the students in the low socio-economic group. The attitudes toward reading of the two groups were more alike than the self-concepts of the two groups.

14. There were no significant correlations between attitudes toward reading and self-concepts in terms of sex. Low, nonsignificant, and positive correlations were found for females and males.

15. There were no significant differences in the attitudes toward reading of students in terms of self-concepts and sex. Females reported more favorable attitudes toward reading and more positive self-concepts than males. However,
these differences were too small to be considered statistically significant.

In the context of the above conclusions the following implications should be considered:

1. Positive attitudes toward reading were important relative to reading achievement. It would therefore seem judicious for schools to direct attention toward improving attitudes toward reading if reading achievement is to be improved. Special efforts should be made to maintain the more positive attitudes toward reading of students at the sixth grade level. In addition, attention should be directed toward the improvement of attitudes toward reading of seventh and eighth grade students.

2. Middle school males had less positive attitudes toward reading than females. Elementary programs should be evaluated in terms of these differences and efforts made to determine causes. In turn, programs should be developed which incorporate learning situations designed to enhance the attitudes toward reading of both sexes.

3. Self-concepts and attitudes toward reading were related at the middle school level. In view of the relationship of both variables to reading achievement, it would seem feasible to provide learning experiences designed to foster the growth of self-concepts and attitudes toward reading as well as reading skills.

4. Both attitudes toward reading and self-concepts
became less positive as grade level increased. This was true for both females and males. Attention should be directed toward developing programs of instruction incorporating definite strategies for reversing this trend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the data collected and analyzed in the study, the following recommendations for further study were made.

1. Assessment of attitudes toward reading should be made a part of evaluations of middle school programs.

2. A follow-up study should be made of the same population of sixth grade students to determine if the positive attitudes of these students are maintained in the recently organized middle schools of East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana.

3. A longitudinal study, beginning in the primary grades and utilizing the same population through high school, should be made to determine the stability of attitudes toward reading.

4. Studies designed to compare attitudes toward reading of sixth grade students in conventional, self-contained classrooms and sixth grade students in middle school, departmentalized settings should be conducted.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Godfrey, Ernestine (ed.). Intelligence, Achievement, Self-concepts, and Attitudes Among 1216 Typical Sixth and Seventh Grade Students in Fourteen North Carolina Schools. ERIC Document ED 045 760, 1971.


San Diego County Department of Education, California. An Inventory of Reading Attitude, Improving Reading Instruction Monograph. ERIC Document ED 028 893, 1961.


APPENDIX A

ATTITUDES TOWARD READING, READING ACHIEVEMENT AND SELF-CONCEPTS MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

TABLE XVIII
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
TOTAL SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Reading</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>51.563</td>
<td>10.472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Achievement</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>80.614</td>
<td>14.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concepts</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>143.522</td>
<td>22.644</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE XIX
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE SIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Reading</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>54.140</td>
<td>10.620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Achievement</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>76.534</td>
<td>15.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concepts</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>144.024</td>
<td>24.486</td>
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</table>
### TABLE XX
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE SEVEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>50.805</td>
<td>11.224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>78.367</td>
<td>16.921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>143.348</td>
<td>20.287</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE XXI
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE SIX, SES₀*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>52.944</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>81.930</td>
<td>13.812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>140.166</td>
<td>22.040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*High socio-economic group

### TABLE XXII
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE SIX, SES₁*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>55.977</td>
<td>8.611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>67.704</td>
<td>14.364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>151.772</td>
<td>26.602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Low socio-economic group
### TABLE XXIII
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE SEVEN, $SES_0^*$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Reading</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>51.866</td>
<td>11.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Achievement</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>85.626</td>
<td>16.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-concepts</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>141.186</td>
<td>20.068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*High socio-economic group

### TABLE XXIV
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE EIGHT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Reading</td>
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<td>49.842</td>
<td>10.295</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Achievement</td>
<td>142</td>
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<td>Self-concepts</td>
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### TABLE XXV
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
$SES_0^*$

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*High socio-economic group
### TABLE XXVI
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
SES₁*

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*Low socio-economic group

### TABLE XXVII
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE SEVEN, SES₁*

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*Low socio-economic group

### TABLE XXVIII
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE EIGHT, SES₀*

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*High socio-economic group
**TABLE XXIX**
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
GRADE EIGHT, SES₁*

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*Low socio-economic group

**TABLE XXX**
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS

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**TABLE XXXI**
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS

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### TABLE XXXII
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
SIXTH GRADE GIRLS

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MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
SIXTH GRADE BOYS

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<td>Attitudes Toward Reading</td>
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### TABLE XXXIV
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
SEVENTH GRADE GIRLS

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**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**
**SEVENTH GRADE BOYS**

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### TABLE XXXVI
**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**
**EIGHTH GRADE GIRLS**

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### TABLE XXXVII
**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**
**EIGHTH GRADE BOYS**

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### TABLE XXXVIII
**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**
**GIRLS, SES\(_0^*\)**

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*High socio-economic group

### TABLE XXXIX
**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**
**BOYS, SES\(_0^*\)**

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*High socio-economic group

### TABLE XL
**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**
**GIRLS, SES\(_1^*\)**

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*Low socio-economic group
<table>
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<td>Attitudes Toward Reading</td>
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<td>Self-concepts</td>
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</table>

*Low socio-economic group
APPENDIX B

413 Kimbro Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808
February 15, 1978

Dr. Clyde Lindsey, Superintendent
East Baton Rouge Parish School Board
1050 South Foster Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

Dear Dr. Lindsey:

I am requesting permission to conduct research for my dissertation in the middle schools of East Baton Rouge Parish. The purpose of the study will be to determine correlates of attitudes toward reading held by middle school students. An attitude inventory and a self-concept scale will be administered to a ten percent random sample of students in grades six, seven, and eight. The instruments can be group administered and will require less than one class period of the students' time. The study will provide information on middle school students in the parish which should prove valuable in curriculum development.

A copy of my proposal as approved by my committee has been made available to Dr. Donald Hoover. If permission is granted for this research to be done, it is agreed that my study will be conducted under his direction. All information on individual students will be kept confidential and no publication of findings will be made without permission from your office.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lois Crews
Dear Mrs. Crews:

I have reviewed your proposal for research study in this school system with Dr. Lindsey and we have found it compatible with our present Middle School Evaluation. The information that you gather in your study would be useful to us.

Your request for research is therefore granted.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Donald L. Hoover, Director
Research and Program Evaluation

DDH/SSY

cc: Graydon L. Walker
    Dr. Lorin Smiley
    Mr. Henry Essex
From: Committee on Humans and Animals as Research Subjects.

To: Vice Chancellor for Advanced Studies and Research
David Boyd Hall

Re: Proposal of Lois Crews Principal Investigator

Entitled "A Correlation Between Certain Selected Factors and Attitudes Toward Research"

This is to certify that a quorum of the Committee on Humans and Animals as Research Subjects reviewed the above proposal. The Committee evaluated the procedures of the proposal with appropriate guidelines established for activities supported by federal funds involving as subjects humans and/or animals.

Recommendation of Committee Approved

Comments:

A review of this proposal by the Committee will be accomplished at least on an annual basis and at more frequent intervals depending on the element of risk.

Date 4/21/73

Date 4/21/73

Chairman, Committee on Use of Humans and Animals as Research Subjects
VITA

Mary Lois Coglan Crews, the daughter of William Henry Coghlan and Ollie Noblin Coghlan, was born in Mississippi. She graduated from Central High School, Memphis, Tennessee, and from Sacramento State University, Sacramento, California, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education.

Her teaching career began in Taipei, Taiwan, where she taught sixth grade for two years. In addition, she taught second grade for two years and fourth grade for one year in Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands. Upon returning to the United States, she taught sixth grade and third grade at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, for a total of three years.

After receiving the Masters of Education degree from Louisiana State University, she was employed in the East Baton Rouge Parish school system. She taught one year and served for six years as Instructional Consultant in Reading at the junior high school level.

She is married to Eldridge Leo Crews and is the mother of Mary Lynn.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Mary Lois Coghlan Crews

Major Field: Education

Title of Thesis: A Study of Various Factors in Terms of Attitudes Toward Reading

Approved:

Eric L. Thurston  
Major Professor and Chairman

Carolyn H. Harpman  
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Jane Adams  
Jean Andrews  
Joseph Lanning  
Helen M. Corkerton  
Robert Con

Date of Examination:

11-16-78