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### Difference In Self-Esteem Between Two Religious Groups

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DIFFERENCE IN SELF-ESTEEM  
BETWEEN TWO RELIGIOUS GROUPS

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Division in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Science

By 7412

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS . . . . .	1
The Problem . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	1
Need for the Study . . . . .	1
Delimitations . . . . .	2
Limitations . . . . .	3
Null Hypothesis . . . . .	4
Definition of Terms . . . . .	4
Self-Esteem . . . . .	4
Fundamental Religion or Fundamentalism . . . . .	4
Other Religions . . . . .	5
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .	6
III. RESEARCH DESIGN . . . . .	13
Basis for Evaluating Self-Esteem . . . . .	13
Subjects . . . . .	14
The Security-Insecurity Inventory . . . . .	15
Procedure . . . . .	16
Treatment of the Data . . . . .	17
IV. RESULTS . . . . .	19
V. DISCUSSION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION . . . . .	27
Summary and Conclusion . . . . .	30
APPENDIX I . . . . .	33
APPENDIX II . . . . .	35
APPENDIX III . . . . .	36
APPENDIX IV . . . . .	37
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	39

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Security-Insecurity Inventory Scores of Randomly Selected Subjects Classified As Members of Fundamental Religious Groups in Pittsburg, Kansas 1969 . . . . .	20
II. Security-Insecurity Inventory Scores of Randomly Selected Subjects Classified As Members of Other Religious Groups in Pittsburg, Kansas 1969 . . . . .	21
III. A Statistical Summary of the Results of Data Obtained by the Administration of the Security-Insecurity Inventory to Fundamental Religious Groups and Other Religious Groups in the Pittsburg, Kansas Area 1969 . . . . .	26
IV. Church Affiliation of Subjects in the Pittsburg, Kansas Area, Who Responded to the Security-Insecurity Inventory . . . . .	26

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Frequency Distribution of Security-Insecurity Inventory Scores for Fundamental and Other Religious Groups in the Pittsburg, Kansas Area 1969 . . . . .	22

## ABSTRACT

This study was a preliminary endeavor concerned with an investigation of self-esteem difference between fundamental religious groups and other religious groups in the Pittsburg, Kansas area for the year 1969.

On the basis of religious doctrines 161 volunteer church members were divided into two religious groups: fundamental religious groups and other religious groups. Of the 161 volunteers, 85 church members were classified as members of other religious groups and 76 church members were classified as members of fundamental religious groups. After numbering subjects in each classification, thirty subjects were chosen from each classification by the use of a table of random numbers. The randomly chosen subjects were administered Maslow's (1952) Security-Insecurity Inventory.

Self-esteem was operationally defined by the use of Maslow's (1952) Security-Insecurity Inventory (SII). Low scores on the SII indicated high self-esteem. High scores on the SII indicated low self-esteem.

A significant difference in self-esteem was found at the .05 Level of Confidence between the two religious groups. The other religious groups SII mean was significantly lower than the fundamental religious groups SII mean, thus, on the basis of SII scores, the other religious groups

self-esteem was significantly higher than the fundamental religious groups self-esteem.

Because of possible sampling biases, it was suggested that generalizations based on the results of this study, are severely restricted.

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

There are various opinions regarding self-esteem between different religious groups. Indications are that different religious groups may be ranked according to social prestige in a hierarchy similar to the social stratification of the general population. Although it is generally conceded that the social prestige of different religious groups varies within the community, little comparison has been made of self-esteem of individual members in different religious groups.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. The problem was to answer the question: is there any difference in self-esteem between fundamental religious groups and other religious groups?

Need for the Study. The importance of the self concept and its centrality in theories of psychotherapy and personality is legend. Of interest here, is the evaluative expression of the self by members of different religious groups.

Many writers indicate that religious affiliation is one of the most powerful modes of self expression, since some form of religious activity has been found in all cultures.



Very little research is devoted to an investigation of the "common belief" of self-esteem differences between members of different religious groups. In this study an attempt will be made to sample a limited population to test self-esteem differences between members of two religious groups.

Since different religious groups emerge under conditions of social dissonance, the efficacy of doctrines associated with "mutant" religions in contributing to self-esteem may be questioned. If the results of this study indicate no significant difference in self-esteem between the fundamental religious groups (emergent) and other religious groups, at the .05 level of confidence, religious doctrines may have no impact on self-esteem.

Conversely, if there is a significant difference in self-esteem between members of different religious groups, investigations concerning other variables that may influence self-esteem are feasible, as it is conceivable that religious expression can be influenced by power relations on other aspects of the social structure. For example, values associated with economic institutions may influence religious expression.

Delimitations. This study was confined to members of religious groups in Pittsburg, Kansas for the year 1969. Excluded from this study: All persons under eighteen years of age.

Limitations. The primary weakness of this study is the lack of a valid measuring instrument. As with most devices used in measuring self-esteem, (Wylie, 1961) the problems of item appropriateness, scoring of responses, validity of test, and restrictions imposed by scales are present. The device used in this study was Maslow's (1952) Security-Insecurity Inventory (SII) which has not been externally validated. Several weaknesses are associated with the SII. Firstly, the individual who responds to the SII may clearly discern its purpose and attempt to present a favorable impression. Secondly, the answers to the SII depend upon self-knowledge (Maslow, 1952).

An additional weakness of this study is the treatment of a complex of relationships in an arbitrary fashion; that is, the person's response to the security-insecurity inventory is the basis for evaluating self-esteem. The Security-Insecurity scores may not represent levels of self-esteem. Other factors that are assumed to influence self-esteem (e.g., income, social position, place of residence, marital status and race), are excluded.

A further limitation of this study is imposed by the choice of subjects. All subjects included in this study were volunteers. The volunteers may not have been a representative sample of church membership in the Pittsburg, Kansas area. All churches in the Pittsburg, Kansas area were not included in this study.

Null Hypothesis. There is no difference in self-esteem between members of fundamental religious groups and other religious groups.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Self-Esteem. Self-esteem refers to a judgmental and evaluative process which ". . . the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy." In short, self-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself (Coppersmith, 1967, p. 7). Operationally, self-esteem is defined as the score received on Maslow's (1952) Security-Insecurity Inventory. Self-esteem being inversely related to SII scores.

Fundamental Religious Groups. Fundamental religious groups were designed to include those religious organizations that subscribe primarily to doctrines that reflect a literal interpretation of the Bible. In addition to informal religious rituals, the doctrines characteristic of fundamental religious groups were: (1) the virgin birth of Christ, (2) the physical resurrection, (3) the inerrancy of the scriptures in every detail, (4) the substitutionary theory of the atonement and (5) the imminent physical second coming of Christ (Vergilus, 1964, p. 59).

Other Religious Groups. Other religious groups are taken to mean all religious groups included in this study that are not classified as fundamental religious groups.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There appears to be no literature directly related to self-esteem differences between different religious groups. There is, however, a large store of literature related to the self-concept and self-esteem.

The summary of literature encompassed by this study was confined to literature concerning phenomenal self concepts relevant to self-esteem assessment.

While self-esteem may be related to the degree to which the individual meets ethical standards (Coppersmith, 1967), the influence of religious doctrines on self-esteem is questionable.

Commenting on the assumption "that religion is somehow associated . . . with goodness," Kirkpatric (1949) said that, "no assumption is more difficult to investigate by the methods of science." Furthermore, "It would require decades of concentrated research to trace the total implications of religion as a social institution" (p. 1).

Many theories of personality advanced within the last two decades assign importance to a phenomenal or non-phenomenal self concept with cognitive and motivational attributes.

Some investigators are called phenomenological because of their stress on the role of the conscious self concept in

determining a person's behavior. Other writers give attention to non-phenomenal constructs (e.g., the unconscious) of the self.

Wylie (1961) made a critical survey of literature related to self concepts and noticed that empirical workers have circumvented theoretical problems (e.g., unconscious motivation) by correlation of behavior in other phenomenal fields with inferred factors. A great portion of the self concept studies are concerned with correlations between the phenomenal self concept and theoretically relevant variables without specifying the direction of the hypothesized antecedent--consequent relationship.

Refining a model borrowed from Rogers and Dymond, Coppersmith (1967) used adaptive behavior as a reflection of self evaluation.

The distinguished self concept theories of Fromm and Rogers bear less directly on self-esteem evaluation. Fromm (cited by Coppersmith, 1967, p. 34) is concerned with the possible debilitating effects of social isolation. Rogers (1954) proposed that all people develop self images that guide and maintain adjustment to the external world. Low self-esteem develops out of the individuals interactions with a pernicious environment.

Institutional ways of influencing beliefs, values and self-esteem has been treated by many sociologists. Yinger (1961) for example, has classified religious denominations

according to the way in which they react to secular culture and the values with which they disagree; that is, acceptance, aggression or avoidance. To be noted here are the apparent conditions under which denominations developed.

Krech, Crunchfield and Ballanchy (1962) emphasized the importance of the reference group in shaping the individual's attitude. Non-membership may also affect attitude development. In relating socio-economic status and religious affiliation, Berelson and Steiner (1964) found that the lower socio-economic groups join fundamental religions, while the upper socio-economic groups join more formalized religions. It can be seen that religious denominations may function as reference groups in that denominations represent group values to which the individual aspires.

In a study investigating the attractive tendency of individuals toward the group, Dittes (1959) believed ". . . the results clearly indicate that attraction toward the group functions directly with the level of acceptance experienced (p. 197)." Non-acceptance experiences with group attraction to group is less among people with low self-esteem than high self-esteem.

Kirkpatrick (1949) studied the effects of religious doctrines on attitudes of humanitarianism and suggested that evidence regarding the influence of religious institutions and humanitarianism is inconclusive. Since attitudes are not innate states of readiness, in as much as they are

formed in relation to particular objects, persons, institutions and value or norms, the individual has first to come into contact with them. Coming into contact is a perceptual situation. This means that the primary stage in the formation of an attitude is a perceptual stage. Festinger (1964) has developed a perceptual theory of cognition which holds that two things are in dissonant relation if, considering those two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other, the theory further holds that dissonance being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce dissonance.

Studying social class status and self-esteem, Copper-smith (1967) concluded that "The most striking feature is the weak, non-significant relationship ( $P < .15$ ), between self-esteem and social class (p. 83)."

Using a rating scale not "completely" validated, Haggstrom (1963) investigated self-esteem of residentially de-segregated Negroes and concluded that desegregation tended to elevate the subjects' self-esteem.

The bulk of investigations study self-esteem as a hypothetical variable of socialization. Copper-smith (1967) studied self-esteem of children with reference to parental values. The tendency was a differentiation between levels of self-esteem of children and parental values. Childs (1946) studied children's preference of task difficulty as a predictor of achievement socialization.



The problem of measurement of self-esteem is probably the most vulnerable area in regards to substantive conclusions. Citing Cronbach and Meehl, Wylie (1961) regards the scaling problem in self-esteem to be comparable to that of perception studies. Yet, "in the absence of validating criteria we may examine results obtained from studies in which responses on the instrument in question are related to other stimulus and response variables" (p. 26).

Most of the current research emphasizes the phenomenological self when discussing self-esteem, thus subjective evaluation of the self is in terms of individual perceptions. Snygg and Combs (1949) indicated a direct relationship between the phenomenal self and behavior which allows for an operational definition of self-esteem.

Osgood (1953) has defined meaning in operational terms; that is, meaning can be approached in an essentially Hullian manner, in which the sign of an object may elicit responses in the absence of the object (Fig. 215, p. 697).

A number of studies have combined commonly accepted check list, inventories, and questions from personality inventories and used them in conjunction with the Osgood model of meaning. Wylie (1961) cited Helper's (1955, 1958) use of forty-two pairs of adjectives from Cattell, plus four of Osgood's connotation scales. Lazowick (1955) used nine bipolar semantic differential scales. Solley and Stagner (1956) found a  $r = .87$  reliability in test-retest studies of

self-esteem using twenty of Osgood's semantic differential scales. Fiedler et al. (1958) found no relationship between self-esteem (as measured on a twenty-item semantic differential instrument) and socio-economic status.

This study proceeded on the assumptions substantiated by Coppersmith (1967; 1968) that there are behavioral data which are positively correlated with self-esteem. High self-esteem is reflected in: active, expressive and socially successful types of behavior. High self-esteem is also associated with eager leadership and low anxiety. While low self-esteem is a mirror image of high self-esteem.

There is an enormous amount of critical literature concerning the measurement of self-esteem. Coppersmith (1967) proceeded by discerning that "The measurement problem and theoretical issues associated with response sets remain, but the findings do reveal the response style associated with self attitudes are valid, reliable and theoretically consistent (p. 254)." By utilizing the Phenomenal Self of Snygg and Combs (1949), the Conscious Function of Thorne (1961), the Security-Insecurity Inventory of Maslow (1952), an attempt will be made to determine self-esteem difference between two religious groups.

Briefly, the theoretical context for measuring self-esteem, in this study, may be stated as follows: all individuals have a need for self-worth. An individual's evaluation of himself is in reference to his perceived

adequacy in coping with his personal standards of conduct. Those individuals who see themselves as adequate to their personal standards (High self-esteem) have a concomitant sense of security. Conversely, those individuals who see themselves as unable to meet their personal standards are insecure (Low self-esteem).

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH DESIGN

Basis for Evaluating Self-Esteem. Maslow's (1952) Security-Insecurity Inventory (SII) was used to measure self-esteem. The SII may or may not correlate with self-esteem, since Maslow (1952) correlated the SII with the Social Personality Inventory (a self-esteem device constructed by Maslow, 1942). Maslow (1953) reported "half a dozen separately obtained correlations between the Social Personality Inventory and SII test gave correlations between  $r = .0$  and  $r = .3$ ."

Selection of the SII was based on two main reasons:

(1) the absence of other economical and consistently valid instruments for measuring self-esteem (Wylie, 1961, p. 39), and (2) an assumed relationship between security and self-esteem. The main assumption of this study is that self-esteem may be operationally defined in terms of degrees of security. In studying the stability of the self-concept, Brownfain (1952) concluded that, "A major correlate of the stable self-concept. . . is a high level of self-esteem. The individual with a stable self-concept is the individual who accepts himself, who values himself highly, who feels secure about himself" (p. 605). Conversely, Brownfain suggested that "The individual who is deficient in self-esteem must

defend himself against. . . insecurity. . ." It is assumed that competence in the behavioral areas associated with self-esteem (Coppersmith, 1967, 1968) produces a sense of security, whereas incompetence produces a sense of insecurity. Those behavioral areas with which the individual has to cope are: activity, expression, success, leadership and anxiety. High self-esteem is reflected in active, expressive, academically and socially successful, eager leadership and low anxiety, types of behavior. A sense of security is assumed to accompany high self-esteem. In the same behavioral areas listed above, it is assumed, that low self-esteem is a mirror image of high self-esteem and is, accordingly, accompanied by a sense of insecurity.

Operationally then, self-esteem is the score received on Maslow's Security-Insecurity Inventory (1952).

Subjects. A list of churches that were members of the Pittsburg, Kansas Ministerial Alliance for the year 1968 was secured (see Appendix I). Selected churches were classified into two religious groups based on Vergilus's (1964) description of religious doctrines. One group of churches were classified as Fundamental Religious groups; the remaining churches were classified as Other Religious groups. Further, all churches listed as members of the Pittsburg, Kansas Ministerial Alliance were not included in this study. Only those churches from which volunteer subjects were obtained were included in this study (see Appendix II).

Because of the lack of census, data concerning church membership in the Pittsburg, Kansas area, volunteer subjects were obtained by several means: (1) efforts were made to contact church officials and established church members for names of possible volunteers, (2) request for volunteers were made through the Local Head Start Organization, (3) appeals were made to the Catholic diocese of Pittsburg, Kansas, and (4) general Psychology classes taught by Mr. John Bateman (Kansas State College of Pittsburg, Summer 1969) were screened for Pittsburg, Kansas residents willing to volunteer for this study. A total of 161 volunteers were secured; 76 subjects were classified as members of the Fundamental Religious Groups and 85 subjects were classified as members of Other Religious Groups. A sample of thirty subjects were chosen from each religious group. Using a randomization procedure described by Scott and Wertheimer (1962, p. 209), names of volunteers from each religious group were numbered and randomly selected for administration of the Security-Insecurity Inventory from a table of random numbers. Subjects whose name coincided with the occurrence of a random number were located and requested to complete the SII at his convenience.

All subjects included in this study were 18 years of age or older; no other subject distinction was made.

The Security-Insecurity Inventory. The Security-Insecurity Inventory (SII) was used to measure feelings of

security (see Appendix IV). As constructed by Maslow (1952), the SII evolved out of research concerning aspects of emotional security. A number of (14) "subsyndromes" are associated with manifestations of security and insecurity. The majority of the "subsyndromes" associated with security-insecurity are seen as effects of development. "The ontogenetic priority of safety, belongingness, and love rest upon the fact that they are basic needs whose gratification during the early years is the basis for adult security" (Maslow, 1952, p. 2).

The SII has not been validated with an external criterion, rather procedures in test construction were taken to lend adequate validity.

Maslow (1952) indicated that the procedures in test construction of the SII were: (1) "clinical derivation of terms;" that is, a clinical criteria for defining security-insecurity was established by studying". . . a large number of individuals known to be secure or insecure." (2) item analysis of a preliminary test form, (3) split-half reliability of a second form of the SII test ( $r = .93 \pm .01$ ), (4) a final form consisting of seventy-five (75) questions divided into three (3) groups of twenty-five (25) each. "Each of the sub-test. . . correlates with the total score over .90 (p. 4)." The SII correlated with the Thurstone Neurotic Inventory (.68), Bernreuter Neurotic Tendency (.58) and Allport Ascendance-Submission (.53) (Maslow, 1952).

Procedure. Since the SII is self-administering, no instructions beyond those suggested by the SII manual were given the subjects. Where occasions of misunderstanding of instructions printed on the SII form were encountered, an attempt was made to clarify the difficulty. The SII was administered both individually and in groups depending on subject availability. The SII has no time limit and no special testing facilities were necessary.

Modification of the SII manual instructions were made in regard to emphasis placed on honesty and sincerity. The subjects were told that the results of the inventory were simply a compilation of attitudes of church members. However, it was emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers, nor were the answers given by the subjects to be used for ranking goodness or badness.

Treatment of the Data. Since this study concerned an investigation of significant difference between two groups and no prediction was made regarding the direction of difference, a two tail  $t$  test was used to determine significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. All subjects were placed in one of two groups classed as fundamental or other religious groups. The mean SII score for each group was taken to represent that group's general level of self-esteem.

Individual SII scores were obtained by the use of the SII scoring key (Maslow, 1962).



After placing the SII scoring key over the answer sheet and aligning the answer column on each of the three pages with the circled response of the SII key, one (1) point was given for each answer (X) coinciding with an (0) of the key. The individual score was the total number of these points. The lower the SII score the more secure the subject (Maslow, 1952).

Although Maslow (1952) noted that SII scores are ". . . skewed toward the security end of the continuum," no special statistical manipulation of the SII scores was attempted. It was assumed that group differences would be reflected in SII scores regardless of skewness.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

There were a total of 161 volunteers included in this study. Of the total number of subjects volunteering, 85 were classified as members of the other religious groups and 76 subjects were classified as members of the fundamental religious groups. Classification of subjects as members of the fundamental religious groups or other religious groups was based upon church membership as classified in Appendix II.

After numbering subjects in each classification (i.e., 01 . . . 76 for the fundamental religious groups and 01 . . . 85 for the other religious groups), thirty subjects were chosen from each classification by the use of a table of random numbers. The randomly chosen subjects were administered the SII.

The SII scores of subjects classified as members of the fundamental religious groups are shown in Table I (see p. 20). The total SII score for the fundamental religious groups was 684, with a mean score of 22.80.

The SII scores of subjects classified as members of other religious groups are shown in Table II (see p. 21). The total SII score for the other religious groups was 509, with a mean score of 16.96.

Figure I (see p. 22) shows the frequency distribution

TABLE I

SECURITY-INSECURITY INVENTORY SCORES OF RANDOMLY SELECTED  
 SUBJECTS CLASSIFIED AS MEMBERS OF FUNDAMENTAL  
 RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN PITTSBURG, KANSAS 1969

Subject	Security-Insecurity Inventory Score
13	31
68	23
21	23
51	15
20	29
66	25
12	26
08	13
26	51
64	45
22	19
65	37
69	25
11	13
59	38
53	21
36	16
25	20
41	7
40	22
04	17
35	14
36	22
26	33
72	9
71	29
19	10
37	7
63	21
55	23
Total <u>30</u>	<u>684</u>
Mean	22.80

TABLE II

SECURITY-INSECURITY INVENTORY SCORES OF RANDOMLY SELECTED  
 SUBJECTS CLASSIFIED AS MEMBERS OF OTHER  
 RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN THE PITTSBURG, KANSAS AREA 1969

Subject	Security-Insecurity Inventory Score
49	10
26	7
47	16
61	10
78	3
12	19
74	19
39	9
64	25
36	16
31	21
45	13
59	15
34	15
52	15
07	20
69	50
06	21
83	2
37	9
68	11
10	14
48	40
85	37
19	14
29	8
01	25
24	8
30	28
18	9
Totals	<u>509</u>
Mean	16.96

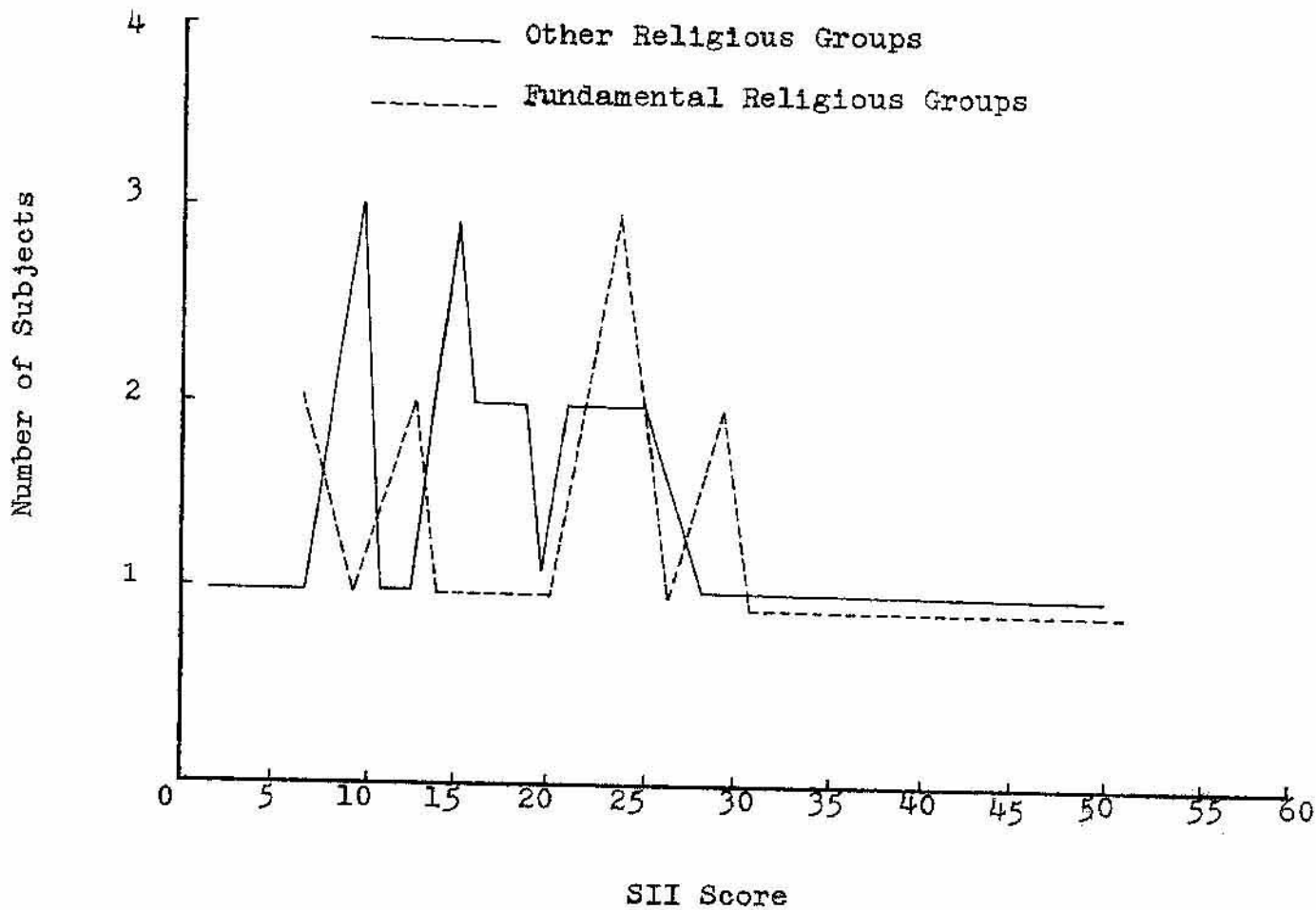


FIGURE 1  
 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF SECURITY-INSECURITY SCORES FOR  
 FUNDAMENTAL AND OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN THE  
 PITTSBURG, KANSAS AREA 1969

of SII scores for the fundamental religious groups and the other religious groups. To be noted in Figure I is the relatively high frequency of low SII scores for the other religious groups, as compared to the relatively low frequency of low SII scores for the fundamental religious groups. The two religious groups are similar in the high SII score frequency (SII score of 30 or above) but differ markedly in the frequency of low SII scores; whereas, there were no SII scores below seven for the fundamental religious groups, there were three SII scores below seven for the other religious groups. The mean and mode of the fundamental religious groups are in close approximation, while the distribution of the other religious appears bimodal and slightly positively skewed.

A statistical summary of the results of this study is shown in Table III (see p. 26).

It can be seen that the fundamental religious groups' total SII score (684) was higher than the other religious groups' total SII score (509). The standard deviation of both groups was approximately equal (10.45 for the fundamental religious groups and 10.60 for the other religious groups). Significant difference (at the .05 confidence level) between the SII scores of the fundamental religious groups and the SII scores of the other religious groups was established by the use of a two tail  $t$  test (Van Dalen, 1966).

$$t = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x_1^2 + \sum x_2^2}{N_1 + N_2 - 2} \left( \frac{1}{N_1} + \frac{1}{N_2} \right)}}$$

The differ-

ence between means was 5.84, the obtained  $t$  was 3.02. For significant difference with 58 degrees of freedom at the .05 level requires a  $t$  value of 1.671 ( $t$  value for 60 degrees of freedom, Van Dalen, 1966). The obtained  $t$  value is significant at the .05 and .01 levels. The difference between the SII scores of the two religious groups studied is taken to indicate significant difference in self-esteem between the fundamental religious groups and the other religious groups. Self-esteem of the other religious groups was significantly higher than self-esteem of the fundamental religious groups. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in self-esteem between members of fundamental religious groups and other religious groups was rejected.

The church affiliation and number of subjects completing the SII is shown in Table IV (see p. 26). The greatest number of subjects (23) classified as members of fundamental religious groups are Baptist. The greatest number of subjects classified as members of other religious groups are Catholics (10) and Methodist (10).

By contacting church officials, estimates of the

membership of those churches listed as members of the Pittsburg, Kansas Ministerial Alliance were established (see Appendix III). The greatest church membership for those churches classified as other religious groups was: Catholic, 2,000 and Methodist, 1,737. The greatest membership for those churches classified as fundamental religious groups was Baptist (937).

Even though a stratified random sample was not attempted in this study, it can be seen in Table IV that an approximate proportional number of subjects affiliated with each religious group is represented. That is, of the total estimated church membership in the Pittsburg, Kansas area, the greatest church membership for the churches classified as other religious groups are Catholic and Methodist. Similarly, of the total estimated church membership in the Pittsburg, Kansas area, the greatest church membership for churches classified as fundamental religious groups are Baptist.



TABLE III

A STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF DATA OBTAINED BY THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SECURITY-INSECURITY INVENTORY TO FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN THE PITTSBURG, KANSAS AREA 1969

	Total SII Score	Mean*	Standard Deviation	Number of Subjects
Fundamental Religious Groups	684	22.80	10.45	30
Other Religious Groups	509	16.96	10.60	30

\*There was a significant difference between the Security-Insecurity Inventory scores of the two religious groups ( $D_M = 5.84$ ;  $t = 3.02$ ;  $d.f. = 58$ ;  $P < .05$ ).

TABLE IV

CHURCH AFFILIATION OF SUBJECTS IN THE PITTSBURG, KANSAS AREA, WHO RESPONDED TO THE SECURITY-INSECURITY INVENTORY

FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS		OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS	
CHURCH	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS	CHURCH	NUMBER OF SUBJECTS
Baptist	23	Presbyterian	1
Church of God and Christ	6	Methodist	10
African Mehodist	1	Episcopalian	2
		Catholic	10
		Christian	2
		Lutheran	4

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The specific concern of this study was to investigate differences in self-esteem between fundamental groups and other religious groups. However, a broader implication of this study concerns the effect of different religious doctrines on self-esteem. In classifying churches in the Pittsburg, Kansas area into fundamental religious groups and other religious groups, emphasis was placed on religious doctrines as criteria for classification. In effect then, this study may be regarded as a preliminary investigation concerning the influence of two broad classes of religious doctrines on self-esteem. In spite of evidence resulting from this study indicating a significant difference in self-esteem between the fundamental religious groups and other religious groups, caution must be taken in deriving firm conclusions. No studies have produced substantial evidence to collaborate the results of this study.

Because little attention is currently given to the Psychology of religion, this study may serve to stimulate interest. Many questions that may have practical and theoretical significance could be answered if the problem could be meaningfully formulated. For example: Does religion lend support to self-esteem? Are the tenets of certain religious doctrines dysfunctional? Is religion relevant to

human behavior?

One of the few studies attempting to answer one question concerning the effect of religious doctrines on attitude was Kirkpatric's (1949) investigation of religion and humanitarianism. In his conclusion Kirkpatric suggested "that the total evidence from verbal behavior seems to indicate that indiscriminating support of religious institutions as humanitarian agencies is open to question" (p. 16).

The results of this study indicated rejection of the null hypothesis that there was no difference in self-esteem between fundamental religious denominations and other religious denominations. It is suggested, however, that the generalizations that can be drawn from the results of this study are severely limited.

Perhaps the most limiting influence on the utility of this study is the sampled population and the adequacy of the self-esteem evaluative instrument.

As all subjects included in this study were volunteers, no allowance was made for the influence of non-volunteers. That is to say, the very act of volunteering may have created a biased sample of the church population. It is conceivable that a replication of this study, using a stratified sampling technique may reverse or shift the results of this endeavor. Additionally, uncontrolled subject variables, such as, mood lability and mental conditions may have influenced the results of this study.

In regards to the technical adequacy of the evaluative instrument in appraising self-esteem, the essential limitations of the questionnaire method inhere in the SII. For example, the subjects' responses on the SII were accepted as undistorted (i.e. an absence of perceptual defense). Furthermore, with the exception of Brownfain (1952) few studies have investigated substantive relationships between security-insecurity and self-esteem.

Yet, notwithstanding the limitations noted above, the results of this study are in general agreement with the construct that there are general differences associated with religious denominations. The nature of religious differences and self-esteem are unclear. It was seen, however, that there was a significant difference in self-esteem between the two religious groups included in this study. The phenomenon that appears more significant in this study is the emergence of differences in self-esteem between two religious groups using the same evaluative instrument.

The significant difference obtained from SII scores in this study may add credence to the general construct of religious difference.

A possible explanation of general difference between religious denominations is suggested by Berelson and Steiner's (1964) description of religion and class. Berelson and Steiner indicated that church affiliation and socio-economic class are related, the lower socio-economic groups

are affiliated with "salvationist" or fundamental religions, while the higher socio-economic groups are more formal (e.g. Lutherans and Episcopalians). Berelson also called attention to the fact that religion, for the lower socio-economic group, ". . . has served as a functional alternative to political extremism" (p. 394). Thus, response styles associated with different religious denominations may be related to self-esteem. Difference in evaluative self-judgments between fundamental religious groups and other religious groups, as suggested by this study, may indicate the inefficacy of religious doctrines as a supportive device in the absence of socio-economic equality.

Summary and Conclusion. This study investigated difference in self-esteem between two religious groups by the use of Maslow's (1952) Security-Insecurity Inventory (SII). A list of churches in the Pittsburg, Kansas area was compiled and classified as either fundamental religious groups or other religious groups. A list of volunteers from each religious group was compiled. Thirty subjects from each group were randomly selected for administration of the SII.

Results indicated a significant difference in self-esteem between the two religious groups ( $t = 3.02$ ;  $d/f = 58$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The fundamental religious groups self-esteem was significantly lower than the other religious groups self-esteem.

The results of this study are not conclusive, since the

writer found no literature directly concerned with self-esteem and religion to collaborate the results. This study may be characterized as a preliminary investigation. A great deal of programatic research is envisioned before firm conclusions regarding self-esteem differences between different religions can be established.

It was suggested that the results of this study are limited in generalizability, but the results are in agreement with the general construct of differences between religious denominations.

The general conclusion drawn from this study is that there was a significant difference in self-esteem between the fundamental religious groups and the other religious groups. But cause-effect statements concerning the difference in self-esteem between the two religious groups studied seem unwarranted, as there are demographic and methodological difficulties present.

APPENDIX

## APPENDIX I

CHURCHES LISTED AS ACTIVE IN  
THE PITTSBURG, KANSAS AREA FOR THE YEAR 1968

<u>Baumstark, F. J.</u> St. Mary's Catholic	916 N. Locust
<u>Boyte, Robert</u> First Christian	606 W. First 5th & Pine
<u>Cravens, Meredith</u> First Methodist	216 E. Williams 5th & Pine
<u>Culley, John</u> Wesley Foundation	112 E. Lindburg 201 E. Williams
<u>Docherty, Robert</u> Baptist Student Movement	1708 S. Broadway 1710 S. Broadway
<u>Scott, Frank</u> Church of God	1105 N. Taylor 1107 N. Tucker
<u>Hayen, Leon H.</u> College Heights United Methodist	403 S. Locust Ford & Taylor
<u>Jacobs, Ted</u> First Baptist	509 Hobson Dr. 7th & Walnut
<u>Keith, Homer</u> First Presbyterian	602 W. Euclid 6th & Pine
<u>Knight, LeRoy</u> Central Christian	RFD #3 21st & Grand
<u>Lehmann, Donald</u> St. John's Lutheran	305 N. Walnut 306 W. 3rd
<u>Lenk, Fred</u> United Presbyterian	807 Twin Lakes Dr. 401 N. Walnut
<u>Pember, Vyril</u> Assembly of God	613 W. Kansas 202 W. 9th
<u>Sanson, John</u> St. Peter's Episcopal	214 E. Williams 306 W. Euclid
<u>Schneeberger, Charles</u> First Methodist	510 W. Euclid 5th & Pine



Schnell, Jerry  
Seventh-Day Adventist

2011 S. English  
21st & Grand

Shoemaker, Donald  
South Broadway Baptist

409 Ohio  
Broadway at Carlton

Vaughn, Jack T.  
United Christian Fellowship House

305 W. Lindburg  
1801 S. Joplin

Wiand, Paul  
Grace Methodist

1601 N. Joplin  
1903 N. Elm

Yates, Harold  
Foursquare Gospel

915 W. 3rd  
727 W. 3rd

Ehry, Carl  
Salvation Army

501 W. 5th  
212 E. 5th (P.O. Box  
62133)

Mt. Hebron  
Dr. Larry Segal (Music Dept.)

Church of Nazarene

Trinity Southern Baptist

Bethmel AME  
Rev. Martin

New Hope Baptist

Church of God and Christ  
Rev. Allmon

## APPENDIX II

CLASSIFICATION OF CHURCHES LISTED AS ACTIVE IN THE  
PITTSBURG, KANSAS AREA FOR THE YEAR 1969, INTO  
FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS,  
BASED ON VERGILUS' (1964)  
DESCRIPTION OF RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES

---

## FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Church of God  
First Baptist  
South Broadway Baptist  
Mt. Hebron Baptist  
Trinity Southern Baptist  
Bethmel A.M.E.  
New Hope Baptist  
Church of God and Christ

## OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

St. Mary's Catholic  
First Christian  
First Methodist  
United Methodist  
College Heights Methodist  
First Presbyterian  
Central Christian  
St. John's Lutheran  
United Presbyterian  
St. Peter's Episcopal  
Grace Methodist

## APPENDIX III

ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP BEYOND EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE OF  
CHURCHES LISTED AS ACTIVE IN THE PITTSBURG, KANSAS AREA

St. Mary's Catholic (all Catholic) -----	2000
First Christian -----	600
Church of God -----	40
College Heights United Methodist -----	20
First Baptist -----	660
First Presbyterian -----	700
Central Christian -----	95
St. John's Lutheran -----	540
United Presbyterian -----	280
Assembly of God -----	100
St. Peter's Episcopal -----	not established
First Methodist -----	1517
Seventh-Day Adventist -----	not established
South Broadway Baptist -----	200
Grace Methodist -----	200
Foursquare Gospel -----	30
Salvation Army -----	100
Mt. Hebron Baptist -----	65
Church of Nazarene -----	not established
Trinity Southern Baptist, New Hope Baptist, Church of God and Christ --- (composite) ---	50

# THE S-I INVENTORY

A. H. MASLOW  
*Brandeis University*

with the assistance of

E. BIRSH  
I. HONIGMANN  
F. McGRATH  
A. PLASON  
M. STEIN

NAME ..... DATE ..... AGE .....  
(or pseudonym)

Underline one: Single Married Divorced Separated Widowed

Education ..... School .....  
(highest grade reached)

Occupation .....

Height ..... Weight .....

Underline one: Catholic ~~Protestant~~ Jewish; or, if other (write in) .....



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	Answers		
	YES	NO	?
25. Do you have enough faith in yourself? .....			
26. Do you feel in general most people can be trusted? .....			
27. Do you feel that you are useful in the world? .....			
28. Do you ordinarily get on well with others? .....			
29. Do you spend much time worrying about the future? .....			
30. Do you usually feel well and strong? .....			
31. Are you a good conversationalist? .....			
32. Do you have the feeling of being a burden to others? .....			
33. Do you have difficulty in expressing your feelings? .....			
34. Do you usually rejoice in the happiness or good fortune of others? .....			
35. Do you often feel left out of things? .....			
36. Do you tend to be a suspicious person? .....			
37. Do you ordinarily think of the world as a nice place to live in? .....			
38. Do you get upset easily? .....			
39. Do you think of yourself often? .....			
40. Do you feel that you are living as you please rather than as someone else pleases? .....			
41. Do you feel sorrow and pity for yourself when things go wrong? .....			
42. Do you feel that you are a success at your work or your job? .....			
43. Do you ordinarily let people see what you are really like? .....			
44. Do you feel that you are not satisfactorily adjusted to life? .....			
45. Do you ordinarily proceed on the assumption that things usually tend to turn out all right? .....			
46. Do you feel that life is a great burden? .....			
47. Are you troubled with feelings of inferiority? .....			
48. Do you generally feel "good"? .....			
49. Do you get along well with the opposite sex? .....			
50. Are you ever troubled with an idea that people are watching you on the street? .....			
51. Are you easily hurt? .....			
52. Do you feel at home in the world? .....			
53. Do you worry about your intelligence? .....			
54. Do you generally put others at their ease? .....			
55. Do you have a vague fear of the future? .....			
56. Do you behave naturally? .....			
57. Do you feel you are generally lucky? .....			

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