

SOME EMPIRICALLY  
DERIVED DIMENSIONS OF  
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

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SUMMARY

Development of a forced-choice instrument, the Multidimensional Assessment of Philosophy of Education is described briefly. Validity correlations for the various item choices with subscale scores are presented to explicate the six dimensions.

INTRODUCTION

About three years ago a new instrument was set forth for evaluating non-cognitive gains in school (Guertin, Graves, and Moffett, 1971). The original instrument, the Multidimensional Assessment of Gains in Schools (MAGS) is described elsewhere (Guertin and Graves, 1972). The outstanding success of MAGS in demonstrating statistically significant gains in a compensatory program (Guertin and Moffett, 1972) suggested the value of constructing similar tests in other areas.

In the course of developing MAGS a generally useful method of producing forced-choice type instruments was created. This general method has been successfully applied to produce the MATS, Multidimensional Assessment of Teacher Style (Guertin, Guertin, and Moffett, 1971). The MASC, Multidimensional Assessment of Self Concept should be ready for use by the time this article appears. Other instruments are in various stages of development in the areas of values, personality, and art interests to name just a few. As the title of this paper suggests, an instrument in the area of philosophy of education has been completed. This instrument, the MAPE, Multidimensional Assessment of Philosophy of Education (Guertin, Litcher, and Hedges, 1973) is now being used in four different states.

It is the purpose of this paper to set forth a brief description of the dimensions of educational philosophy revealed by the data in the process of producing a sub-scale scoring system.

The format for all these multidimensional assessment tests is uniform. Quadrads of choices with equal preference value within each are presented. The subject is asked to choose the one of the four he agrees with "Most," then indicate the one he agrees with "Least."

## PROCEDURE

The MAPE itself consists of 60 sets of quadrads. For example, the first quadrad is:

- a. A good teacher shares power with the pupils.
- b. Children are very interested in experiments.
- c. Curriculum plans should consider child-selected activities.
- d. Parents do not want their children to be given false ideas.

The items in the MAPE came from a much larger pool compiled by the authors. This original pool consisted of all the statements they could contribute independently and from any sources available. The pool of items was regarded as reasonably exhaustive when their colleagues were unable to add any new items. No systematic philosophical theorizing was explicitly employed. After editing to expand coverage and eliminate exact duplications, the items were tested out on 50 female education majors at the University of Florida. These students responded in terms of agreement on a Likert scale for each choice so as to provide a preference index or value for each item (mean Likert value). This information permitted grouping into quadrads so that each choice within a given quadrad would be equally attractive. This forced-choice arrangement is regarded as essential for all of these instruments since it reduces the opportunity to "say the right thing."

After obtaining preference values the items were grouped to give 100 quadrads. This lengthy preliminary form was administered to 150 female education majors at the University of Florida to provide information needed to establish sub-scales and the weights for calculating each person's sub-scale scores. These weights appear in Table 1. These weights are correlation of choices with sub-scale score.

## RESULTS

Since no underlying philosophical frame work was built into the instrument it should be valuable to learn what emerged. These dimensions are presented only as the by-products of developing the instrument. Had the aim of the research been to simply factor analyze out the dimensions of philosophy of education the original Likert scale values would have been analyzed.

The dimensions disclosed probably are the most robust ones since they survived the merciless number-crunching of the analysis. Also it should be borne in mind that there has been no opportunity to find external correlates with the subscale scores. At this point subscales can be understood only through looking at heavily weighted items, a content validity approach.

TABLE 1

## Validity Correlations of MAPE Choices with Subscales

Scale	r	Choice from Quadrad
<b>I. Antisubject-Centered Curriculum</b>		
	.49	Teaching by topical units is outdated
	.45	Homework is of little value for learning most subjects
	.45	The subject-centered curriculum is outdated
	.38	Teaching by topical units is outdated
	.35	The child never is completely satisfied or dissatisfied
	.33	Intelligence testing is of little value
	.32	There should be more individual study projects
	.32	A potentially poor teacher will never become a good one
	.31	Pupils should feel free to question the teacher's decisions
<b>Punitive and Controlling</b>		
	-.30	Children must be taught to conform
	-.31	It is important to identify and isolate troublemakers
	-.33	Teachers who do not conform to local policy should be dismissed
	-.34	Defiant responses to the teacher should be punished
	-.34	Curriculum plans should specify outcomes and behaviors
	-.34	Good pupils take notes
	-.34	Parents do not want their children to be given false ideas
	-.40	Some pupils need to be spanked
	-.41	Pupils should be punished if they talk back
	-.44	Corporal punishment is still appropriate
	-.46	Pupils should be punished if they talk back
	-.55	It is easier to teach a group of children of one ability level
	-.55	Some pupils need to be spanked
	-.57	I believe physical punishment is needed in school
<b>II. Commitment to Individual Differences</b>		
	.91	Children should determine their own punishment
	.66	Children should determine their own punishment
	.43	The principal has no right to challenge a teacher's grade
	.38	Teachers should develop clear expectations for each pupil
	.33	PTA activities are very important
<b>Conventional Social Orientation</b>		
	-.32	Learning is essentially an ordered process
	-.32	Parents are responsible for moral training, not teachers
	-.34	Foreign languages should be emphasized more
	-.39	Discipline problems are more frequent with low SE pupils
	-.41	Slow children usually are discipline problems
	-.41	It is easier to teach a group of children from one ability level
<b>III. Social-Group Learning Focus</b>		
	.54	Intelligent children react negatively to inadequate peers
	.51	Teachers are continually looking for the "right" method
	.47	American studies need to be emphasized more
	.37	Children approach education with very definite ideas and demands
	.34	Homework is of little value for learning most subjects
	.31	Teaching by topical units is outdated
	.30	Pupils should be free to question the teacher's decisions
<b>Content (Textbook) Emphasis</b>		
	-.34	No textbook can be contemporary for long
	-.44	Elementary textbooks should contain the latest information
	-.51	Elementary textbooks should contain the latest information
	-.60	It is important to have the latest textbooks
	-.78	It is important to have the latest textbooks

#### IV. Detailed Planning

- .55 Objectives should be spelled out in terms of behavior
- .49 A good teacher develops lesson plans carefully
- .49 A good teacher develops lesson plans carefully
- .48 Detailed educational objectives must be formulated
- .41 Memorization of facts is vital for most subjects
- .40 Detailed educational objectives must be formulated
- .38 Parents should be informed what is taking place in class

#### Distrust of Conventional Procedures

- .34 Teachers should treat pupils as equals to show respect
- .36 A noisy classroom is undesirable
- .37 Intelligence testing is of little value
- .38 Parents are responsible for moral training, not teachers
- .40 Vandalism results from lack of outlets for aggression
- .42 There should be less social promotion
- .44 Standardized tests are of little value
- .51 Curriculum is a patchwork and materials

#### V. Acceptance of Total Responsibility

- .40 Educational objectives are necessary for good teaching
- .40 Parents should be informed what is taking place in class
- .39 Parents should be informed what is taking place in class
- .37 With an abused child the trouble lies in the group
- .35 Good teachers act as though all is well with the school
- .32 The ultimate goal of education is acquiring knowledge

#### Hypercritical

- .31 The neighborhood school concept must not be lost
- .31 There should be a movie projector in each room
- .31 Most teachers are not creative
- .32 Pupils should feel free to question the teacher's decisions
- .34 Most teachers rely solely on textbooks
- .34 Every teacher should have an aide
- .36 Genuine ability is rare in school administration
- .36 Students should be compared against one another
- .82 Most teachers rely solely on textbooks

#### VI. Personalized Teaching

- .73 Principals should help teachers improve their teaching
- .33 Homework is of little value
- .32 Teachers must police their own membership
- .30 The teacher should be a friend

#### Impersonal Instruction

- .31 National control of education is a solution to today's problems
  - .33 A teacher must be careful not to like some pupils more
  - .35 Unstructured classrooms can give upsetting experiences
  - .38 Curriculum content should differ for each grade
  - .48 Audiovisual aids promote outstanding learning
  - .69 Closed-circuit TV should be used a lot more
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