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THE VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING ROLE:
PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS.

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts
in Applied Psychology at
Massey University

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1977

ABSTRACT

A Repertory test was constructed to determine the perceptions of 143 schoolchildren concerning people who gave them vocational counselling. A preliminary study elicited the constructs which they used to structure and order their interpersonal world. Each subject completed a version of the Repertory Grid consisting of 22 Role Titles and 22 supplied constructs. Grid responses were averaged and examined for the group as a whole as well as for sub-groups consisting of male and female, private and state school pupils, separately.

The pattern of relationships existing between all 22 Role Figures was determined by subjecting the data to both a multi-dimensional scaling and an hierarchical clustering form of analysis. Clusters of figures produced by these methods were examined and discussed in terms of their composition and the descriptive adjectives and phrases associated with them.

As predicted, it was found that the subjects made their discriminations between people on two major construct dimensions, an intimacy and a potency factor and that the vocational counselling persons appeared in two of the generalized figure clusters indicating that there are at least two distinct parts to the vocational counselling role. Different attributes in the counsellor are required for each of these different role functions. The composition and characteristics of other generalized figure clusters were also examined.

The 18 subjects who were unable to complete their grids were considered as a separate group. For all subjects their relative standing in their school classes on the last set of examinations was taken as a measure of intellectual capacity but there was no evidence that a relationship existed between this and the ability of subjects to complete the grid protocols.

Finally a number of possible extensions and refinements to the experiment were considered and an evaluation was made of the Repertory Grid technique as it was used in the present context.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Michael C. Smith for his guidance, encouragement and constructive criticisms throughout the course of this research.

My sincere thanks are also extended to the fifth form students of the seven Secondary Schools in Palmerston North and Feilding who provided the data and to the principals and staff of the schools for their interest and generous assistance.