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Differences in the Needs of Low Dogmatic and High Dogmatic Prospective Teachers

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Consideration of the needs of prospective teachers may be useful in planning opportunities for experiences that will assist their professional preparation.

TEACHERS do more than teach subject matter; they teach people. Since teachers do teach people, it is necessary for them to understand human behavior, both their own and that of others. According to Hamachek (1972), knowledge about one's personal dynamics is critical in teaching because the processes between teacher and student are personal in nature and involve feelings, emotional states, subjective views, and personal preferences.

Assuming that it is helpful for a prospective teacher to know more about his personal dynamics, a pertinent area is what needs influenced his choice of occupation and what needs may be satisfied as a result of this choice. Roe (1956) suggests that the need structure of a person is related to his vocational choice since he hopes to satisfy his needs through this choice. Therefore, a prospective teacher should understand his needs and identify ways in which they may be met in teaching. In some cases an individual will

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have to consider whether his needs might best be satisfied in an occupation other than teaching.

Although all prospective teachers may have chosen teaching because they believed it would meet some of their needs, it is probable that they are attempting to satisfy different types of needs. In an effort to understand better the psychological needs of individuals, Edwards (1954) conducted a study with 120 university students. On the basis of the Dogmatism Scale (DS), he identified 30 students who were low dogmatic and 30 students who were high dogmatic. When he compared their needs as measured by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS), significant degrees of difference in the needs of the open-minded or low dogmatic group and in the needs of the close-minded or high dogmatic group were found for eight of the 15 scales. The low dogmatic group had greater need for autonomy, dominance, intraception, and heterosexuality; the high dogmatic group had greater need for abasement, succorance, nurturance, and endurance.

In a discussion of Edwards' study, Kemp (1967) concluded that in any given task those who are low dogmatic and those who are high dogmatic are seeking to satisfy different needs. This conclusion supports the idea that people who go into teaching or into any other occupation may do so in order to satisfy a variety of needs.

Since teacher educators have long maintained that openness is a desirable quality, a relevant question is whether or not there is a difference in the needs of prospective teachers who are low dogmatic when compared to a group of prospective teachers who are high dogmatic. This study hypothesized that the low dogmatic prospective teachers would be differentiated from the high dogmatic prospective teachers in terms of needs.

Procedure. Form E of the Dogmatism Scale (Rokeach, 1960) and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (1959) were administered to 83 teacher education students enrolled in a competency-based teacher education program. All of the students were

	Low Dogmatic Mean	SD	High Dogmatic Mean	SD	t	p
Achievement	14.50	4.22	13.14	4.08	-1.12	
Deference	12.27	3.84	12.31	4.57	0.03	
Order	9.68	3.86	12.31	3.93	2.29	.05
Exhibition	12.63	3.02	12.27	3.56	-0.37	
Autonomy	13.18	2.26	11.40	2.77	-2.39	.05
Affiliation	16.59	3.18	16.18	3.39	-0.42	
Intracception	19.34	3.85	17.19	3.84	-1.90	
Succorance	12.13	4.99	13.36	4.88	0.84	
Dominance	14.18	4.34	13.68	5.41	-0.35	
Abasement	11.68	4.76	16.72	4.24	3.79	.01
Nurturance	16.68	4.72	15.36	3.22	-1.11	
Change	18.45	4.56	16.81	4.91	-1.17	
Endurance	15.72	4.94	14.90	3.65	-0.64	
Heterosexuality	16.86	4.28	14.59	4.49	-1.76	
Aggression	8.72	3.40	11.54	2.72	3.11	.01

Table 1. Comparisons of the Manifest Needs of Low Dogmatic and High Dogmatic Prospective Teachers as Measured by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule

in their junior year of college and were beginning their teacher education program. The 22 students having the lowest scores on the DS (97 to 126) were designated as low dogmatic, and the 22 having the highest scores on the DS (156 to 212) were designated as high dogmatic. The mean score for the low dogmatic group was 115.04, and the mean score for the high dogmatic group was 173.45; these were significantly different at the .001 level. There were no significant differences between the groups in sex, age, and grade point average.

For both groups a mean raw score on each of the 15 needs measured by the EPPS was computed. Each pair of means was compared using t-tests.

Results. The hypothesis that the needs of the low dogmatic prospective teachers would be significantly different from the needs of the high dogmatic prospective teachers was confirmed on four of the 15 scales. The low dogmatic group had significantly greater need for autonomy. The high dogmatic group had significantly greater need for order, abasement, and aggression.

The means of the need scores indicated that both groups tended to have higher needs for intracception, affiliation, nurturance, and change and less need in the other areas. (See Table 1.)

Discussion. The results of the investigation supported the hypothesis that low dog-

matic and high dogmatic prospective teachers have different need patterns. These differences suggest that although both groups have chosen teaching as an occupation, they may be attempting to satisfy different needs.

Since the needs of prospective teachers do vary, each individual should be aware of his needs and should consider how these relate to teaching. The low dogmatic group had greater need for autonomy; it may be that they view teaching as a situation where they will have the opportunity to make independent decisions. The high dogmatic group had greater need for order, abasement, and aggression; they may view teaching as an organized system where they will be supervised and at the same time be allowed to criticize points of view which disagree with their own.

Both groups had higher needs for intraception, affiliation, nurturance, and change. These needs may have motivated the individuals in both groups to choose teaching as an occupation. In a study comparing the needs of teachers and tutors, Cox and Patton (1970) proposed that intraception, nurturance, and change were appropriate to the motivation for teaching.

Consideration of the needs of prospective teachers may be useful to teacher educators in planning experiences which will be most effective. Some individuals may desire freedom in their programs, whereas others may prefer structured experiences. This suggests that teacher educators should consider models which enhance individualization and personalization.

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