SECOND WORLD BLACK AND AFRICAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CULTURE

LAGOS, NIGERIA

15 JANUARY - 12 FEBRUARY, 1977

COLLOQUIUM

MAIN THEME: BLACK CIVILIZATION AND EDUCATION

SUB-THEME : BLACK CIVILIZATION AND HISTORICAL AWARENESS

SELF-CONCEPTS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD COUNSELING

by Dr. Alwin C. Spence

Canada

English original

by Dr. Alwin C. Spence

   Montreal, Canada

INTRODUCTION

Black high school students have been labeled
disruptive and defiant of their teachers, counselors,
and administrators by many groups of people. Many
school boards have actively recruited black teachers
and counselors with the hope of containing these stu-
dents. For many, the black students were disciplinary
problems who should be suspended or expelled from
school. This measure was not always successful, and
in some cases, only served to make the students more
defiant. This study is attempting to study the
behavior of these black students with the view of
establishing a better understanding of how they perceive
themselves and of their attitudes toward counseling.

Attitudes Toward Counseling

The effects of the culture and social class of
the therapist has been recognized in psychological
literature. It has been suggested that lower class
clients are not amenable to treatment by therapists,
who by the usual criteria of education and vocation,

are members of higher socio-economic classes. The
assumption is that social class difference presents a
communication barrier which does not allow facilitative
interpersonal processes to take place. Inhibiting
effects of white counselors upon the responses of
blacks are noted. Truax and Carkhuff (1964) conducted
a study, the purpose of which was to find out the
differential effects of (a) race, and (b) social class
of the therapist upon patient depth of exploration.
The result supported the hypothesis that race and
social class of both patient and therapist were sig-
nificant sources of effect, and that the interaction
on these variables between the patient and therapist
variables was significant. Patients most similar to
the therapist explore themselves most and vice-versa.
Banks and Berenson (1967) also studied the effect of
race and counselor training upon the counseling process
in the initial interview. Their findings agreed with
those of Truax and Carkhuff. Phillips (1951) also
studied the problem of rapport between white counselors
and black counselees. The white counselor claimed that
the blacks were deceptive and used defensive techniques
and did not allow the counselor to penetrate the social
barrier to find out the cause of their behavior.

Jourard (1964) said that the extent to which a person is able to share material of a personal nature appears related to his overall interpersonal adjustment. In essence, the more adjusted one is, the more he will share his personal feelings. Black students do have difficulties sharing their feelings with counselors and therefore often-times frustrate the efforts of the counselors.

Heine (1950) said that to maintain any social relations with whites, blacks must adapt themselves in one way or another to a code of behavior that has been created largely by the white majority. This need to adapt to unfamiliar expectations has resulted in poor communication between blacks and whites.

Minority groups have barriers against outgroups. As conveyed by the writing of Octavo Pax (1959) in the Labryrinth of Solitude, this kind of racial barrier is used by Mexicans as a protective device. In Tolson's (1953) Libretto to the Republic of Liberia, it was reported that the African uses a medium of communication, "Deepie Talkie," one version for the Africans and one for the whites. This communication barrier is also mentioned in Douglas' (1968) semi-autobiography, My Bondage, My Freedom. It shows that the Negro spirituals

were used as a medium of communication among the slaves
as they planned their escape to the North. Evidence of
this same kind of deception is also seen in the works
of Dunbar (1938) and Dubois (1969).

The evidence reported above would seem to indi-
cate that one alternative to confronting the communi-
cation barrier is to provide black students with black
counselors and all would be fine. But this is not
altogether true as many blacks, especially middle class
blacks, would regard it as a type of condescension to
seek help from a black counselor, regarding the coun-
selor as lower class compared to his counterpart, the
white counselor. Also, from personal experience, it
seems as if black counselors are put through a period
of "wait and see," test period before acceptance or
rejection by clients. The evidence plus these personal
impressions would seem to indicate that there are more
factors than color of skin that help to determine a
favorable or unfavorable attitude towards counseling.

Nelson (1972) reported on some studies which are
relevant to this research. They all deal with attitudes
toward counseling. Lytton's study (1968) suggested
that students' perceptions reflected parental attitudes.
Gibson (1965) and Tipton (1969) indicated that students'

perceptions are greatly influenced by their peers.
But it was suggested by Brough (1965) that the coun-
selor's actual behavior is the major factor in deter-
mining a student's perception of counselor role and
function. Rippee, Harvey, and Parker (1965) supported
Brough on such a premise, that the counselor determines
the perceptions others have of his role and function.
Stone and Shertzer (1963) also supported this hypo-
thesis and called upon counselors to become more active
in defining and determining their role and function.

Differences Between Black Canadians and Black West Indians

In examining the differences between West
Indians and Canadians, it is necessary to consider
whether the environment in which each group had their
early lives has any influence on their attitudes. While
the West Indian is at home, he is surrounded by black
teachers, administrators, politicians, doctors, and
other professionals. These would serve as significant
others to be emulated. The West Indian students feel
that the schools, the colleges, and the island belong
to them, and even when they leave, they nostalgically
identify with their birthplace, refusing to be absorbed
in the so-called North American melting pot. They
maintain this identity and, according to Coombs (1972),

only identify with North American blacks when it is advan-
tageous to them. This identification with the homeland is
so strong that even second generation West Indians (those
who were born here but whose parents came from the islands)
use this double identity.

The black Canadian, on the other hand, for all his
life has been a part of a minority culture where his sig-
nificant others are likely to be mostly whites with a
different value system from his own. His identity with
the significant others is made less realistic because of
cultural, racial, and socio-economic reasons.

In an attempt to understand differences between
Canadian blacks and West Indians, one must recognize first
that attitudes toward the counselling of West Indians and
Canadians are different. Secondly, it must be understood
that the two groups grew up and spent thier early lives in
two different environments. Thirdly, the influence of the
environment on everyone has to be recognized as a contribu-
ting factor. This analogy seems to be sequential in its
nature. First, an active environment influences the self-
concept, which in turn influences attitudes which predis-
pose the individual to particular behavior. Therefore, there
should be some relatioship between self-concepts and attitudes
towards counselling. Furthermore, that relationship should
differ between West Indian and Canadian blacks.

Environment and Self-Concepts

The impact of the environment on the self-concept has been recognized by many leading psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists. Cooley (1902) defined the self as that which is designated in common speech by the pronouns of the first person singular, "I," "me," "my," "mine," and "myself." He introduced the concept of the "looking-glass self" referring to the fact that an individual perceives himself in terms of how he is perceived by others. Consequently, if society's concept of a person is bad, the person will learn over a period to accept this concept and to see himself as bad.

Mead (1934) said that the self is formed through social interaction, and more specifically, by how others react to an individual. Erickson (1968), Goodman (1972), and Sullivan (1953) all suggested that the individual's social contact is of primary significance for the development of the self-concept. Sullivan, however, gave pre-eminence to the value judgment of the mother figure which is adopted by the child. This, at times, could be very harmful, as Heine (1950) said, since the child may take on the parental anxieties about discrimination and other social phenomena. In essence,

the black family's perceptions of cultural and socio-
economic problems will probably be taken on by the
child. Erickson (1968), and Allport (1965) believed
that a person feels a positive sense of selfhood when
what he does is relevant to him. This idea is in keep-
ing with that of psychologists who equate activism with
mental health. That position would say that it is emo-
tionally healthy for a black client to become involved
in the civil rights movement.

Fitts (1971), an exponent of the self-concept
theory, stated that:

> Self theory is based upon the general principle
> that man reacts to his phenomenal world in terms
> of the way he perceives this world . . . The
> self-concept or self-image, is learned by each
> person, through his lifetime of experiences
> with himself, with other people and with the
> realities of the external world. Thus the
> self-concept is a powerful influence on human
> behavior (p. 3).

James' (1910) social self, which includes the
views others hold of the person seems consistent with
earlier definitions. Lecky (1945) identified the self-
concept as the nucleus of personality, which rejects
and modifies old and new ideas. But Lecky must have
underestimated the impact of the environment if his
notion of self-concept holds that it (self-concept)
can determine what concepts are acceptable for assimi-
lation into the overall personality organization.

Rogers (1951) and Snygg and Coombs (1949) assigned the self-concept a central place in their personality theory, and suggested that the individual's self-concept is a major factor influencing his behavior. Super also said that the self-concept is continually developing, shifting through life as experiences indicate that changes are necessary to reflect reality. Bingham (1973) elaborating on Super's ideas, mentioned the variety of roles the individual tries out before crystallization and clarification of self perception take place.

Dai (1949) also saw the concept of the self as a product of social interaction. He said that:

> The nature of the self system an individual acquires
> in the course of socialization depends largely on the
> kind of personalities he is associated with, the cul-
> ture after which his activities are patterned, what
> the significant people in the environment think of him,
> and the ways in which the socialization program is
> carried out (p. 547).

Miller (1971), Piaget (1932), Murphy (1947) also traced the development of the self-concept. Miller said:

> Those identities which finally comprise the self are
> those that the individual comes to regard as being more
> "me" than all the others. Therefore the self-concept
> of an adult is the internalization of certain identities
> developed mainly in childhood and adolescence as the
> individual performed various roles.... It also gives
> insight into why there will be a fair degree of common
> identities and common features in the self-concepts
> of individuals growing up in a particular social
> context. According to this view, the self an individual
> has is almost totally the product of his environment.
> (p. 16)

Black Self-Concepts

Williams and Byans (1970) substantiated the importance of environmental impact on the self-concept. They said that racial segregation leaves the black child with feelings of pervasive self-abasement. Segregation as a social institution reinforces negative self-concepts in blacks. The very fact of segregation is an ignominious symbol of society's appraisal of blacks. Using empirical means, Williams and Byans assessed the extent to which integrated experiences can ameliorate this self-abasement. Their subjects were eleventh-grade black students who attended segregated schools. They found that there was significant improvement in self-concepts after these students spent a year in the integrated schools. Students became more positive about themselves. They pointed out, however, that it must be remembered that hostile integration is as bad as segregation. Banks (1972) said that:

> In modern American society we acquire identity from other human beings (significant others) and incorporate it within ourselves...Since whites are the dominant and significant others in American society and black children derive their conceptions of themselves largely from society and its institutions, we are not going to progress significantly in augmenting the black child's self-concept until we either change the racial attitudes and perceptions of white Americans or create new significant others for black children (p. 91).

Ausubel and Ausubel (1963) contended that members of disadvantaged subcultures possess low self-concepts and show self-depreciation as a result of economic, social, and cultural deprivation. Thompson (1972) reported on some of the findings of many psychologists and sociologists who had done research on the self-concepts of black students. Their samples included junior and senior high school students and adults. Summarizing these conclusions, Thompson said that most samples, particularly junior high and high school students, showed below average positive self-concepts. The results also showed that these students were very defensive.

Heine (1950) said that blacks have difficulty differentiating between what might be called "primary self-picture", which is a product of direct interpersonal experience with significant members of the family, friends and acquaintances within the minority group; and the "secondary self-picture", which emerges from experience as a racial minority member having a number of formalized contacts with the discriminating majority. Blacks, he said, have two bases for self-referent feelings and ideas: the attitudes expressed by significant adults during his rearing; and the attitudes by the white majority. These two influences are not independent but

rather closely interacting one with the other. If a black experiences salutory relations with significant adults during his rearing he may have high esteem for himself; his interracial contact will have a relatively less destructive effect on him. Where early relationships have been conflictual with consequent low self-esteem, interracial relationships are extremely threatening and become the force of further self-derogation. Heine claims that most black clients for psychotherapy are drawn from the latter froup.

Essien-Udom (1962) said that:

The tragedy of the Negro in North America is that he has rejected his origins - the essentially human meaning implicit in the heritage of slavery, prolonged suffering, and social rejection. By rejecting his unique group experience and favoring assimilation, and even biological amalgamation, he thus denies himself the creative possibilities inherent in it and in his folk culture. This dilemma is fundamental; it severely limits his ability to evolve a new identity or a meaningful synthesis, capable of endowing his life with meaning and purpose (p. 168).

Coard (1968) gave some very practical examples
of the conflicts some black students had, and their con-
sequent ability to work out their own identity. His
position is clear that these identity-resolution problems
arise from what society is doing to their true identity.
His experience with Desmond, a black boy from Jamaica,
is a classical example of a denial of self, or in other
words, Desmond had such a poor self-concept that he tried
to become someone else. To admit that he is black,
with short kinky hair, is to admit that he is a golliwag,
something funny, to be laughed at, someone different
from the other members of his class. Denying his true
identity is only an escape from the unpleasantness
accomanying his true self. There seems no escape from the
impact of society on the self-concept of a black youth.

Clark and Clark (1947) using white and brown dolls with black children between ages 3 and 7 demonstrated the inability of these children to make socially correct identifications with the brown doll, even though they were aware of racial differences.

Horowitz (1939), Goodman (1952), and Marland (1958) have all experimented on this misidentification concept and found a large proportion of blacks unable to present their own image. Greenwald and Oppenheim (1968) replicated Clark and Clark's experiment with some changes. They used blacks as well as whites for the subjects. They also used three types of dolls: dark brown, mulatto, and white. The introduction of new dimensions changed the results somewhat, but it is safe to say that there was significant misidentification among the black children.

Coles (1965) reported on some of his experiences with black children. He said that in his clinical work with black children he has found that the sketches of these children revealed a sense of fear of white

people, a sense of disappointment at not having white
skin, and a sense of foreboding at what the future holds
for them as blacks. Coles went on to say that one black
child drew himself small and mutilated in contrast to
white children; another pictured himself so noticeably
large that he became curious and asked why. The response
Coles got from the black boy was that if you want to
survive you have to be big. There were some blacks who
did not wish to sketch themselves or anyone else as
black, while some sketched their white classmates as
only a lighter shade of brown. A six-year old black girl
sketched a picture with the arms crippled, but the feet
were all right. When she was asked the reason for this,
she said that the feet can run when you are in trouble,
but it is the hands that get you in trouble. Coles
soon learned that this girl had been reprimanded for
stealing candy from a store. The little girl was repri-
manded by the saleslady, more for being black than for
stealing the candy. Coles then asked whether black
children face special challenges in the course of
learning the ordinary do's and don'ts of this world.
In this example, one can see the hostile environment
shaping the concepts and attitudes of the black child.

Mischel (1961) found that a poor self-concept is exhibited in black students' inability to delay immediate smaller rewards for later but larger rewards. Testing 112 Trinidadian black students, girls and boys between the ages of 11 and 14, he found that there was a positive correlation between self-concepts and the ability to delay rewards and achievement. This investigator has also had similar experiences in his work with black students. They need quick results and tend to lose interest if they have to wait too long.

Sclare (1952) said that blacks unconsciously have a deep fear of, and hostility toward, white people. This phenomenon induces self-hate. Sclare went on to say that racial discrimination is a factor in character formation, and the handling of aggressive impulses poses an overwhelming problem to many blacks. There is deep conflict over hostile and masculine expressiveness, a prolonged degree of oral dependency, and pseudo-masculine defensiveness. The black man is in intense rivalry with the white man. His self-assertiveness is limited because of this "social straight jacket." Restrictions are placed on the black man, therefore if he is to survive he must be many times more sensitive than the white man. In his

anxiety he often overreacts, and he becomes a mere
caricature of the white man. When happy, he becomes
jubilant; when amorous, he is lustful; when angry; he
may be violent. His ill-directed outbursts may lead
to further humiliation and defeat, perpetuating the
vicious cycle.

Mussen (1953) designed a study, the purpose of
which was to investigate the differences between the
contents of the TAT stories of black and white children
in New York City. The data were derived from the proto-
cols of 50 black and 50 white boys of normal intelligence.
They were between the ages of 9 and 14. The findings
show that the blacks saw the environment as more hostile
to them than the white boys did. Because the black boy
has hostile feelings about the world around him he
exhibits feelings of inferiority and helplessness and
an attitude of indifference.

Stevenson and Stewart (1958) conducted studies
on the development of racial attitude and awareness.
They found from their study that black 3- to 6-year
olds showed a preference for the physical character-
istics associated with white children.

Marland (1962) demonstrated that blacks show
an exceedingly high preference for and acceptance of
whites. This was borne out at all the age levels with

decreasing proportion as the child gets older.

From the preceding paragraphs, the evidence is over-whelmingly in support of the fundamental principle or assumption raised in this study: that the environment, or society, plays a major role in shaping the self-concepts, attitudes, and behavior of the individual. Blacks are unfortunate in this respect; they seem to be surrounded by a hostile, unkind environment, which negatively affects their entire lives. To this hostility, they respond with hostility, exhausting themselves in the process.

Positive Self-Concepts

Arnez (1972) gave a brighter picture regarding the self-concepts of blacks. His studies seem to indicate that blacks do have positive self-concepts. Larsen, Olson, Totdahl and Jenson (1966), using white and black kindergarten children from inner city and outer city schools, revealed that although black children more often incorrectly identify themselves racially than do white children, they showed no significant preferences for either race in their positive and negative role assignments. This is significant as in previous studies black children have always given negative role

assignments to black dolls or pictures. Georgeoff (1967) using fourth graders, blacks and whites, divided them at random into three groups. He taught the unit on "The American Negro" to the two experimental groups. Using the Piers-Harris Measure on Self-Concept, he tested all three groups and found that the experimental groups showed improvement in self-concept. Roth (1969) duplicated this experiment, but using a different instrument, Self-Concept and Motivation Inventory developed by Farrah, Milchus and Teitz (1969), got similar results. Hodgkin and Stakenas (1969) used black and white high school and college students as their subjects. Using the Semantic Differential developed by Osgood (1957) they showed a significant difference between black and white subjects in self-adjustment and self-assurance in the school situation, with blacks tending to score higher than whites.

Knight (1970) using black and white educable mentally retarded boys, designed a questionnaire which obtained information regarding factors which might reflect self-concepts. Subjects were asked to state three things they did not like and three things they liked best about themselves. The results showed no difference in response between the two groups, and that

no one said he did not like himself.

Johnson (1970) and Morgan (1970) also compared white and black students and found difference in positive scores on the self-concept scale. Although some studies suggest that blacks are beginning to compare favorably with their white counterparts, it must not be construed that they have sufficiently high positive self-concepts. Although improvement seems likely, there remains alot to be accomplished.

Summary of Rationale

The literature reviewed in this chapter, though not exhaustive, is represenative of the literature pertinent to this study. The findings and theory reviewed support several assumptions basic to this study:

1. That there is a positive relationship between attitudes towards self and attitudes towards others.

2. That the environment, physical, social, and moral is important in the formatiom of self-concepts.

3. That as one gets older, the self-concept becomes more stable.

4. That blacks tend to be less positive about themselves and as a result exhibit lower self-concepts than whites.

5. That there is evidence, taken especially from studies done in the 1970's that a trend has started and that blacks are showing higher positive self-concepts than formerly.

Hypotheses

Based on the literature examined it seems feasible to hypothesize the following:

(1) That there is a positive correlation between self-concepts and attitudes toward counselling.

(2) Black girls have higher self-concepts than black boys.

(3) Black girls have more positive attitudes toward counselling that black boys.

(4) West Indian black students have higher self-concepts than Canadian blacks.

(5) West Indians have more positive attitudes toward counselling than Canadians.

Design and Procedure

Subjects

The students surveyed were all from Montreal. All
attend high school. Students ᴀᴀ *had contacts* with the counsellors before they
entered high school and also each student had the same counsellor
throughout the high school years . All of the students knew
their counsellors by name and had gone to see him/her at least
twice. All black students were exposed to counselling as done
by white counsellors.

There were 109 students tested. Forty-five were born
in Canada, and sixty-five were from the West Indies. There
were thirty-seven males and sixty-two females.

Instumentation

Two instruments were used to examine the variables
related to the hypotheses; The Semantic Differential (Osgood
1957) and The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Fitts 1957).

Osgood (1957) said the Semantic Differential is
essentially a combination of controlled association and scaling
procedures. The subject with a concept, or with concepts, and
a set of bipolar adjectival scales, against which ti rate each
concept. The subject is asked to rate each concept on a seven
point scale. The concept in this research is "Counselling".

The TSCS consists of 100 self-descriptive statements
which the subjects use to portray their own picture of them-
selves. This scale is sub-divided in order to measure different
areas; eg. Physical Self, Behavior Self, Moral-Ethical Self,
Personal Self, Family Self, Identity Self, and Social Self.

COUNSELING

GOOD	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	BAD
VALUABLE	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	WORTHLESS
FAIR	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	UNFAIR
SINCERE	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	INSINCERE
MEANINGFUL	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	MEANINGLESS
REPUTABLE	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	DISREPUTABLE
POSITIVE	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	NEGATIVE
IMPORTANT	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	UNIMPORTANT
STRONG	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	WEAK
HARD	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	SOFT
LARGE	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	SMALL
HEAVY	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	LIGHT
ACTIVE	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	PASSIVE
FAST	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	SLOW
HOT	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	COLD
EXCITABLE	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	___:	CALM

Table 1

Distribution of Subjects by

Place of Birth and by Sex

Place of Birth	Male	Female	Total
Canada	18	26	44
Barbados	5	13	18
Trinidad	7	10	17
Jamaica	3	15	18
Others	4	8	12
Total	37	72	109

Scoring

The Semantic Differential Scale was scored by the researcher, while the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale was machine-scored at Counselor Recordings and Tests in Nashville, Tennessee.

The raw data obtained with the semantic differential are a collection of check-marks against bipolar scales. To each of the seven positions on these scales a digit was assigned. The digits were 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. A subject's score on an item is the digit corresponding to the scale position he checks. There were 16 scales to each concept and the only concept examined for this particular research was Counseling. Therefore, the total score on any concept would be the sum of the item scores. In this case the possible maximum was 112, and the minimum 16, since there were 16 scales. But since only 8 items-pairs fall in the Evaluative factor which represents the individual's attitude, the total semantic score had a range of from 8 to 56. A score of 30 was designated as a neutral score while above was favorable, and below 30 unfavorable.

On the TSCS, one of 5 responses was made for each statement. The responses were: completely false, mostly false, partly false and partly true, mostly true, and completely true. These responses were represented by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The total P score was the sum of the responses on statements 1 to 90. The sum of the scores on the other 10 statements gave the self-criticism scores. Scores were then computed for 27 other scales. (See Appendix B-1.)

Statistical Treatment

To test the correlation between self-concept and attitudes, Pearson Product Moment Coefficient was used. A t test was used to test the level of significance of the correlation, the significance of the difference between the performances of male and female, the difference between West Indians and Canadians. The level of significance was set at .05 in each case.

Summary

Analysis of the data collected in this study allows the following observations:

(1) That there is no significant relationship between self-concepts and attitudes toward counseling as exhibited by black high school students from the Montreal Protestant School System.

(2) There is no significant difference in attitudes toward counseling between male and female black students.

(3) Black girls have more positive self-concepts than black boys.

(4) West Indian black students have more positive self-concepts than black Canadian students.

(5) As a group, Barbadians demonstrated the most positive self-concept with Canadians having the least positive.

(6) That as the self-concepts of Canadian blacks become more positive their attitudes towards counseling become less favorable.

Relationships Between Self Concepts and
Attitudes Toward Counselling

There was a negative correlation between self-concepts and attitudes toward counselling for Canadians, while for West Indians there was a very low nonsignificant positive correlation. It is clear that the two groups responded differently. The fact that the relationship was negative for Canadians results from the low scores on the E factor, but the correlation suggests that the more positive the self-concepts of black Canadians, The less favorable will be their attitudes toward counselling. Perhaps black Canadians, In an effort to be more positive about themselves, must disparage others and this is reflected in their attitudes toward counselling. It is almost as if they must reject the value system that has been imposed on them in order to recognize or enhance their own worth. Maybe the behavior of these students is best construed in the light that it represents a search and a finding of self, a more positive self-concept, and not simply a rejection of white values. In this sense, then, open challenges to white authority could be interpreted as manifestations os positive self-concepts rather than defiance.

Table 2

Relationship Between Self-Concepts and Attitudes Toward Counseling (E Factor on the Semantic Differential)

Group	N	PO 1	PO 2	PO 3	PO 4	PO 5	PO 6	PO 7	PO 8	PO 9	PO 10
						Scales[a]					
Total Group	109	-.09	-.02	.05	-.09	.02	.04	-.07	-.22	-.08	.09
Canadians	44	-.18	-.29*	-.17	-.27*	-.25*	-.27*	-.30*	-.08	-.27*	-.11
Total West Indians	65	-.01	.11	.19	-.03	.16	.25*	.01	-.01	.02	.20
Jamaicans	18	-.32	.39*	.45*	.31	.32	.40*	.37	.16	.27	.28
Trinidadians	17	.16	.18	.25	.05	.16	.48*	.03	-.01	-.11	.28
Barbadians	18	.11	-.20	-.12	-.19	-.19	-.01	-.42*	-.04	-.31	.09
Others	12	.16	-.29	.05	-.66**	-.01	-.24	-.40	-.42	-.22	.22

[a]PO 1, Self-Criticism; PO 2, Total Positive Self; PO 3, Identity; PO 4, Self-satisfaction; PO 5, Behavior Self; PO 6, Physical Self; PO 7, Moral Ethical Self; PO 8, Personal Self; PO 9, Family Self; PO 10, Social Self.

*Significant at .05 level.

**Significant at .01 level.

Sex Differences

The second hypothesis stated that black girls
have more positive self-concepts than black boys.
This hypothesis was clearly accepted. This undoubtedly
reflects the psychological and sociological history
of blacks. Washington (1968) said that women head 10%
of all families, 25% of poor families, and most sig-
nificantly 75% of non-white poor families. Mead (1950)
said that under slavery, black men are thrown into a
devalued or castrated role, and that their nurturing
role has suffered. As a result, they turn away from
paternal responsibility and mother and child then form
the stable unit. The data of the present study sug-
gest that the impact of this history still persists
among blacks, for the males scored significantly lower
in total positive self.

Society has been less kind to the black male
than to the black female. Dubois (1972) said that the
white man who is the most powerful in our society has
violently segregated the white woman from the black
man, but he has been more patient with the black woman,
maybe because she is less of a threat to his power.
The fact that there is presently a much higher pro-
portion of black females to black males, than white

Table 3

Sex Differences in Mean Self-Concept Scores

Variable[a]	Female		Male		t
	M (N=72)	SD	M (N=37)	SD	
PO 1	35.05	6.07	35.21	7.63	-0.12
PO 2	347.08	31.08	321.72	32.50	3.97**
PO 3	122.23	9.98	116.32	12.94	2.64**
PO 4	113.86	14.32	102.16	14.07	4.06**
PO 5	110.98	13.31	103.24	11.97	2.97**
PO 6	74.43	7.43	70.13	8.59	2.71**
PO 7	68.44	8.79	60.72	8.37	4.41**
PO 8	68.51	7.42	64.83	7.68	2.42**
PO 9	68.16	11.20	63.24	7.92	2.65**
PO 10	76.20	9.37	62.78	7.76	2.47**

[a]PO 1, Self Criticism; PO 2, Total Positive Self; PO 3, Identity; PO 4, Self-Satisfaction; PO 5, Behavior Self; PO 6, Physical Self; PO 7, Moral Ethical Self; PO 8, Personal Self; PO 9, Family Self; PO 10, Social Self.

*Significant at .05 level

**Significant at .01 level

females to white males in medical schools in the United
States (American Association of Medical Colleges, 1974)
may be a specific illustration of this force since the
medical profession has always been white male dominated.

In integrated schools it has often been observed
that the black girls are the aggressive ones, that they
openly defy and challenge teachers and administrators.
Nelson (1972) concluded from his study that girls,
moreso than boys, are likely to manifest willingness
to discuss social-personal problems with counselors.
One reason Nelson gave for this, was sex-role expecta-
tions. Boys are expected to handle their own problems,
while girls are not prevented by any cultural restrictions
from seeking assistance. But Nelson studied a pre-
dominantly white population. The inability of black
males to live up to society's expectations of men in
general because of built-in restrictions resulted in
the reduction of self-concepts as found in the data of
the present study. The subtle differences in society's
expectations of the black male and black female may
very well be the reason that black girls scored higher
than black boys. Only further investigation can
determine whether Nelson's conclusions would hold for
a black population. If the general impression of

aggressiveness and open defiance in black girls is accurate, then it seems reasonable to expect that they might prefer not to seek help with personal problems.

National Differences

In this study it was hypothesized that West Indians would have more positive self-concepts than black Canadians. This hypothesis was supported by the findings. However the significant difference in the self-concepts of the sexes is a great influence on National difference, since there is no significant difference between the self-concepts of West Indian boys and Canadian boys, and between West Indian girls and Canadian girls, but a significant difference between boys and girls.

Feelings about the self are established early in life and modified only by subsequent experiences. The reasons for the observed difference in self-concepts must be found in the differences of the early environment in which the two groups were raised. In the West Indies, blacks are in the majority, they form part of the privileged group, while black Canadians are the underprivileged minority, discriminated against because of their color and poor socio-economic conditions. Because of this, many black Canadians are rejecting the white middle class values, while black West Indians are eagerly seeking the material advantages associated with middle-class values.

Table 5

National Differences in Mean

Self-Concept Scores

Variable[a]	Canadian Blacks		West Indian Blacks		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
	(N=44)		(N=65)		
PO 1	35.75	6.18	34.67	6.89	.83
PO 2	328.59	30.81	345.16	34.07	-2.59**
PO 3	117.06	11.89	122.36	10.57	-2.44*
PO 4	105.86	14.15	112.61	15.42	-2.32*
PO 5	105.65	12.38	110.18	13.74	-1.75
PO 6	70.13	8.47	74.89	7.20	-3.15**
PO 7	63.20	8.02	67.60	9.84	-2.46**
PO 8	66.23	7.73	67.97	7.63	-1.16
PO 9	64.84	9.54	67.62	10.93	-1.37
PO 10	64.18	8.39	66.73	9.43	-1.45

[a]PO 1, Self Criticism; PO 2, Total Positive Self, PO 3, Identity; PO 4, Self-Satisfaction; PO 5, Behavior Self; PO 6, Physical Self; PO 7, Moral Ethical Self; PO 8, Personal Self; PO 9, Family Self; PO 10, Social Self.

*Significant at .05 level

**Significant at .01 level

According to Coombs (1967), the West Indian has a strong
tie or identity with his country, not hesitating to remind
everyone that he will soon be returning home. This idea,
hypothetical as it may be, apparently gives the West
Indian more psychological strength to withstand any oppo-
sition he may encounter in his struggle for economic inde-
pendence. A chief aim of the West Indian is to "make it"
economically. Social status will come when he is finan-
cially independent. On the other hand, the black Canadian,
from birth, has been relegated to the status of a second-
class citizen and may continue to act out the role made for
him by society. The black Canadian has very few black role
models as compared to the West Indian black. While West
Indian students talk realistically of returning home, and
entering politics, and becoming ministers of government,
it is very seldom that the black Canadian would have this
or similar aspirations as the role models are not present.

If black Canadians are to find ways to enhance
their own self-concepts, perhaps ethnic identity would be
an important element of that search. The struggle for
identity among blacks in North America (and among minori-
ties throughout the world for that matter) is one mani-
festation of striving for self-concept enhancement. Coun-
selors should encourage such efforts, not only because it
would facilitate positive self-perception among black

students, but because, in the long run, it will improve the effectiveness of the educational system.

The West Indians in this study were quite favorable toward counseling and one wonders if the argument presented by Heine (1950) about some blacks, does not hold true for West Indians--that counselors will help them to integrate well in their new environment. Therefore, counselors may be seen as sponsors and not as collaborators. Even though counselors usually prefer to be seen as collaborators, it may help their effectiveness to accept the sponsor role. Certainly counselors can be imaginative enough to serve as sponsors when that is seen as appropriate by prospective clients without destroying their potential to be effective collaborators if the expectations change. Whether it is possible in actuality for one person to fill both roles warrants careful investigation. If data suggest that it cannot be done, then provisions can be made to have sponsors available separately.

A further comparison was also carried out indicating differences among blacks from the various islands in the West Indies. But since the sample from each island was so small, further research would have to be done before the findings could be accepted as valid. The West Indian community is predominantly a rural one, with few fairly large cities. The islands differ in

size, population, and industrial development. There-
fore, it would seem impractical to treat all West Indians
as one homogeneous· society. The differences mentioned
could be important factors influencing the self-concepts
and attitudes, and therefore further research is recom-
mended. But the differences observed in this study
could be used as a basis for formulating hypotheses to
be tested.

Implications for Counseling

It should be comforting to counselors that none
of the subjects tested showed any extremely unfavorable
attitudes toward counseling. Even though the basic
values are reported, this finding may mean that the
individual counselor is seen as an important factor in
the student's relationships. It should be noted, how-
ever, that black students do have problems relating
to white counselors, and moreso to traditional white
counselors. Truax and Carkhuff (1964) have demonstrated
that black counselors functioned at the highest level
with black clients, while the relatively traditional
white counselor had little or no success. It was also
shown that even the most facilitating white counselors
were rejected by some blacks. This suggests the
existence of a possible hard core of blacks who would

reject all whites. Again Heine (1950) said that blacks
eschew the traditional pattern of counseling and confuse
their own real feelings with social problems. Since
counselors cannot treat the black social problems, he
cannot treat a black who represents his problem as
lying exclusively in his racial membership. When a
black client assigns responsibility for his problems to
others or to society, a white counselor has little
credibility for saying that the assignment is a dis-
tortion. Thus, he is not accepted as being able to
treat the problem.

If counselors are to overcome such disadvantages
in relating to socially different clients, particular
effort needs to be devoted to understanding the clients
and their culture. The counselor must be familiar with
the literature which identifies black self-concepts as
negative and must understand the underlying causes.
Otherwise, he may fall into the trap of stereotyping
black clients and lose what little credibility he has
to begin with. He must recognize that, as in this study,
many other studies have shown blacks to possess very
high positive self-concepts. It should be perfectly
clear that black students do not fit comfortably into
the counseling model developed for white students.

Therefore, a new approach has to be found to counsel
black students, one in which individual, group, and
cultural differences are taken into consideration. As
stated before black students will talk about their
socio-economic problems. The counselor must somehow
identify with these problems before there will be any
willingness to discuss personal concerns. To accom-
plish this end may require open rejection of the social
practices that are restrictive. Sometimes, such action
takes a great deal of courage.

Banks, Berenson, and Carkhuff (1966) found that
the counselor, rather than the client determined the
degree to which therapeutic conditions are present in
a counseling interview. In their study they used black
students as subjects. So, in essence, if the counseling
needs of black students are to be met, then the change
that creates the therapeutic conditions must take place
within the counselor and then be manifested in his
approach to black students. This, admittedly, is diffi-
cult, and will not come overnight, but it should be
built into counselor education programs so the necessary
skills can be acquired over a timely period. It might
be unfair to expect counselors with only traditional
counseling skills to counsel black students effectively

at short notice. The time has come, however, to recognize that different clients have different needs and that counselor preparation must include opportunities to develop adequate skills to work with a variety of clients.

Adams, W. A. The Negro patient in psychiatric treatment. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1950, 20, 305-310.

Ausubel, D. P., & Ausubel, P. Ego development among segregated Negro children. In A. H. Passow (Ed.), Education in depressed areas. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1965.

Ballenger, H. L. The validation of Iowa Language Tests. University of Iowa Studies in Education, March, 1931, 6 (3).

Banks, G., Berenson, B. G., & Carkhuff, R. R. The effects of counselor race and training upon counseling process with Negro clients in initial interviews. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 1967, 23, 70-72.

Banks, J. A., & Grambs, J. D. Black self-concept. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972.

Benjamin, J. Changes in performance in relation to influence upon self-conceptualization. Journal of Abnormal & Social Psychology, 1950, 45, 473-480.

Berger, E. M. The relation between expressed acceptance of self and expressed acceptance of others. Journal of Social Psychology, 1952, 47, 778-782.

Bingham, W. C. The counselor and youth employment. Guidance Monograph Series. VII. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973.

Bowker, G. Education and coloured immigrants. Langmans, Green & Company, Ltd., 1968.

Boykin, L. L. The adjustment of 2078 Negro students. Journal of Negro Education, 26, 75-79.

Branden, N. The psychology of self-esteem. New York: Bantam Book, Nash Publishing Corp., 1969.

Branden, N. The disowned self. New York: Bantam Book, Nash Publishing Corp., 1972.

Carkhuff, R. R., & Banks, G. Training as a preferred
        mode of facilitating relationships between race
        and generations. Journal of Counseling
        Psychology, 1970, 17, 413-418.

Carkhuff, R. R., & Truax, C. B. Training in counseling
        and psychotherapy. Journal of Consulting
        Psychology, 1965, 29, 333-336.

Clark, K. B., & Clark, M. Racial identification and
        preference in Negro children. In T. M. Newcombe
        & E. L. Hartley (Eds.), Readings in social
        psychology. New York: Henry Holt & Company,
        1947.

Coles, R. It's the same but it's different. A. H.
        Passow (Ed.). New York: Teachers College
        Press, Columbia University, 1965.

Coombs, O. Do you see my love for you growing. New
        York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1970.

Coard, B. West Indian children in ESN (Special) schools
        in Britain. Report, Caribbean Education and
        Community Workers Association, 1971.

Crain, R. L., & Weisman, C. S. Discrimination, per-
        sonality and achievement. New York & London:
        Seminar Press, 1972.

Davidson, H., & Lang, G. Children's perception of
        their teacher's feelings toward them related to
        self-perception, school achievement and behavior.
        Journal of Experimental Education, December,
        1960, 29 (2) 107-118.

Deutsch, M. The disadvantaged child. New York/London:
        Basic Books Inc. Publishers, 1967.

Epstein, S. The self-concept revisited. American
        Psychologist, May, 1973, 404-416.

Erikson, E. Identity, youth and crisis. New York:
        Norton, 1968.

Fantini, M. D., & Weinstein, G. The disadvantages,
        challenge to education. New York: Harper &
        Row, Publishers, 1968.

Ferguson, G. A. Statistical analysis in psychology and education. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966.

Fishbein, M. Readings in attitude theory and measurement. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967.

Fitts, W. H. Self-concept and behavior. Research Monograph No. VII. Dede Wallace Center, 1972.

Fitts, W. H. The self-concept and self actualization. Monograph 3, 1971.

Ford, D. H., & Urban, H. B. Systems of psychotherapy - A comparative study. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1967.

Fromm, E. Man for himself. New York: Rinehart & Company, 1947.

Getsinger, S. H., Kunce, J. T. M. D., & Weinberg, S. R. Self esteem measures and cultural disadvantagement. Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology, 1972, 38, 149.

Gittler, J. Social dynamics. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1952.

Goodman, M. E. Race awareness in young children. Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Press, Inc., 1952.

Greenwald, H. J., & Oppenheim, D. B. Reported magnitude of self-misidentification among Negro children - Artifact. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1968, 8 (1), 49-52.

Gunning, T. S., & Simpkins, G. A systemic approach to counseling disadvantaged youth. Journal of Non-White Concerns, 1972, 1, 4-8.

Heine, R. W. The Negro patient in psychotherapy. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 1950, 6, 373-376.

Hopkins, L. T. The emerging self in school and home. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Horney, K. Neurosis and human growth. The struggle toward self-realization. New York: W. W. Norton, 1950.

Indik, B. P., Zito, R. J., & Roth, J. An analysis of the affective meaning of racial and interracial photographs. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University, 1971.

Jersild, A. T. In search of self. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952.

Jones, R. L. Black psychology. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972.

Krech, D., & Crutchfield, R. S. Theories and problems of social psychology. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1948.

Lecky, P. Self-consistency. A theory of personality. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1945.

Mead, G. H. A behavioristic account of the significant symbols. Journal of Philosophy, 1922, 19, 157-163.

Miller, E. Self and identity problems in Jamaica - The perspective of shame. Caribbean Quarterly, September-December, 1971, 17, 15-35.

Mischel, W. Delay of gratification, need for achievement and acquiescence in another culture. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1961, 62 (3), 1-7.

Montreal Teachers Association - Professional Development Committee. M.T.A. position on the needs of inner city schools 1972.

Moreland, K. J. Racial acceptance and preference of nursery school children in a southern city. Merrill Palmer Quarterly, 1962, 8, 271-280.

Morrish, I. The background of immigrant children. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1971.

Murphy, G. Historical introduction to modern psychology. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1949.

Mussen, P. H. Difference between the TAT responses of Negro and white boys. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 1953, 17 (5), 373-376.

Neale, D. C., & Proshek, J. M. School related attitudes of culturally disadvantaged elementary school children. Journal of Educational Psychology, 1967, 58 (4), 238-244.

Nelson, R. H. Interpersonal involvement students' perception of successful counseling. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Rutgers University, 1972.

Osgood, C. E., Suci, G. J., & Tannenbaum, P. H. The measurement of meaning. Urbana, Chicago and London: University of Illinois Press, 1967.

Phillips, E. L. Attitudes toward self and others. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 1951, 15, 78-81.

Piaget, J. The child's conception of the world. New York: Harcourt-Brace, 1929.

Rogers, C. R. Client-centered therapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951.

Rogers, C. R. On becoming a person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, Sentry Edition, 1961.

Rosen, B. C. Race, ethnicity and achievement syndrome. American Sociological Review, 1959, 24, 46-60.

Roth, R. The effects of black studies on Negro 5th grade students. Journal of Negro Education, Fall, 1969, 30, 435-439.

Sclare, A. B. Cultural determinant in the neurotic Negro. Journal of Medical Psychology, 1952-53, 25-26.

Shearer, E. An analysis of the relationship between acceptance of and respect for self and acceptance of and respect for others in ten counseling cases. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 1949, 169-175.

Spence, A. Black frustration in the high school. The Sentinel-Newspaper of the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers of Quebec, 1971, 6 (3).

Stevenson, H. W., & Stewart, E. C. A developmental study of racial awareness in young children. Child Development, 1958, 29 (3), 399-410.

Stikes, C. Culturally specific counseling. The black client. Journal of Non-White Concerns, 1972, 1, 15-23.

Stock, D. An investigation into the interrelations between the self-concept and feelings directed toward other persons and groups. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 1949, 13, 176-180.

Sullivan, H. S. Conceptions of modern psychiatry. Washington: The William Allison White Psychiatric Foundation, 1947.

Super, D. E., Starishevsky, R., Natlin, N., & Jordoan, J. P. Career development. Self-concept theory. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, College Entrance Examination Board, 1963.

Sutherland, R. L. Color, class and personality. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1942.

Thompson, W. Correlates on the self-concept. Research Monograph 6. Dede Wallace Centre. Library of Congress, 1972.

Trager, H. G., & Yarrow, M. R. They learn what they live. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1952.

Ullman, V. Look to the north star. Boston: Beacon Press, Saunders of Toronto, 1969.

Vontress, C. E. Racial differences: Impediments to
rapport. Journal of Counseling Psychology,
1971, 18 (1), 7-13.

Weinraub, B. British schools accused of mishandling
West Indian blacks. New York Times. Wednesday,
May 12, 1971.

West Indian immigrants in Toronto schools. Board of
Education for the City of Toronto, 1970.

Williams, R. L., & Byans, H. The effect of academic
integration on the self esteem of southern
Negro students. Journal of Social Psychology,
1970, 80, 183-188.

Winks, R. W. The blacks in Canada. Montreal: McGill-
Queen's University Press, 1971.

Wylie, R. C. The self concept. Lincoln: University
of Nebraska Press, 1961.