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SELF-CONCEPTS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD COUNSELING

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Canada

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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 students. 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 significant 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 Labryinth 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 indicate that one alternative to confronting the communication 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 counselor 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 counselor's actual behavior is the major factor in determining 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 hypothesis 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 advantageous 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 significant 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 their early lives in two different environments. Thirdly, the influence of the environment on everyone has to be recognized as a contributing factor. This analogy seems to be sequential in its nature. First, an active environment influences the self-concept, which in turn influences attitudes which predispose the individual to particular behavior. Therefore, there should be some relationship 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 socioeconomic 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 keeping with that of psychologists who equate activism with mental health. That position would say that it is emotionally 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 receives 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 assimilation 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 culture 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)
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-deprecation 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 salutary 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 group.

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 consequent 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 accompanying 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 reprimanded 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 protocols 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 characteristics 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 overwhelmingly 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 a lot to be accomplished.

Summary of Rationale

The literature reviewed in this chapter, though not exhaustive, is representative 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 formation 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 than 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 attended high school. Students 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.

Instrumentation

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 to 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 themselves. 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.
|          |               |                   |               |               |               |          |               |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |          |               |                   |               |               |
Table 1

Distribution of Subjects by Place of Birth and by Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 of positive self-concepts rather than defiance.
Table 2

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

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

Scales<sup>a</sup>

- 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 significantly 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 suggest 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 proportion of black females to black males, than white
Table 3
Sex Differences in Mean Self-Concept Scores

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

<sup>a</sup>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 expectations. Boys are expected to handle their own problems, while girls are not prevented by any cultural restrictions from seeking assistance. But Nelson studied a predominantly 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Canadian Blacks M (N=44)</th>
<th>West Indian Blacks M (N=65)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PO 1</td>
<td>35.75 6.18</td>
<td>34.67 6.89</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 2</td>
<td>328.59 30.81</td>
<td>345.16 34.07</td>
<td>-2.59**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 3</td>
<td>117.06 11.89</td>
<td>122.36 10.57</td>
<td>-2.44*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 4</td>
<td>105.86 14.15</td>
<td>112.61 15.42</td>
<td>-2.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 5</td>
<td>105.65 12.38</td>
<td>110.18 13.74</td>
<td>-1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 6</td>
<td>70.13 8.47</td>
<td>74.89 7.20</td>
<td>-3.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 7</td>
<td>63.20 8.02</td>
<td>67.60 9.84</td>
<td>-2.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 8</td>
<td>66.23 7.73</td>
<td>67.97 7.63</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 9</td>
<td>64.34 9.54</td>
<td>67.62 10.93</td>
<td>-1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO 10</td>
<td>64.18 8.39</td>
<td>66.73 9.43</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>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 opposition he may encounter in his struggle for economic independence. A chief aim of the West Indian is to "make it" economically. Social status will come when he is financially 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 minorities throughout the world for that matter) is one manifestation of striving for self-concept enhancement. Counselors 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. Therefore, 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 recommended. 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, however, that black students do have problems relating to white counselors, and more so 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 accomplish 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 difficult, 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.


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


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