A Report of a Review and Synthesis of Findings of Research Studies about Academic Achievement of Ethnic Minorities in K-12 Education

Harold C. Wheeler Jr.
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses
Part of the Educational Administration and Supervision Commons

Recommended Citation
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/1280

This Masters Thesis-Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.
A REPORT OF A REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS OF RESEARCH STUDIES ABOUT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN K-12 EDUCATION

by

Harold C. Wheeler, Jr.

A Project Report
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Specialist in Education
Department of Educational Leadership

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
June 1987
The purpose of this report is to review and synthesize findings of research studies about academic achievement of ethnic minorities in K-12 education.

In this paper, the literature in Chapter I is related to findings about children as a result of school desegregation. Specifically it focuses on the effects which desegregation has had on motivation, and social-psychologic development of black and white children.

The second chapter begins with a historical background and discusses the life of economic and political oppression and the attitudes toward education that have shaped black school achievement over time.

In Chapter III, race and academic performance studies over several decades are presented.

The information presented in Chapter IV reviews the research on the effects that desegregation has had on minority students.

In Chapter V, a summary and evaluation concerning the findings of research studies about academic achievement of ethnic minorities is presented.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In completing this project, I have profited from the suggestions of Dr. Edgar A. Kelley and Dr. Charles Warfield from Western Michigan University.

I am especially indebted to Dr. Kelley for his continuous encouragement and assistance in editing this project.

One's family always makes a contribution to the professional endeavors of an educator. Mine has been no exception. I would like to thank my wife, Sharon Marie Wheeler, for her encouragement and patience during the time spent on the project.

To Kris Hirsch, a very special thank you is in order. Kris's typing, clerical skills, and suggestions made the project presentable. Her speed and accuracy in preparing this report saved an enormous amount of time and made deadlines realistic.

Harold C. Wheeler, Jr.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a document sent to us for microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this document, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify markings or notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or “target” for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is “Missing Page(s)”. If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting through an image and duplicating adjacent pages to assure complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a round black mark, it is an indication of either blurred copy because of movement during exposure, duplicate copy, or copyrighted materials that should not have been filmed. For blurred pages, a good image of the page can be found in the adjacent frame. If copyrighted materials were deleted, a target note will appear listing the pages in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., is part of the material being photographed, a definite method of “sectioning” the material has been followed. It is customary to begin filming at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. If necessary, sectioning is continued again—beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. For illustrations that cannot be satisfactorily reproduced by xerographic means, photographic prints can be purchased at additional cost and inserted into your xerographic copy. These prints are available upon request from the Dissertations Customer Services Department.

5. Some pages in any document may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.
A report of a review and synthesis of findings of research studies about academic achievement of ethnic minorities in K–12 education

Wheeler, Harold Clifton, Jr., Ed.S.
Western Michigan University, 1987
PLEASE NOTE:

In all cases this material has been filmed in the best possible way from the available copy. Problems encountered with this document have been identified here with a check mark ✓.

1. Glossy photographs or pages
2. Colored illustrations, paper or print
3. Photographs with dark background
4. Illustrations are poor copy
5. Pages with black marks, not original copy ✓
6. Print shows through as there is text on both sides of page
7. Indistinct, broken or small print on several pages
8. Print exceeds margin requirements
9. Tightly bound copy with print lost in spine
10. Computer printout pages with indistinct print
11. Page(s) lacking when material received, and not available from school or author.
12. Page(s) seem to be missing in numbering only as text follows.
13. Two pages numbered. Text follows.
14. Curling and wrinkled pages
15. Dissertation contains pages with print at a slant, filmed as received
16. Other

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

UMI
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................. ii  

CHAPTER  

I. REVIEW OF LITERATURE .................................. 1  

II. THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT ................................. 5  
   School Achievement from 1900 to the  
   Brown Decision ........................................ 10  
   The Post-Brown Years: 1954-1980 ...................... 12  
   Summary .............................................. 17  

III. RACE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT ....................... 19  
   Summary .......................................... 24  

IV. MINORITY CHILDREN ................................... 25  
   Racial Self-Identity ................................ 27  
   Desegregation Effects on Racial  
   Identity ......................................... 29  
   Desegregation Effects on Self-Esteem ............... 30  
   Motivation to Achieve ................................ 33  
   School Climate: Enhancing Self-Esteem  
   and Motivation ..................................... 39  
   Summary .......................................... 44  

V. SUMMARY AND EVALUATION .................................. 46  

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................ 52
CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to review and synthesize findings of research studies about academic achievement of ethnic minorities in K-12 education. In this chapter, an overview of research studies conducted since the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) is presented.

Since that decision in 1954, schools have been undergoing changes designed to facilitate both the academic achievement of minority children as well as cross-racial and cross-ethnic interpersonal acceptance. Given the importance of achieving equality of educational opportunity for all and of diminishing intergroup hostility and prejudice, it is no: surprising that school change has been a priority issue for educators and government officials. A considerable amount of attention and resources has been committed by both educators and social science researchers to the study of intergroup contact in interracial schools (e.g., Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPortland, Mood, Weinfold, and York, 1966).

In this paper, the literature is related to findings about children as a result of school desegregation. Specifically it focuses on the effects which desegregation has had on motivation, and social-psychologic development of black and white children. A wide range of relationships is presented based on a scholarly approach to studying the effects of desegregation on children.

In terms of temporal consideration, background characteristics
such as social class, race and ethnicity, etc., should have a strong influence upon a variety of aspects of a child's life; they are obviously present from the time that the child is born.

Certainly, no one would argue that the environment prior to entering school is unimportant in determining scholastic achievement, especially early achievement. Consequently, the major problem is to define the relative importance of background characteristics in the achievement process. Consider the implications if the effects of background on achievement are predominantly unaffected by variables within the school settings: equality of opportunity for all in the educational system could be achieved only when differences disappear. On the other hand, if the effects of background differences are not irreversible, but instead are mediated by other variables, especially variables found within the school setting, then equality of opportunity might be brought about more simply. Background differences could be overcome by altering those variables that mediate the effects of background on scholastic achievement.

At present, there is no definitive answer to the question. Although it has not been proven that persons from certain ethnic and racial groups are innately inferior, as some would agree (e.g., Jensen, 1969), at the same time, despite occasional exceptions (Scarr and Weinberg, 1976), various attempts to raise the scholastic performance of minority children to the level of middle-class whites have been largely unsuccessful. Therefore, one aspect of the search for additional predictors of achievement involves locating variables that effectively mediate the relationship between background and
achievement, especially focusing on those that can be altered more easily than can social class or ethnic and racial background.

There are some comparisons of black children to nonblack children on measures of school attendance, completion rate, and performance in order to monitor change over time in the content of regional and national patterns of school achievement. The main focus, however, is to chart the ingroup achievement patterns of black children through the twentieth century, to study those patterns on their own terms, and to see how more recent developments compare with those of earlier decades.

The inclination to focus primarily on interethnic and interracial comparisons has tended to portray a gloomy and onesided view of black educational achievement and has therefore seriously obscured its meaning and significance. This approach has drawn attention away from blacks' particular adaptation to the American educational system and has failed to focus adequately on black models of achievement motivation and behavior.

The first chapter begins with a historical background which seeks to frame the black response to formal schooling in its proper context—the historical life of economic and political oppression and the attitudes toward education that have shaped black school achievement over time. This is followed by a detailed presentation of the evidence of black school achievement patterns from 1900 to the mid 1950s. The data, though limited in some aspects, offer an adequate picture of school enrollment, attendance, completion rates, literacy decline, grade distribution, and some measures of competence in pri-
mary academic skills (i.e., training in reading, writing, and math skills). Then the achievement patterns of black school children in the "post-Brown" era are analyzed on much the same basis. This last section concludes with some reflections on the meaning of black school achievement patterns in the twentieth century.
CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL CONTENT

Any student of black achievement behavior should recognize at
the outset that historically much discordance has reigned between
blacks' motivation to achieve and their opportunities to achieve.
Observers of the black experience in all eras of postbellum America
have noted blacks' deeply rooted desire for scholastic achievement.
In 1879, Harriet Beecher Stowe (cited in Anderson, 1981) said of the
recently emancipated ex-slaves' quest for schooling: "They rushed
not to the grogshop but to the schoolroom—they cried for the spell­
ing book as bread, and pleaded for teachers as necessity of life"
himself a part of the ex-slaves struggle for universal schooling,
most vividly described his people's desire for formal education:
"Few people who were not right in the midst of the scenes can form
any exact idea of the intense desire which the people of my race
showed for education. It was a whole race trying to go to school.
Few were too young, and not too old, to make the attempt to learn"
(p. 2). The attitudes described by Washington are viewed by almost
all historians of the black experience as representative of blacks'
desire for scholastic achievement in the post-Civil War era.

The strong motivation for scholastic achievement resulted in
"marvelous" progress even in the unfavorable social climate of the
Reconstruction period. In 1860 only 2% of the black children of
school age were attending school; by 1880, 34% were in school. During the same period the proportion of school-age white children enrolled in school rose from 60% to 62% (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975). Hence, when one considers change over time from the point of departure black school achievement in this period was outstanding. Indeed, at no other period of American history did either the absolute or relative rate of black literacy increase as much as between 1865 and 1880. W.E.B. DuBois (cited in Myrdal, 1946) correctly pointed out that the "uprising of the black man, and the pouring of himself into organized effort for education, in those years between 1861 and 1871, was one of the marvelous occurrences in the modern world; almost without parallel in their history of civilization" (p. 887).

The black motivation for scholastic achievement, which lay deep in the slave and ex-slave past, persisted into the twentieth century and into our own present. In the classic 1946 study, Following the Color Line, Baker wrote at the beginning of this century: "The eagerness of the coloured people for a chance to send their children to school is something astonishing and pathetic. They will submit to all sorts of inconveniences in order that their children may get an education" (cited in Myrdal, 1944, p. 65). In 1941, reflecting on blacks' precious regard for education in his seminal folk history of Afro-America, Twelve Million Black Voices, Wright (1941) wrote: "Any black man who can read a book is a hero to us. And we are joyful when we hear a black man speak like a book" (p. 65). Only several years had elapsed when Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish social scientist,
published his monumental book on the condition of blacks in America, entitled *An American Dilemma*. The Carnegie Corporation, which commissioned the Myrdal study, sponsored another important book on race relations in 1978 called *Protest, Politics, and Prosperity: Black Americans and White Institutions, 1940-1975*. It was written by Newman, Amidei, Carter, Day, Kruvant and Russell (1978), who observed that "education...represents in a classic way the struggle of black Americans to achieve" (p. 78). Those who attribute past or contemporary inequalities in school achievement largely to "deficiencies" in black school children's character and motivation do not understand black America's enduring desire for scholastic success. They are often guilty of confusing achievement behavior with achievement motivation.

Much of the academic achievement of black children has occurred over time within social contexts that were not conducive to that success and must be regarded as commendable victories against almost overwhelming odds. Historically, beyond all the high motivation in the black community for scholastic success lurked the oppressive realities of black socioeconomic life. That more blacks were not successful in schools or that the "successful" ones did not achieve more means little, for the conditions have been appallingly difficult. Students of black achievement patterns must understand the duality of motivation and oppression and the interplay between the two. Therein lies the central story of black achievement and failure. Nowhere was this duality more eloquently expressed than in Wright's (1941) *Twelve Million Black Voices*: As "Queen Cotton"
ranged against the school achievement of black children in the South, a pervasive and racist job ceiling created similar obstacles in the North. The racism of employers and unions prevented blacks from acquiring professional, managerial, skilled, and even semiskilled occupations and thereby removed from the black community one major incentive for academic achievement.

As early as 1899, W.E.B. DuBois (cited in Anderson, 1982), in his classic study, *The Philadelphia Negro*, drew attention to the forced concentration of blacks into menial low-wage jobs. Studies of black employment opportunities during the industrial revolution underscore DuBois's findings. Pleck (cited in Anderson, 1982), studying blacks in Boston between 1865 and 1900, found that racism was the main barrier to black success in the labor market. "It seems clear," she concluded, "that the one overriding disadvantage blacks faced was the deeply rooted racial prejudice of their fellow Bostonians" (pp. 196-197). An inferior education, for instance, typified Irish peasants and southern Italians as much as blacks; still, a European immigrant who had just arrived in Boston had a far better chance of securing a well-paying job than a black laborer whose ancestors had been in Boston for generations. This was largely the racist policies and practices of city governments, department stores, trade unions, and manufacturers that crowded black workers into menial jobs which required no schooling. Katzman and Kusmer (cited in Anderson, 1982) found similar evidence of labor market racism in early twentieth century Detroit and Cleveland.

The basic contradiction between blacks' historical struggle for
scholastic success and the sociopolitical barriers to that success provides the contest for monitoring black school achievement over time. Often, as Wright described in his analysis of black life in the cotton economy, the very structure of black existence provided little leisure and less motivation to succeed in school. Even when a chance to learn became available, the lack of opportunities for social and economic advancement tempered scholastic ambition. A slave, upon being offered a chance to become literate by his owner, replied: "Missus, what for me learn to read? Me have no prospect" (Genovese, 1974, p. 566). Historically the gruesome reality of "no prospects" has undermined the motivation of many blacks to succeed in school. In 1915, a New York social investigator (cited in Tyack, 1974) reported that the restriction of economic opportunities was "sapping the ambition of the colored boys and girls, and they were not making the effort put out by their parents and grandparents to secure an education" (p. 222). To be sure, the evidence in general shows an upward trend in black school achievement from the post-Civil War period to the present. Along the way, however, the economic structure of daily living and the racist obstacles to social mobility have done much to undermine blacks' historical struggle for academic achievement. That these oppressive conditions did not sap the ambition of more black children is testimony to herculean efforts by parents and educators to cope with a wide range of adverse social realities.
School Achievement from 1900 to the Brown Decision

At the beginning of this century there were 3,499,187 black children of school age (between 5 and 20 years, inclusive) and about 31% of them were enrolled in school. This condition represented a slight decline from the proportion (34%) of black school children enrolled in 1880. This was the only period in post-Civil War history in which there was regression in some component of black school attendance. This was due primarily to the fact that the planter-dominated white south regained control of the state governments as a consequence of the Compromise of 1887.

Nevertheless, there was some advancement in school achievement between 1880 and 1900. Literacy increased significantly. In 1880, approximately 70% of all blacks 10 years old and over were illiterate. This proportion declined to 56.8% in 1890 and to 44.7% in 1900 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1918). A good portion of the illiterates in 1900 were those blacks whose youth antedated the availability of public school facilities in the South. For instance, in 1890, 40% of the black population 10 to 14 years of age were illiterate; in 1900, this age category was only 30% illiterate and in 1910, its rates of illiteracy had declined to about 19% (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1918). Thus, for blacks 10 to 14 years old, inclusive, the proportion of illiterates decreased in 20 years from nearly two-fifths to less than one-fifth. Such achievement was due mainly to black American's sustaining interest in scholastic success. School conditions in 1900 were not much improved over their 1880
level. Moreover, the vast majority of blacks lived in the South, where compulsory school attendance laws were virtually nonexistent. By 1900 every state, except two outside of the South, compelled attendance, but no Southern state except Kentucky did so. Blacks were compelled largely by their own ambitions for scholastic success (Harlan, 1968).

In 1910, the proportion of blacks not in school exceeded the corresponding proportion of whites, but this difference existed mainly in the South. The rates of school attendance for blacks in the North and West were nearly on a par with whites in those regions. In the North 59.2% of blacks and 65.3% of whites 5 to 20 years old were attending school. In the West the percentages were 60.8% for black children and 66.5% for white children. The proportion of blacks attending school in the South (46.4%) was markedly lower than that of whites (62.1%). This difference was far more important than the virtual parity in black-white school attendance in the North and West. Approximately nine-tenths of the blacks reported attending school in 1910 were in the South. Hence, in 1910, intraregional differences constituted the significant racial difference in attendance and in some other forms of school achievement (Wilkerson, 1939).

In comparing school attendance in 1910 to that in 1900, particularly in light of the stagnation from 1880 to 1900, black educational attainment in the former period represented rapid improvement. In all sections of the country the proportion of black children attending school increased over the level of attendance in 1900 (Wilkerson,
1939). This progress continued over the next two decades. By 1934, the extent of public school attendance of southern black children was almost as great as for southern white children. This was true for not only enrollment but also the average daily attendance to enrollment.

The Post-Brown Years: 1954-1980

The Brown v. Topeka (1954) decision, which swept aside legalized "separate and unequal" education opportunities in America, was hailed as initiating a new era in Afro-American history. W.E.B. DuBois (cited in Weinberg, 1977) wrote: "I have seen the impossible happen. It did happen on May 17, 1954" (p. 87). This was a time for hope. For almost a century after emancipation the schools for blacks were still separate, unequal, and destitute. Even in these poverty-striken institutions black Americans had made spectacular progress in all phases of school achievement. Surely, given the gains made under overwhelming social and educational oppression, blacks could reasonably expect greater scholastic achievement if educational opportunities actually became more equal. Indeed, black Americans were extremely optimistic about their chances for improved social and educational conditions. Although as Orfield (1978) points out, "The Brown decision included no findings about academic achievement and no promise of better test scores" (p. 120), the desire for greater scholastic achievement was one of the predominant forces that underlay the struggle for equal educational opportunity.

The struggle for equal educational opportunity escalated before
the Brown decision had time to cool. Black parents and their children began to petition and file lawsuits across the nation, requesting admission to hitherto white schools. Their direct-action demonstrations brought America to a national crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas. President Eisenhower, confronted with a direct challenge to federal authority, ordered troops to Little Rock to enforce school desegregation without mob interference. The nine courageous teenaged black pupils, together with their adviser, Mrs. Daisy Bates, won the NAACP's Spingarn Medal for advancing the cause of civil rights in 1957. The first "sit-in" took place in 1960 and was led by black students from Greensboro, North Carolina. In 1961, the freedom riders began moving into the South under the organization of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and voter registration drives were conducted throughout the South. These movements to acquire civil equality were joined by the drive for greater scholastic achievement. Gurin and Epps (1975) in Black Consciousness, Identity, and Achievement found that black student activists were committed to both collective and individual achievement goals.

The struggle for more equal educational opportunities continued at all levels of education. In Chicago a large-scale movement of blacks against pervasive segregation in elementary and secondary schools began around 1960. In Georgia, Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes pressed for and finally won admission to the University of Georgia in 1961. James Meridith confronted "Ole Miss" in 1961 and entered in 1962 amidst rioting that again brought federal troops to enforce equality of educational opportunity. Meredith's matricula-
tion precipitated a riot in which two persons were killed. Then, in
the fall of 1963, Governor George Wallace stood at the entrance door
to the University of Alabama promising to prevent Vivian Malone and
James Hood from enrolling. He was defeated and, symbolically, the
proponents of equal educational opportunity had broken the back of
Jim Crow racism (Newman et al., 1978).

The social climate and its attendant educational opportunities
had an enormous effect on black school achievement and enabled black
people to act on deeply rooted educational values that had been con­
strained during several generations of legalized "separate and un­
equal" educational opportunity. When black high school seniors were
surveyed in the 1960s, 9 out of 10 of their mothers wished them to
go on to college, and two-thirds of the students saw a college educa­
tion as the best way to get ahead (Jones, 1981). Before the 1960s,
however, there were few opportunities to act on these beliefs.
Between 1960 and 1980 there was a steady and even spectacular
improvement in rates of high school and college attendance and com­
pletion. In 1960, 33% of blacks 20 to 24 years of age had completed
high school. In 1978, 73% of this age category had completed high
school. This compared with 61% of whites in the same age group in
1960 and 85% in 1978. In 1967, the median years of school completed
by blacks was 10; it reached 12.3 by 1976, at which time there was no
noticeable difference between blacks and whites (12.6) in the median
number of school years completed. Blacks who remained enrolled in
high school increased by 11% between 1967 and 1970, and by another
16% from 1970 to 1974. The increases were 6% and 3%, respectively,
for whites during these same two periods (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1978).

The percentage change in college enrollment was the most spectacular. In the 10 years between 1966 and 1976, the number of black students enrolled in college increased from 282,000 to 1,062,000, by more than 275%. There are still noticeable differences between black and white college enrollments. For instance, the percentage distribution among 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges, and universities is statistically significant along racial lines. For the black collegians, in 1975-1976, 34% were enrolled in 2-year colleges, 44% in 4-year colleges, and 16% in universities. For white collegians, only 23% were enrolled in 2-year colleges, 44% in 4-year colleges, and 33% in universities. Such distributions undoubtedly affect differential access to professional and employment opportunities. Further, there is a noticeable difference between blacks and whites in the proportion completing colleges. As of 1976, among 25 to 29 year olds, for every 100 majority males, 34 were college-educated while only 11 out of 100 minority males or minority females were college-educated (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978; U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1978). "In other words," reports the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1978), "most minority and female groups remained only about 30% as likely as majority males to have a college education" (p. 26).

There have been significant gains since the Brown decision. Gains in school achievement from 1960 to 1980 were more striking than the increases from 1940 to 1960; from 1960 to 1980 blacks increased
their median years of school completed, doubled the proportion of high school graduates, almost tripled the proportion of college graduates, and increased enormously their enrollment percentages in high school and college ("Report card on school desegregation," 1979). While academic achievement levels of the black population have not reached parity with whites but any comparison of recent progress with earlier levels of school achievement demonstrates that the 1960-1980 gains were remarkable. These gains are even more stunning considering the fact that they were achieved by a relatively lower-income minority population, in mostly segregated schools, and under considerable repression by the dominant society. Clearly, much of this had to be attributed to the inspiration and social climate fostered by the Brown decision and its attendant educational opportunities. But underneath it all lay blacks' enduring motivation for scholastic achievement.

Evidence has shown improvement on the most important outcome, achievement in primary academic skills. The Census Bureau found that, in 1977, 10% of all black students aged 16 to 17 were at least 2 years behind the proper grade for their age. That was an improvement from 1967, when 18% were below the norm. Summary measures by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show some improvement in performance by black students over time. This was particularly apparent among blacks in the 9-year-old age group. From 1971 to 1975 their scores improved by almost five percentage points. For 13- and 17-year-old black students, improvement was noted only in the southeast region (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Wel-
fare, 1978). Burton and Jones (1982) report that, for learning areas other than writing, the average difference between white and black 9-year-olds has shrunk from about 17 percentage points to 10 or 11 over the 1970s. They conclude that "there is a rather steady decline in the average white-black achievement difference with advancing year of birth, regardless of learning area or age of assessment" (p. 14). There is no way of predicting whether these improvements will persist through the 1980s, but the history of black school achievement suggests that they will.

Summary

For black Americans, where does greater school achievement lead? The words of the nineteenth-century slave are worthy of repetition: "Missus, what for me learn to read? Me have no prospect" (Genovese, 1974, p. 566). These words could have been spoken by free blacks in nineteenth-century America. Indeed, as historian David Tyack (1974, p. 125) has shown, in 1819 a black youth in New York gave a similar reply at a graduation ceremony: "Why should I strive hard, and acquire all the constituents of a man, if the prevailing genius of the land admit me not as such, or but in an inferior degree!" Throughout American history the increased proportion of blacks who improved themselves educationally has not been reflected in commensurate participation in the socioeconomic process. As Lincoln (1969) pointed out, "The Negro college graduate carrying mail, waiting tables, or redcapping was a familiar phenomenon of the 1940s and 1950s" (p. 231). Since 1954, in good times or bad, the
black unemployment rate remained substantially higher than the white—usually twice as high. In looking at the rate of joblessness among blacks, conditions in the 1980s are worse than they were in the mid-1960s. Joblessness among black teenagers, for instance, soared from 16.5% in 1954 to about 50% in 1982 (Malabre, 1979, p. 36). Hence black high school graduates today enter a world where more than half of their peers are unemployed.

That the value of scholastic success among blacks would withstand centuries of overwhelming economic oppression is suggestive of how deeply rooted it must be. Those who deplore low academic achievement among black children, and attribute this situation to deficiencies in the will to learn, fail to understand the duality of oppression and motivation in black life and culture and how the former has eaten away at the latter for almost four centuries. As Weinberg (1977) said, "The miracle was that the belief in learning among blacks had not been contained or suppressed" (p. 139).
CHAPTER III

RACE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Studies extending over several decades have consistently found that the average black student and the average white student differ on measures of academic achievement. White students, on the average, do better than black students and the differences found have been substantial (Coleman et al., 1966; St. John, 1975; Weinberg, 1977). In this chapter, the academic performance of black students and of white students in the Indianapolis high schools will be described. Also examined, are the extent of differences between the two racial groups and the variations within each group.

Black students and white students, as well as students within each racial group, with respect to psychological variables which often have been thought to be closely related to academic performance were compared. These included prior cognitive abilities, intelligence quotient, values, expectancies of success, educational and occupational aspirations, effort, and feeling toward peers and teachers. In addition, these subjective variables between race and within-race were examined to the extent of their associations with academic performance.

There are two types of measures of students' academic performance—standardized achievement tests and grades. Students' grades tended to be consistent with their scores on achievement tests, but this association was far from perfect.

19
Both achievement test scores and grades have advantages as measures of academic performance. Standardized achievement scores have the important advantage of being comparable among students throughout a school system and comparable also among students throughout the country. Achievement tests reflect performance at one particular point in time, may be affected by differences in test-taking ability and motivation, and may not always test the material taught in particular schools and classes.

In contrast, a student's grades are based on performance over an extended period of time, often are based on several kinds of performance (e.g., class recitation, homework papers, and tests), and are tied more directly to the material taught in the student's own classes. On the other hand, since the material taught and standards of grading may differ, grades of students with different teachers, those in different schools, and those in different school systems may not be strictly comparable.

Both national and local studies have shown that black students, on the average, score consistently far below the average for white students throughout the United States. The average score for blacks usually is about one standard deviation below those of whites. This means that about 85% of black students (as compared to 50% of white students) score below the white average (e.g., Sewell, 1967).

The academic performance of students in high school may be influenced by the cognitive abilities—e.g., language concepts, mathematical concepts, logical reasoning, memory—which they have developed prior to high school. As a measure of students' cognitive
development prior to high school, scores on IQ tests are the common. While IQ scores were developed as a measure of intelligence (the letters are an abbreviation for "Intelligence Quotient"), it is incorrect to think of them as primarily a measure of "native" intellectual ability. Rather, IQ tests measure important cognitive abilities which may be affected by a variety of influences (Honzik, 1973; Loehlin, Lindzy, & Spulher, 1975). These include innate learning ability (which is unlikely to differ among racial or ethnic groups), nutritional adequacy, early stimulation of language in the home, and the quality of early learning experiences in school. The abilities measured by IQ tests are not identical to those measured by standardized achievement tests but they require some of the same basic language and mathematical abilities.

A large majority of students in the sample in the Indianapolis high schools took the IQ test, called the California Test of Mental Maturity when they were in eighth grade. These test scores were reviewed as a standardized measure of students' general cognitive abilities shortly before they entered high school.

The black and white students compared in the general skills measured by IQ tests, just prior to entering high school showed that, consistent with studies in other schools and regions (Shuey, 1966), there was a large difference in the distribution of IQ scores between the races. Much larger proportions of blacks were below the overall population and much larger proportions of whites were above the overall population average.

Among whites, there was no clear modal tendency. Almost seven
out of ten whites scored at about the national average or higher and 24\% scored over 115. At the other extreme, about 4\% of all white students had IQ scores below 70. There was a strong relationship among freshmen and sophomores of each racial group and the academic performance and the IQ scores on the standardized achievement test (MAT). For blacks, the correlation of IQ's with achievement test scores was .74. For whites, the correlation was .83. These results mean that over half of the differences in achievement scores among blacks, and about two-thirds of the differences among whites, were accounted for by the level of cognitive skills (IQ) which students acquired prior to high school. Correlations between IQ scores and achievement scores among juniors and seniors were very similar to those for the lower classmen. The associations between students' IQ scores and the measures of their academic performance were changed only very slightly when students efforts were controlled. The associations between IQ and performance measures also remained substantial, though somewhat reduced, when a variety of other factors concerning home background, personal characteristics, the school situation, and interracial contact were held constant. Thus, prior cognitive abilities had a marked effect on academic performance in high school even when other variables which may affect performance are taken into account.

Students' performance in school may be affected also by the extent to which they value doing well in school. Low economic performance among black students may be due in part to their not sharing the white middle-class values of success in school.
To assess the extent to which students valued academic success, each student was asked to rate (on a three point scale) how im­­port­­ant each of a number of outcomes were to each. These included: (a) getting good grades, (b) getting a good education, and (c) being able to go to college. These academic goals were rated as very important by a majority of students of both races. On each of the three items, black students were somewhat more likely than white students to rate the academic goal as very important to them.

The similarity of blacks and whites with respect to values and aspirations indicates that the large racial differences in achievement scores and grades cannot be accounted by differences on these variables. However, within each racial group, variations in values and aspirations were related to variations in academic performance.

Values and aspirations were more closely related to grades and to achievement test scores among whites than among blacks. This may indicate that whites adjusted their aspirations to fit their academic performance more readily than did blacks. Also, whites may have been more successful than blacks in achieving the level of academic performance that was consistent with their aspirations.

While motivation and effort depend in part on the value which a student places on doing well in school, it also may be affected by his expectancy of being able to succeed (Katz, 1968; O’Connor, Atkinson, & Horner, 1966; Rotter, Chance, & Phares, 1972).
Summary

In this chapter, variations between and within racial groups with respect to students' academic performance were described. Achievement scores and grades varied widely within each racial group. On the average, the achievement scores and grades of black students were substantially lower than those of their white schoolmates. These wide average differences in academic performance between blacks and whites are fairly typical of results throughout the country.

Also examined, were differences between and within racial groups with respect to a number of psychological factors which may affect academic performance. A large racial difference in academic performance in high school was paralleled by a similarly large difference in the cognitive abilities which blacks and whites possessed upon entering high school as indicated by IQ scores. Also, within each racial group, prior cognitive development accounted for a large part of the variation in high school grades. The results indicated the great importance of abilities acquired prior to high school as determinants of academic performance in high school.

Consistent with the small racial differences with respect to values, aspirations, and expectancies, differences in effort between the races also appeared generally to have been small. While white students tended to be more diligent in some ways, the small differences in effort cannot account for much of the large differences in academic performance between the races.
CHAPTER IV
MINORITY CHILDREN

Desegregation, Self-Evaluation, and Achievement Orientation

In "The Nature and Meaning of Negro Self-Identity," Proshansky and Newton (1968) state that "most theorists and researchers have assumed that (for black children) segregation in the schools, whether defacto or legal, has devastating consequences for the development of a positive self-image" (p. 209). Chief Justice Warren, speaking for the United States Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education (1954, p. 494) wrote that "the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to retard the educational and mental development of Negro children." In the 27 years since the Brown decision, black children have experienced both segregated and desegregated educational environments. During that period, many researchers have attempted to determine the impact of school desegregation on the self-image and motivation of black children.

There is little agreement among researchers on the meaning of the terms "self-image," "self-esteem," and "self-concept." Some researchers use the terms interchangeable; others draw distinctions. Coopersmith (1975) views the self-concept as "the symbol or image
which the person has formed out of his personal experiences" (p. 148). Strike (1981) treats self-concept and self-image as synonymous terms, but states that it is important to distinguish between self-respect and self-image (p. 235). Porter and Washington (1979) "divide self-esteem into two components: racial and personal. Racial self-esteem refers to how the individual feels about the self-esteem for one's individuality regardless of racial group—how one feels about the self in a comprehensive sense" (p. 54). Coopersmith (1975) also notes that "in addition to a global self-concept that summarizes the broad range and variety of personal experiences persons form more specific self-concepts that are more limited and particularistic." He goes on to state that "the question of whether certain features of experiences such as race, sex, or size are so salient that they pervade virtually all aspects of the self-concept not established" (p. 148). Hare (1980) writes that it is important to look at dimensions of self-esteem, such as how the person evaluates himself in the home setting, the school setting, and while interacting with peers. Rosenberg (1968) adds that individuals do not give equal weight to all aspects of their experiences.

Some selectivity is clearly involved in the development of self-esteem. An individual will choose among various types of qualities and characteristics—valuing those characteristics at which he believes he is good and disregarding or undervaluing those characteristics or qualities at which he views himself as being poor. One's self-esteem may be based upon such varied characteristics as athletic prowess, dress and physical appearance, attractiveness to the opposite
sex, skill at verbal replies, and skill at fighting, as well as academic achievement. The particular combination of attributes that constitute the basis of high self-esteem varies from individual to individual, but is systematically related to the social and cultural background of the individual and to the values held by persons who are close to him, such as parents and friends. Finally, some researchers distinguish between general self-esteem and academic—specific self-esteem or self-concept of academic ability (Brookover & Erickson, 1975). In this chapter, the following distinctions will be made: (a) for global self-image, the term "general self-esteem" will be used; (b) for academic self-image, the term "self-concept of academic ability" will be used; and (c) for racial self-image, the term "racial self-identity" will be used.

Racial Self-Identity

Research in this general area is used to determine the extent to which black children or other minority children develop racial self-hatred, a low sense of self-worth, dominant group preference, or rejection of their own group as a result of growing up in a racist society. The research usually involves asking children to choose pictures or dolls that are "like me: or unlike me" to select the "good child" or the "pretty child," or the child he or she would like to work or play with. Inferences are then made from these choices about the children's self-images and racial self-identity without making direct assessments of the children's self-esteem or racial self-evaluation.
Reviews of research in this (Spencer, 1976; Stephan, 1978; Weinberg, 1977) indicate that there are numerous methodological and conceptual problems which make it difficult to draw firm conclusions. Porter and Washington (1979) point out that responses among preschool children vary by age, sex, and social class. A major problem is inadequate controls. This is very important in making comparisons over time and across settings. Specific inadequacies cited by reviewers in addition to lack of controls include questionable research designs, poor sampling, the use of wide variety of instruments and procedures, the use of samples of different age, sex, and status composition, and the study of children in different social contexts (laboratories, playgrounds, schools, different geographic regions, different desegregation status, and so on). Generalizing from this complexity is difficult.

Spencer (1976) argues that few researchers give adequate consideration to the developmental issues regarding concept acquisition (self, other, race ethnicity). In her research, Spencer found a significant nonlinear relationship between racial attitudes and self-concept. Specifically, 80% of the 4 and 5 year olds were found to have both "majority culture preference racial attitudes, and positive self-esteem" (p. 78). The research demonstrates clearly that young black children do not internalize the negative societal evaluation of blacks, even as they learn that blacks are devalued in society.

Other research suggests that black children's preference behavior has changed since the earlier work of Clark and Clark (1947). Winnick and Taylor (1977) found that almost double the number of
black children in their study (64%) showed preference for their own race, as compared to the findings of the study published by Clark and Clark. In addition, Banks (1976) points out that the appropriate research question is not whether black children make more cross-race choices than whites; it is the extent to which choices made by black children differ due to chance. Using this criterion, his analysis of the results of the most prominent studies of preference behavior in blacks indicated that in only 6% of the experiments did black children demonstrate preference.

Desegregation Effects on Racial Identity

The most extensive study of racial identity in the context of desegregation was conducted in Riverside, California (Gerard & Miller, 1975). The results of this study indicated that a child's ethnic identity and self-attitude are not closely linked: When data measuring these two factors were analyzed together, they showed no significant relationship. Photographic assessment of ethnic identity, a technique that uses photographs of male and female black, Mexican-American, and Anglo children was used in this study. The clearest result, as one would expect, is that children of all ethnic groups were most likely to choose a same-race same-sex picture as "most like me." This pattern was more pronounced after two years of desegregation, fewer minority group children choosing a picture of an Anglo child in the third year. McAdoo (1977) studied the development of racial attitudes in Mississippi, Michigan, and Washington, D. C. over a period of five years. She found that a child's prefer-
ence for his or her own race increased after he or she attended an interracial school. Weinberg (1977) has observed: "Racial self-awareness had apparently increased sharply, both in the North and in the South. Racial self-acceptance has also undoubtedly risen. But the degree of such a rise has been overstated" (p. 169).

Desegregation Effects on Self-Esteem

Several comprehensive reviews of both published and unpublished studies on the impact of desegregation on children's self-esteem available prior to 1977 have been published (Epps, 1975, 1978; St. John, 1975; Stephan, 1978; Weinberg, 1977). These reviews have all found a mixed pattern of results, some find that black students have higher self-esteem in segregated schools and others finding black students with higher self-esteem in nonsegregated schools. Still other studies have found no significant differences between students in segregated and nonsegregated schools.

Hare (1977) reports that home self-esteem is the best predictor of general self-esteem for black children and for blue-collar white children. School self-esteem, the best predictor of general self-esteem for white-collar whites, is not significantly related to general self-esteem for the other groups. In other words, school self-evaluation seems to have little bearing on the total self-esteem of black children or lower-class children. Caution is advised in generalizing from this study because of the small samples used in some comparisons and because Evanston may be a unique environment in some respects.
Cicirelli (1977) used the Purdue Self-Concept Scale (PSCS) to study 345 primary grade children attending inner-city schools in a metropolitan area. There was a decline in self-concept with grade level, and blacks scored higher than whites. An analysis was made of black second-grade children's scores of those children whose families were on welfare; these children scored significantly higher than other blacks. The results were explained as possibly being due to low evaluative expectations in the welfare environment, increasingly salient black pride, or defensiveness. The black and white children in this study live in the same neighborhood and attend the same schools, therefore the differences displayed seem to indicate home influences or ethnic influences rather than neighborhood or community influences. Although it is still possible for the school to have differential impacts on children of different racial groups even when they are in the same classrooms, this study provides no evidence on this source. Cicirelli (1977) states that "it is conceivable that parents and teachers have lower expectations for these (welfare) children than would be the case for their slightly more advantaged peers; however, this should be submitted to empirical test" (p. 215).

Hare (1980) reported sex differences among black males and females attending desegregated elementary schools. However, students differed more in achievement than in self-esteem. There were no significant differences in general self-esteem, home self-esteem, or self-concept of academic ability. Boys were much higher than girls on a self-rating of the importance of sociabilities, and tended
to be higher in peer self-esteem. Black females tended to be higher than black males on school self-esteem, and were higher than black males in anxiety and achievement orientation (achievement values). Black girls also were much higher than black boys in both reading and math achievement as measured by standardized test scores. White boys had higher self-esteem than white girls, and whites did not differ in achievement. Black and white males did not differ in self-esteem or self-concept of ability; but black girls had higher self-concept of ability than white girls, in spite of the fact that white girls had higher achievement scores.

Gerard and Miller (1975) state that on all measures of self-attitudes administered prior to desegregation, except the need for school achievement, Anglo children scored more favorably than black and Mexican-American students. The authors state the response bias may have influenced outcomes on some of the scales utilized, thus possibly confounding the results. Controls for socioeconomic status also failed to account for the ethnic differences. The only change after desegregation involved younger black children. The children displayed much greater increases in general anxiety than either Anglo or Mexican-American children three years after desegregation. Factor analyses yielded different factor structures for each of the ethnic groups, which suggests that the scales may be measuring different underlying constructs for each ethnic group.

Generalizing about the impact of desegregation of the racial aspect of self-concept is unwarranted. As Christmas (1973) and Weinberg (1977) concluded after reviewing the literature, the find-
ings are generally inconclusive. Weinberg thinks that, on balance, the research is more favorable than unfavorable. The research certainly does not support the contention that desegregation is harmful to black self-identity.

Motivation to Achieve

Gerard and Miller (1975) drew heavily on achievement motivation theory in their research design. The indices of achievement-relevant motivation used in their study included: (1) a ring-toss game which yielded measures of goal discrepancy—the difference between expected performance and actual performance, and number of unusual shifts, such as raising goals after poor performance; (2) an eight-item sense of control over the environment scale; (3) a six-item scale to assess intellectual achievement responsibilities (IAR), which yielded two scores—a "lack of effort" score and a "lack of ability" attribution score; and (4) a measure of tendency to delay gratification. The authors hypothesized that minority scores should improve on these measures after exposure to white classmates in desegregated schools. The analysis addressed three questions: (1) Do the measures show the expected differences for age and ethnic group? (2) Do the measures predict school achievement? (3) Is there any indication that desegregation has an impact on achievement-related behavior?

On the ring-toss goal setting measures and the fate control measures, the age and ethnic group responses were about as predicted, with older children and Anglo children having more favorable scores.
On the IAR measures, an age effect was found for "effort" attribution, but not for "ability" attribution. There were no ethnic differences on the "effort" attribution measure, but Mexican-American children were more likely than either Anglos or blacks to attribute failure to their own ability. Blacks and Anglos did not differ on the IAR. The results for delay of gratification were as predicted: older children and Anglos were more likely than younger children or minority children to delay gratification.

To answer the second question, regarding the relation of motivation to achievement, a standardized achievement test score (three levels within each ethnic group) was included in an analysis along with school grade, sex, and ethnic group. The goal setting (ring-toss) measure was not related to achievement for any group; fate control was significantly related to achievement for Anglos and Mexican-Americans, but not for blacks. The "effort" subscale of the IAR was not related to achievement. Attributing one's failures to lack of "ability" was associated with low achievement, but only for girls. The results for delay of gratification were inconclusive. Gerard and Miller (1975) concluded in their summary, that this analysis demonstrated that only a miniscule proportion of the variance in achievement could be accounted for by achievement motivation or at least their measures of it. They obtained a moderated relationship for fate control and for self-attributions of ability, but the other four variables appeared to be virtually unrelated to achievement scores" (p. 139).

The impact of desegregation analysis indicated that there was
no effect of desegregation on goal-setting scores for third and fifth graders, but first-grade minority children performed better after one year of desegregation than the comparison (predesegregation) group. The authors recommend caution in interpreting the result, because there were only ten black children in the group that showed improvement. Comparing children who had one year of desegregation experience with those who had three years of desegregation experience suggests that goal setting of minority children improves as desegregation experience increases. Amount of desegregation experience did not appear to affect fate control. However, after three years of desegregation, "all children were much less likely to delay gratification than were their age mates two years earlier" (Gerard & Miller, 1975, p. 144).

Perhaps the most important analysis in Gerard and Miller's study looked at the effect of teachers' attitudes on children's achievement orientations. On the goal setting measure, it was found that desegregation experience was mediated by teachers' attitudes. While Anglo children were not affected, third and fourth-grade black and Mexican-American children in classrooms with teachers who were moderate or high in discrimination improved their goal setting less than did minority children in classrooms of teachers who were low in discrimination. The measure of teacher discrimination was derived from teachers' tendencies to overestimate the achievement inferiority of minority children.

Ruhl and Feld (1977) studied the development on achievement motivation in black and white children in two working-class elemen-
tary schools, one 33% black, and the other 85% black. The findings indicated that the black and white children did not differ in "autonomous" achievement motivation, which is learned at home prior to school age. White students scored higher on social comparison motivation, which is acquired during the elementary school years. Autonomous standards define excellence in relation to one's own past performance. Social comparison standards are based on comparisons between one's own performance and that of others. These findings on autonomous motivation provide clear support for Banks and McQuarter's (1978) contention that the roots of low achievement in blacks are not located in family and early socialization experiences. As Ruhland and Feld (1977) assert, the classroom is a major source of information about how one's ability compares with the abilities of one's peers. If teachers have low expectations for minority students, or if they provide other inaccurate feedback, they may subvert the process of developing effective social comparison motivation and self-evaluation skills. Evidence from several studies suggests that black students are less accurate than whites, in segregated or desegregated settings, in estimating their own achievement levels (Busk, Ford, & Schuhman, 1973; Hare, 1980; Massey, Scott, & Dornbusch, 1975). Teachers may be providing inappropriate feedback to minority students (for example, saying work is satisfactory when a student is performing below standards). The social comparison process represents a cultural conflict for some minority students whose backgrounds are not supportive of individualistic competition; some groups stress family—or group—oriented achievement and dis-
courage competition with peers.

In summary, this review, like others (Epps, 1975, 1978; Porter & Washington, 1979; St. John, 1975; Weinberg, 1977), concludes that the results of research on racial self-identity, self-concept and self-esteem, and achievement orientation of black students yield mixed or conflicting results. Some studies find higher self-esteem for black students in segregated schools; others report higher scores for integrated schools; still others report no difference. These differences in results can be attributed to methodological weaknesses in some studies, the use of many different instruments to assess personality characteristics; comparisons of different age, sex, and geographic location groups; and comparisons of results from different time periods. In spite of these shortcomings, some conclusions seem warranted.

First, it is virtually impossible to determine with certainty whether or not desegregation has short-term or long-term beneficial or harmful effects on minority students' self-esteem, aspirations, or motivation. There is fairly consistent evidence that desegregation has a facilitating effect on students' sense of control. Black students' aspirations for future education are usually high in both segregated and desegregated schools. Self-concept of academic ability is also surprisingly high in view of the relatively low academic achievement of black students (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979).

Second, whatever the impact of desegregation, minority students, especially blacks, typically have acceptable levels of general self-esteem. That is, most studies find minority students scoring equal
to or higher than whites in general self-esteem. The work of Hare (1980) provides important insights that can help to guide policy makers. This research strongly suggests that it is the area of school-related self-esteem that may need enhancing in minority students. Hare's results, along with those of Brookover and Lezotte (1979) and that of Busk and associates (1973), also provide a basis for inferring that minority students use different reference groups than whites in forming their evaluations of their academic performance.

Third, minority students' achievement values or orientations are usually lower than those of white students. Much of this difference is associated with social class. There is also a strong probability that the instruments used to assess achievement values are based upon Anglo-American middle-class norms and may not accurately assess minority achievement motivation, which may be more strongly oriented to family and group achievement than to individualistic competition.

Fourth, results vary so much across settings that it makes little sense to talk of gross comparisons such as desegregation versus segregation. Experiences vary within classrooms and schools to such an extent that site-specific assessment is necessary for an understanding of desegregation's impact on students. For example, Felice and Richardson (1977) report that dropout rates for bused minority students are similar to but slightly higher than those for nonbused minority students. This general finding is less interesting than the fact that dropout rates for bused students are strongly
affected by the socioeconomic status composition of the school and by teacher expectations at the receiving school. The authors explain: "Desegregation produces a positive benefit for this most crucial dimension of minority student educational accomplishment, when the school to which the minority student is bused is one where teachers expectations are positive and supportive" (Felice & Richardson, 1977, p. 242).

Finally, it seems clear that if the goals of desegregation include both the enhancement of self-concept and achievement, there is a need to consider how the school environment can be reorganized so as to enhance achievement, and, in the process, enhance self-concept as well. The following section addresses this issue.

School Climate: Enhancing Self-Esteem and Motivation

School learning climate is defined as "the norms, beliefs and attitudes reflected in institutional patterns and behavioral practices that enhance or impede student achievement" (Lezotte, Hathaway, Miller, & Passalacqua, 1980, p. 4). This definition of school learning climate implies a concern for the educational environment of the whole school. While it is also possible to think of the learning climate of a classroom, an effective classroom isolated in a low-achieving school can have little impact on the total school environment. Therefore, it seems more efficient to concentrate on school learning climate rather than classroom learning climate.

This focus on school learning climate is based on research which demonstrates that some schools attended by lower-class minority
children are much more successful than others in terms of students' scores on achievement tests (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Brookover & Schneider, 1975; Edmonds, 1979). The school climate concept is important for desegregation planners for two reasons. First, the learning environment in desegregated schools can have either an enhancing or impeding effect on student learning, self-esteem, and racial attitudes. Second, in urban districts with large minority populations some schools remain minority-isolated even with the best of planning. Knowledge of the characteristics of achieving schools can assist planners in developing programs for effective education in minority-isolated schools as well as in biracial or multi-ethnic schools.

Lezotte and associates (1980) stated that school learning climate correlated positively with achievement when climate was viewed as

the dynamic patterns of classroom interactions and teaching process (with the classroom as a unit of analysis); organizational structures based on differences in philosophy and practices (tracking; differences in the school setting due to time spent on lessons, attendance rates, and perceptions of levels of discipline; the overall atmosphere or ethos of a building; the intellectual and academic emphasis and norms in a building; and the normative patterns of teacher and student expectations, evaluations, beliefs and group practices).

(Lezotte et al., 1980, p. 55).

According to Brookover and Lezotte (1979), the following characteristics of the school social system relate to high achievement and other desired outcomes:

First of all, believe that all children can and will learn whatever the school defines as desirable and appropriate. Expect all children to learn these patterns of behavior rather
than differentiate among those who are expected and those who are not expected to learn. Have common norms that apply to all children so that all members of the school social system expect a high level of performance by all students. With these evaluations, expectations, and norms characterizing the school social system, the patterns of interaction between teacher and pupil should be characterized by consistently appropriate and clearly recognized reinforcement of learning behavior. Failure should be followed by immediate feedback and reinforcement should be given only when correct responses are made. This type of school environment is best characterized by what has come to be known as the Mastery Model (Brookover & Lezotte, p. 147).

Perhaps the most important theme of this school climate research is that the schools can be held responsible for levels of pupil achievement regardless of students' racial or socioeconomic status. As Edmonds (1979) states, factors that contribute to high achievement are under the control of the school system. Instructional leadership, high expectations, positive learning atmosphere, and specific emphasis on instruction in basic skills are consistently essential institutional determinants of pupil performance. Edmonds contends that strong administrative leadership is indispensable. This leadership is necessary to bring together the various elements of good school learning environments. He states that "effective schools get that way partly by making it clear that basic school skills take precedence over all other school activities" (pp. 28-32). Pupil progress should be monitored systematically so that the principal and the teachers can remain constantly aware of pupil progress in relationship to objectives.

Brookover and Lezotte (1979) also stress that high achieving schools are characterized by the students' feeling that they have control of their academic work and that their own efforts make a
difference in their academic success. Tracking appears harmful to the development of this sense of control. Teachers and principals in high achieving schools are able to convince students that they are committed to seeing that their students learn their academic work. High expectations are communicated to students so that they know they are expected to learn and that they are expected to conform to the school norms of high achievement standards. In lower achieving schools, students feel a sense of futility. They believe that the system is organized in such a way that they cannot achieve, that teachers are not committed to their achievement, and that teachers have little faith in their ability to learn. Low expectations are characteristic of teacher attitudes, student attitudes, and the attitudes of administrators. Therefore, little time or effort is devoted to instruction, and much effort is devoted to control. Since teachers and administrators believe that only a few of their students can learn, tracking or ability grouping is likely to characterize lower achieving schools. Students are also likely to be praised for substandard performance. One result of this inappropriate feedback is that students in low achieving schools may have high self-concept of academic ability and at the same time low sense of control (high sense of futility). This is especially true of predominantly black schools.

There seems to be little educational justification for homogeneous ability grouping. The practice persists in spite of this lack of educational justification, perhaps because of educational inertia or the belief that grouping makes the work of the teacher...
easier. If the practice cannot be justified on the grounds of enhancing the achievement of average and low ability children, and if the practice results, as it usually does, in segregating children on the basis of class and ethnicity, it should be abolished in all cases in which a case of educational benefit cannot be clearly established. Perhaps the policies of PL 94-142 (cited in Hawley, 1981) can be adopted for desegregation planning. The law requires that an individualized education plan be written for each student before he or she can be placed in any special education program, and that the plan be reviewed annually. Individualized education plans are signed by parents, thereby giving parents some control over their children's placement. The most important aspect of any such plan is the provision of effective monitoring to assure that the goals of the plan are being met, and that children are enabled to make upward movement as their achievement improves. One of the most harmful aspects of ability grouping, tracking, and special education placement is the tendency for initial placement to become permanent. There must be assurance of systematic procedures for upward mobility from low ability groups to higher ability groups, from special education to mainstream classrooms, and from lower tracks to higher tracks if the harmful aspects of placement are to be minimized.

Bloom (1976) has developed an instructional approach, based on research and theory, that has demonstrated that effective instruction improves achievement and enhances self-concept without ability grouping. A version of this instructional strategy has been implemented in the Chicago public schools. Evaluation of the 1976-1977
program in 10 schools indicates that pupils taught with mastery learning techniques gained 7.5 months during 7 months of instruction, while the control group of pupils gained only 4.5 months on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. There were no measures of self-esteem reported in this study, but if one is to be correct in inferring from other research that improving achievement enhances self-esteem and motivation, this type of program could help educators achieve the goal of effective desegregation—high quality education for all pupils.

Summary

In summary, research findings have shown that the self-esteem of black children in interracial schools is usually comparable to the self-esteem of white children in the same schools, yet the black children usually get lower grades than the white children and have lower achievement test scores. Their self-esteem is only weakly related to their achievement. How are students able to have such a high concept of their achievement when they are not meeting the school's achievement standards? One plausible explanation is that they are comparing themselves only to their black classmates. There is a need to develop policies for desegregation that will raise achievement and, through raising achievement, build a stronger relationship between self-esteem and achievement among black pupils.

How can this be done? To begin with, desegregation must be complete and carried out at the classroom level. Students must not be resegregated through tracking. Even ability grouping within
classrooms must be eliminated if the goal of desegregation, equality of educational opportunity for all pupils, is to be realized. This will require reorganizing the instructional process through such instructional strategies as mastery learning, multiple-ability group teaching, and teaching-learning games. Without changes being made in schools, there is little hope for making the most of the dream of the Brown decision.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

The black segment of our population was one of the few minorities directly prevented from full participation in the public schools. After the Civil War, blacks were allowed to attend schools but not alongside white students. In 1896 The Supreme Court upheld this practice as constitutional in the case of Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), and the doctrine of "separate but equal" became an acceptable principle (cited in Bartz & Maehr, 1984, p. 38). All this changed, however, in 1954 with the Supreme Court's decision in the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) case. In its landmark decision the court recognized the great importance of education in the scheme of American society.

In this case, as in most desegregation cases, there were two parts to the proceedings; liability and remedy. Liability pertained to finding of fact which demonstrated that the defendant violated the constitutional rights of the plaintiffs. When the court found the defendant liable for the damage or harm, then a remedy had to be determined which would restore the plaintiffs to the condition they would have experienced if the liability had not occurred. In terms of the Brown case, the students were to be restored to the condition they would have experienced if the segregation had not occurred. The goal of the remedy was to rectify the harm done to their hearts and minds.
Clearly, minority children differ from their white peers in terms of social status. Further, beyond the differences in social status, there are also differences in subculture patterns that differentiate between white and minority persons on comparable social status. Both types of differences can strongly affect measures that vary with social status, notably measures like achievement.

Minority students in predominantly Anglo schools score higher on achievement tests. This does not seem to be because of the "whiteness" of the school but because predominantly white schools have student bodies with higher socioeconomic status.

Most studies of desegregation were conducted shortly after the desegregation plan studied was put into effect. This meant that the students were not representative of graduates of desegregated schools. These students were still in school in nearly every case and, in a number of cases, they began desegregation not at kindergarten or first grade but after they had already attended segregated schools. Thus their experience is not representative of a future group of students who would experience 12 or 13 years of desegregation by the end of high school. Based upon data reported, the beneficial effects of desegregation are most likely when children are desegregated at an early age.

Research also showed that black achievement was higher in schools where staff racial climate of the classroom was more positive. This implied that certain kinds of desegregation plans produced enhanced achievement by creating more favorable racial situations. Most studies comparing white vs. black achievement do, in
fact, find average differences in achievement test scores favoring white students (Coleman et al., 1966; St. John, 1975). One might infer from this that these students not only have higher expectation and value achievement more, but that they also possess more effective study habits and strategies (Sears, 1963). There is no way that black children can learn from their white peers if they are in different buildings. Moreover, children's play serves an important instructional role in this regard; it is in play that children model, inform, and instruct their peers in many types of activity. If, in fact, white children use these skills more frequently than black children and feel that they are appropriate school activities, then segregation only serves to sustain and accentuate these "peer" cultural differences.

Children are at a disadvantage when they internalize the pessimistic expectation of their school environment and fail to learn the values and goals which are associated with the larger culture's meaning of achievement. One probable outcome is a lowered level of performance due to a lack of motivation and strategies. A series of failures is devastating to a child. Using past performance as a gauge for future expectations, a realistic child who is failing will certainly lower his own expectations and goals. Another potential outcome of poor performance, especially when combined with negative social feedback, is anxiety. After repeated failure and negative feedback, which is certainly unpleasant, a child may feel anxious in anticipation of future evaluative situations.

The literature on culture and motivation provides some insight
into how different values play an important role in determining motivation and achievement within the school situation. Most of this work begins with the premise that all people are motivated to do some task(s) in some situations and continues on to assume that different cultural groups have unique goals and means to those goals which are validated within the group structure. In terms of this discussion, one could state that children are motivated to achieve in some situations on some tasks (e.g., music lessons, basketball court, math quiz) and that a partial explanation for these differences may be the values and pressures which affect members of a particular culture. From a psychological point of view, achievement in a particular area will be valued depending on the degree to which it confirms characteristics of the self that are culturally approved. Peer groups have a determining effect on what is valued and what is not seen as appropriate for members of a group. A student can acquire values and behaviors that are adaptive to school success through interaction with peers or be restrained by being a member of a group which devalues school achievement and perhaps punishes school success. Most likely this will be a difficult area to attempt intervention in, given the skepticism and resistance attempts that change are likely to encounter. However, the greatest challenge and most rewarding avenue of study, increasing motivation, may lie in understanding how children and parents perceive school, value it as a means to future goals, identify with its values, and understand the process by which one succeeds in the school system. This knowledge would lead to more effective techniques of helping children achieve
goals they desire.

If black children's lower performance is not due to a difference in native ability, then one must look elsewhere for the cause of the established performance difference, with motivation becoming the likely factor. Equality of motivation should be the goal of educational interventions. Instead of striving for equality of academic success, which may be unrealistic, maybe motivating children to achieve to the best of their ability should be the ideal to which our educational system strives.

The most important lesson to be learned from the past is that each case had unique characteristics and thus demands a unique remedy plan. In other words, there is not one answer which can be decided upon in a courtroom and then applied uniformly to all educational settings. Each remedy plan would have to meet the needs of specific children, teachers, and parents. Past experience in the educational field has shown that a truly cooperative relationship between professionals and participants produces the most effective programs.

Emotional and psychological adjustments are going to be required of all members of the school districts affected by a desegregation plan. For any meaningful change to occur, parents, children, teachers, and staff must change their attitudes and behavior toward each other and, if this is to occur, then all parties must be brought into the planning stages, provided resources to cope with change, and given incentives that make it worth their while to follow their own or others' program. Without these conditions, supports and rein-
forcements even the best-planned programs will fail to be implemented successfully in the actual school context.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


52


