DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 045 276 24 RC 004 926

AUTHOR Dreyer, Philip H.
TITLE The Relation of Self-Esteem to Personal-Social Adjustment Among American Indian Students: The Personal-Social Adjustment of American Indian Youth. National Study of American Indian Education. Final Report.
INSTITUTION Chicago Univ., Ill.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
BUREAU NO BR-8-0147
PUB DATE Sep 70
CONTRACT OEC-0-8-080147-2805
NOTE 27p.; Series 3, No. 10

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.45
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement, *American Indians, Aspiration, *Cross Cultural Studies, Education, *Educational Research, Eskimos, *Questionnaires, *Self Concept, Self Esteem, Social Attitudes, Testing

ABSTRACT

The document is 1 in a series of papers for the National Study of American Indian Education. Data for the study were collected by means of 2 paper-and-pencil questionnaires administered to approximately 2,000 Indian elementary and high school students from the following groups: Plains Indians, Southwest Indians, Northwest Indians and Eskimos, Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians, North Carolina Indians, Oklahoma Indians, and urban Indians. Among the factors considered in this study were (1) How did Indian students view their future when compared to their self-evaluation in the present? (2) How did Indian students rate Indian and White cultures, and did their self-esteem ratings correlate more with 1 culture than with the other? and (3) How did Indian student self-esteem relate to school achievement as measured by rank in class? Among more specific conclusions, a positive quality of the Indian students seemed to emerge from this study. Included in the document are 8 tables of statistics showing the relation of self-esteem to social adjustment. (EJ)

THE NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

PROJECT OEC-0-8-080147-2805 FINAL REPORT

Series III The Personal-Social Adjustment of American Indian Youth

No. 10 The Relation of Self-Esteem to Personal-Social Adjustment among American Indian Students

Philip H. Dreyer
University of Chicago
September, 1970

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

This Study was conducted in 1968-69-70 with the aid of a grant from the United States Office of Education, OEC-0-8-080147-2805.

The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

V. A Survey of the Education of American Indians.

The Final Report Series will be available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service after they have been announced in Research in Education. They will become available commencing in August, 1970, and the Series will be completed by the end of 1970.

The Relation of Self-Esteem to Personal-Social Adjustment among American Indian Students

Several questions about the relationship of Indian student "self-esteem" to other variables motivated this study. The first of these was: how did Indian students view their future, especially when compared to their self-evaluation in the present? A second was how did Indian students rate Indian and White cultures and did their "self-esteem" ratings correlate more with their [illegible]ings of one culture than with the other? A third was how did Indian stu[illegible] "self-esteem" relate to school achievement as measured by rank in class? These questions emerged from earlier studies of the "phenomenal self"* of Indian students and were attempts to gain more knowledge of the construct of the "self," as well as attempts to find out more about the relationship of the "self" to other aspects of Indian students' thinking and experience. While there was an extensive literature about the "self" concept among white students and a growing literature focusing upon black students, American Indians have been seldom studied, so that it was hoped that this study would contribute to the self-concept literature by studying a minority group which has been largely ignored by psychologists in the past.

The data for this study were collected from over 2,000 American Indian elementary and high school students who attended schools from Alaska to North Carolina. Two paper and pencil questionnaires were administered to these students by field research teams from seven universities who cooperated in the National Study of American Indian Education.

Description of Variables

Four variables were defined for this study. They consisted of three self-concept measures, an index of each student's feelings about "my future," two adjustment to culture measures, one for "Indian culture" and one for "white culture," and a class rank rating for school achievement. All variables, except the class rank rating, were derived from two paper and pencil questionnaires, which were labeled "Student Inventory A" and "Student Inventory C." "Student Inventory A" was a twenty statement "self-esteem" questionnaire modeled after a similar instrument developed by Coopersmith (1959, 1967). This consisted of a series of twenty statements, such as "I think I'm as good as anybody else." and "No one pays much attention

*The term "phenomenal self" is used here to designate a person's conscious awareness of who he is and how he stands in relation to his total environment. In this sense it is a global perception which a person has of his position, function, and feeling with regard to his or her relationship to the objects, persons, and institutions around him. It is not meant to designate a person's unconscious organizing ability, coping style, or other personality attributes which are sometimes referred to as subconscious "ego" qualities.

to me at school.", after which the subject was asked to check one of two spaces labeled "like me" and "not like me." These statements reflected attitudes about the individual in relation to peers, family, and school. The items were worded in both positive and negative forms to prevent a response set, and four items were repeated in different form to act as a check on the consistency of response. "Student Inventory C" was a semantic differential questionnaire modeled after the measures developed by Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957). This consisted of the concepts "myself," "my future," "my home," "Indians," "tribe's way of life," "this school," "teachers," and "white people's way of life," each of which was rated on a six-place scale for the seven adjective pairs "good-bad," "worthless-valuable," "weak-strong," "happy-unhappy," "lazy-active," "smart-dumb," and "friendly-unfriendly." These adjective pairs were chosen to stress Osgood's "evaluation" factor, with five adjective pairs for "evaluation" and one pair each for the "potency" and "activity" factors. The variables "self-esteem," "my future," and two "adjustment to culture" measures were then defined as follows:

1. "Self-esteem" measures. Three measures for "self-esteem" were used. The first was the total score from the twenty statements of Inventory A, where a response indicating positive self regard was scored "1" and negative self regard was scored "0". This scale had a possible high score, indicating high "self-esteem," of 20, a normal distribution, and a mean of 12.5. The second was the mean score for the seven adjective pairs describing the concept "myself" from Inventory C. Here positive self-regard responses were scored "1" and negative responses "6", resulting in a scale ranging from "1", indicating high "self-esteem," to a possible low of "6", indicating low "self-esteem." This scale had a skewed distribution towards the positive end of the scale with an overall mean of 2.20.

As a result of a study of the reliability and concurrent validity of these two "self-esteem" measures, which were discussed elsewhere by this author, it was concluded that neither of these two measures alone could be said to represent an accurate measure of the "phenomenal self" of Indian students. To improve upon their validity and thus hopefully lead to a more total measure of Indian student "self-esteem," a third self-esteem scale was developed.

This third measure was developed by normalizing the distribution of "myself" scores from the semantic differential Inventory C and comparing them with the distribution of scores from the Twenty Statement Self-Esteem Inventory A to form a scale of values from one to twenty that were equivalent to the "myself" scores. This was done by assigning the mean score for "myself" a value of thirteen on the third scale and then arbitrarily fixing similar equivalent values from 14 to 20 for "myself" scores above the mean and values from 1 to 12 for "myself" scores below the mean. The scale was developed from data taken from Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians and Northwest Indians and Eskimos originally, 514 cases, and then applied to the other Indian groups. The equivalent value of from one to twenty for each subject's "myself" score was then added to his score from the Twenty Statement Self-Esteem Inventory A, so that a new score, called "Combined Self," was then devised for each subject. The "Combined Self" score then had a range of from three, indicating low

"self-esteem" to a high of forty, indicating high "self-esteem," a normal distribution, and high correlation with each of the two original measures (+.85 or higher with the mean score for the Twenty Statement Self-Esteem Inventory A and -.80 or higher with the mean score for "myself" from the semantic differential Inventory C). It was this "Combined Self" score which was used most often in this study as the measure of "self-esteem."

2. "My Future." This rating was defined as the student's mean score for ratings across the seven adjective pairs used to describe the semantic differential concept "my future" on Inventory C. The possible range of scores was from a positive or "high" value of 1.00 to a negative or "low" value of 6.00; however, the data again revealed a skewed distribution towards the positive end, so that the actual range fluctuated from 1.00 to 4.00 with a mean of about 1.60.

3. Adjustment to Culture. Two adjustment scores were used, each of which was defined as the mean score of ratings of adjective pairs used to describe three semantic differential concepts on Inventory C. "Adjustment to Indian Culture" was made up of the mean score for the 3 sets of 7 adjective pairs used to describe the concepts "My home," "Indians," and "Tribe's Way of Life." "Adjustment to White Culture" was made up of the mean score for the 3 sets of 7 adjective pairs used to describe the concepts "This School," "Teachers," and "White People's Way of Life."* Both of these measures produced more normal distributions than the other semantic differential concepts, particularly "myself" and "my future."

The fourth variable used in this study was class rank rating and was the only variable not derived from either Inventory A or C. Each student was rated as being in the top, middle, or bottom third of his class in school. In most cases these ratings were made by the student's classroom teacher or counselor on the basis of comparing each student with others in his or her class. In some cases, where teacher ratings were not available, ratings were made by research staff members who evaluated either a student's report card grades or his standardized achievement test scores against other members of the student's class in his school. Thus, the class rank ratings were made by different people using different criteria, but always attempting to use the student's own class group as a reference group. We do not know much about the reliability of these data. It turned out that less than one-third of the students were ranked in the "top third." It was of considerable interest and surprise to the study that no matter what method of rating class rank was used, the relationship between "self-esteem" and class rank seemed to be the same, as will be discussed below.

Description of the Sample

The final sample of American Indian students for whom both instruments were satisfactorily completed consisted of 2007 youths, 998 males, 1009 females,

*It may be noted that the concepts used to define "adjustment to white culture" are not as appropriate as those used to define "adjustment to Indian culture." This is a weakness.

ranging in age from eight to twenty. In addition, a non-Indian control group was included, consisting of 168 youths, 92 males and 76 females.

The groups whose scores are reported here were the following:

Plains Indians. Five Indian communities (Blackfeet, Sioux, Navaho) studied by the University of Colorado Field Center. 253 boys and 242 girls in the age-range 8-20 inclusive.

Southwest Indians. Ten Indian communities or schools (Pima Papago, Apache, Hopi, Laguna, Acoma, Navaho) studied by the University of Arizona Field Center. 395 boys and 364 girls, aged 8-20.

Northwest Indians and Eskimos. Four Indian and one Eskimo communities or schools (Quinault, Makah, Tlingit, Eskimo) studied by the San Francisco State College Field Center. 186 boys and 143 girls, aged 8-20.

Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians. Three schools in Wisconsin and two in Minnesota (Chippewa, Menominee, Sioux) studied by the University of Minnesota Field Center. 97 boys and 85 girls, aged 8-17, mostly in schools where the majority of students were Indian. There was also a junior high school in Minneapolis, called School C, with 21 Indian boys and 25 Indian girls, who were in the minority in this school, and are reported as part of the Urban Indian group.

North Carolina Indians (Lumbee). Two Indian schools in Pembroke County (North Carolina) with 26 boys and 31 girls, aged 8-17. These were studied by the North Carolina State University Field Center.

Oklahoma Indians. Two communities in north central Oklahoma, with a minority of Indian students (Pawnee and Ponca), 26 boys and 39 girls. These were studied by the Oklahoma State University Field Center.

Urban Indians. Students in several elementary schools and a high school in Chicago, with 59 boys and 55 girls, age 8-17, studied by the University of Chicago staff, and 21 boys and 25 girls age 12-17, who were students at a junior high school in Minneapolis, studied by the University of Minnesota staff. All of these Indians were in a minority among students at the schools they attended.

Chicago and Colorado Non-Indians (Controls). White, Black, and Oriental students in the same schools studied by the Chicago research staff and white students in the same schools studied by the Colorado staff, with 87 boys and 75 girls, age 8-17.

Results

Self-Esteem and My Future. The attitude which a person has about his future has often been noted as one indication of mental health and of an individual's general feelings about what life holds in store for him. For Indian youths

who are members of one of America's most neglected and impoverished minority groups there was reason to expect that the future would be seen as a time of uncertainty and doubt. The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of Indian students toward their future, particularly in comparison to their view of themselves in the present. It sought to answer the general questions: did Indian students see their future as being different from the present, and were they optimistic or pessimistic about the future?

The instruments used in this case were two concepts from the semantic differential Inventory C. The measures used were the mean scores for the concepts "myself" and "my future" rated across seven adjective pairs from a positive score of "1" to a negative score of "6". The results are given in Table 1.

The results from Table 1 clearly indicate that all groups of Indian students rated their future more positively than their present self. Chi-square tests of these differences revealed that the differences were statistically significant in almost every group, the exception being North Carolina Indians. Furthermore this trend was consistent across all age groups for both sexes.

These results would seem to indicate that Indian students looked toward the future with feelings of optimism and hop , as a time when they expected that life would be better than it was in the present and as a time when their personal aspirations would be fulfilled. In no sense do these data indicate a feeling of what some researchers have termed "alienation" or a view of the future as a time of hopelessness and frustration. There appeared to be no difference between the comparative views of the Indian students and the non-Indian Controls in this regard. Both groups saw the future significantly more positively than the present, and neither appeared to be "alienated" in the sense of looking upon the future pessimistically.

We could not tell, of course, what the nature of the future was for the Indian students, since each student held his own view of what he hoped from the future; however, the consistency and size of the difference between the "my self" and "my future" ratings had important implications for Indian educators. Regardless of school achievement problems, difficulties in social adjustment, or economic problems, the picture this study revealed was of a student who was basically positive in his attitude about his future and who looked forward to the future as a time of self-improvement and personal fulfillment.

Self-Esteem and Adjustment to Culture. This study sought to add clarity to the complex issues of cultural "adjustment" or "assimilation" by looking at two aspects of the data. The first of these was the relationship of "self-esteem" to the two measures "adjustment to Indian culture" and "adjustment to white culture." The object of this correlational analysis was to find out with which culture the Indian student seemed to identify more closely. The second type of analysis was designed to see whether Indian students rated the two cultures, as defined by our instruments, differently, and if so, what the ratings indicated about the Indian students' perceptions of the two cultures. The correlations of "Combined Self" and the two cultures are given in Table 2, while the mean ratings for the two cultures are given in Table 3.

Table 1

MEAN SCORES FOR CONCEPTS "MYSELF" AND "MY FUTURE" FOR INDIAN STUDENT GROUPS AND NON-INDIAN CONTROLS

(Lower score is more positive rating)

	(N)	"Myself"	"My Future"	Difference
Plains Indians	(495)	2.12	1.86	.26
Southwest Indians	(759)	2.30	1.98	.32
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(329)	2.12	1.63	.49
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(185)	2.37	1.80	.57
North Carolina Indians	(57)	1.70	1.37	.33
Oklahoma Indians	(65)	2.26	1.78	.48
Urban Indians	(114)	2.29	1.76	.53
Non-Indian Controls	(167)	1.92	1.56	.36

Table 2

PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATIONS OF MEAN SCORES FOR "COMBINED SELF" AND ADJUSTMENT TO WHITE AND INDIAN CULTURES FOR INDIAN STUDENTS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND AGE GROUPS

	Age-group											
	8 - 11			12 - 14			15 - 17			18 - 20		
Area	(N)	White	Indian	(N)	White	Indian	(N)	White	Indian	(N)	White	Indian
Plains Indians	(142)	.254	.326	(168)	.426	.356	(133)	.304	.307	(52)	.225	.280
Southwest Indians	(92)	.487	.414	(257)	.354	.419	(213)	.284	.473	(197)	.198	.475
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(25)	.534	.428	(89)	.294	.158	(148)	.099	.365	(67)	.448	.585
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(22)	.315	.183	(111)	.404	.493	(49)	.523	.578			
No. Carolina Indians	(10)	.584	.499	(14)	.039	.068	(33)	.052	.645			
Oklahoma Indians	(14)	.403	.567	(31)	.571	.566	(11)	.570	.499			
Urban Indians	(21)	-.039	.493	(81)	.277	.462	(12)	.073	.382			
Non-Indian Controls	(63)	.509	.120	(47)	.431	.428	(57)	.340	.334			

The correlations between "Combined Self" scores and ratings of the two cultures given in Table 2 showed that there was a consistently positive relationship between the "self" and culture ratings, indicating that perceptions of the "phenomenal self" are generally related to perceptions of the cultures in which the Indian students lived. This relationship seemed to fluctuate in both an upward and a downward direction across age groups with no consistent age trend appearing. A separate analysis of these trends for males and females also revealed that there was no consistent sex difference in this relationship for the various age groups.

Table 2 also showed that Indian students generally related their "self-esteem" to both White and Indian cultures about equally and did not seem to be identified more with one culture than the other. The only exception to this was the Urban Indian group which had a higher correlation between "self-esteem" and Indian Culture for every age group and which seemed to be the only group that was clearly identified with one of the two cultures, in this case Indian culture.

The nearly equal relationship of "self-esteem" with the measures of adjustment to Indian and to White culture may be due in part to the fact that half of the self-esteem score is based on the semantic differential inventory which also included the concepts on which the Indian and White culture adjustment scores are based. Insofar as there is a "social desirability" element in the semantic differential, this may have operated on all three mean scores, making them less than truly independent means, and raising their intercorrelations.

In the light of this consideration, the departure of the Urban Indian group from the others is especially noteworthy, since it is likely that truly independent measures would have produced an even stronger indication of their closeness to Indian culture and their relative distance from White culture. It might be expected that Urban Indians would be at least moderately acceptant of their predominantly White cultural surroundings; however, quite the reverse appeared to be true. Given their minority group status amid the larger White urban environment, the urban Indian students appeared to become stronger in their cultural identification as Indians.

If such a differentiation between the relationship of "self-esteem" to White and Indian culture were the result of the urban Indians perceiving themselves as a minority "out-group" which "suffered" from discrimination by the majority, we would expect that all Indian student groups who were in a minority among the students at their schools, regardless of the schools' location, would also show such a distinction between their perceptions of their "self-esteem" and the two cultures. An analysis of our data by minority group status of the Indian students among students attending rural and small city schools did not reveal this to be the case. For six schools which were located in rural areas and small cities where Indians comprised no more than 25 percent of the student population the correlations between "Combined Self" scores and ratings of White and Indian cultures were essentially the same, with no clear difference indicated between the Indian students' relative closeness to Indian and White cultures. Thus it appeared that the pattern of closer identification with Indian culture exhibited by the urban Indian students was a fact unique to the large city Indian students

The urban Indian student data came about equally from Chicago and Minneapolis. Examination of the data from these two places indicates that the low or negative correlation between self-esteem and adjustment to White Culture comes largely from one junior high school in Minneapolis, which we have called "School C." The situation in this school will be discussed in some detail below. There has been a good deal of friction between Indian students and their parents, on the one hand, and the school administration as well as other groups of students in the school. Since the score on "adjustment to White Culture" depends heavily on ratings of "This School" and "Teachers," this special situation probably caused at least part of the difference between "urban Indians" and other Indian students that appear in Tables 2 and 3.

Given the fact that most Indian students did not seem to show a difference between the relationship of their "self-esteem" ratings to White and Indian cultures, this study sought to find out if Indian students rated the two cultures differently, particularly if they rated one culture more positively than the other.

The ratings for White and Indian cultures given in Table 3 indicated that five of seven Indian student groups rated Indian culture more positively than White culture, and that for three groups--Minnesota-Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Urban Indians--the more positive rating for Indian culture was statistically significant. Of the two groups which did not fit this trend, one, Southwest Indians, rated the two cultures the same and the other, Oklahoma Indians, rated White culture slightly more positively than Indian culture.

Reviewing the data for the ratings of White and Indian cultures for age trends and sex differences revealed no significant differences across age groups and no significant differences in the ratings made by males or females. There was a tendency for ratings of White culture to fluctuate more across age groups than the ratings of Indian culture. 8-11 year olds tended to be more positive in their ratings of both cultures than did 12-14 and 15-17 year olds, a trend which was more accentuated for the ratings of White culture than for Indian culture; however, these age trends were not statistically significant. Some groups did show slight differences in the ratings for the two sexes, but these differences were not uniform across the groups and were not significantly large in any case.

The most conspicuous exceptions among those studied were the Urban Indians and the North Carolina Indians. They rated Indian culture positively and White culture considerably less favorably than the other student groups. These findings were especially interesting in the light of the earlier findings about the correlation between "self-esteem" and adjustment to White and Indian cultures. The two groups had different patterns of response and will be discussed separately.

The Urban Indian group apparently had a stronger sense of differentiation between White and Indian cultures than did the other Indian groups, and they also felt more strongly than the other groups that White culture was less favorable than Indian culture. What seemed to emerge from the data of Tables 2 and 3 was the conclusion that Urban Indian students had a clearer sense of what might be called cultural boundaries and a clearer perception of cultural differences with an accompanying view of themselves as more clearly belonging to one culture and not to the other.

The North Carolina Indian group showed a different pattern of correlations and of ratings of White and Indian cultures from any of the other groups. Since the numbers of North Carolina students are small, the findings are less reliable than they are for the groups with larger numbers, but there clearly is something unique about this group. The North Carolina students were in schools with something like 95 percent Indian enrollment; and they lived in a county that also had all-white and all-black schools, of which they must have been aware, especially as they grew older. For the 12-17 year old groups, the correlation coefficients of self-esteem with ratings of White culture were practically zero, as was true with most of the Urban Indians. However, the correlations of self-esteem with ratings of Indian culture fluctuated from zero to .645. Table 3 shows the North Carolina Indians to be the most favorable of all groups toward "Indian culture," and considerably less favorable toward White culture. Here it may be suggested that the Indian adolescents were becoming acutely aware of the existence of three color or racial groups in their county, and were distinguishing among them in a way that is favorable to their own group. It would have been interesting to get their ratings of "Negroes" and "the Negro way of life."

The Special Case of School C

We have noted that the urban Indian students rated Indian culture much more favorably than White culture. They rated the School and Teachers very low, as can be seen in Table 4A. Upon examination, we found that the low scores of the urban Indians were produced mainly by the 46 pupils in School C, a junior high school in Minneapolis. Accordingly, we looked into this situation to see whether we could learn something from it.

School C and another junior high school in Minneapolis were scenes of much hostility among students and between students and teachers in the period from 1968 to 1970, when this study was made. The schools both had a minority group of about 20 percent Indian pupils, and another minority group of black pupils. There was a good deal of hostility between these groups.

There was also a considerable amount of hostility of Indian pupils toward teachers. Students in their interviews frequently singled out teachers by name as ones they thought were prejudiced against Indian pupils. Teachers were asked to comment on the attitudes of a random list of Indian pupils, and they said with respect to the majority on this list that they were "hostile" toward the school and toward teachers. They also mentioned certain ones as having called them names in public and having defied them. Yet the teachers of School C, on the attitude questionnaire to which teachers from all schools in the Study responded, were more favorably disposed toward Indian pupils and less authoritarian than the other teachers in the Minnesota-Wisconsin area.

Thus, from the Student Inventories, from Teacher Inventories, and from public knowledge, School C presented an unusual degree of conflict and hostility of Indian pupils toward the school and toward teachers.

The situation of Indian adults in Minneapolis is one of greater militancy and greater protest against the Establishment than was true of any other community in the Study. The Minneapolis Indian group is known to be more militant than any other large city Indian group in recent years. Thus the children may be expected to have heard a good deal of hostile talk and to have observed a good deal of militancy on the part of their parents. This critical attitude of Indian parents showed clearly in the interviews conducted by the Study with Minneapolis Indian parents. On the scale which measured the extent to which the parent perceived the school as meeting the needs of his child, the most frequent rating by the 800 parents from the 30 communities in the Study was 4, which indicated mild approval. But 75 percent of the School C parent respondents were below 4, expressing degrees of disapproval ranging from mild to extreme. On the scale measuring the parent's opinion of his child's teacher's performance, the most frequent score was 5, indicating definite approval. But 55 percent of School C parents rated below 4, indicating definite disapproval of the teacher's performance. By comparison, only 15 percent of the sample of Chicago Indian parents scored below 4 on this scale. On the scale measuring parents' opinion of the school administration, the most frequent scores from the 800 parents were 4 or 5. School C had 65 percent below 4, indicating definite disapproval of the school administration.

Observation of this school in comparison with other urban schools by staff members of the Study did not disclose any striking difference visible

to neutral observers, except the greater hostility of the students in School C.

Thus it appears that the junior high school pupils to some extent were reflecting attitudes of the adult Indian community toward the institutions of Minneapolis.

The most reliable measure we have of the students' attitude is the Semantic Differential, which gave the following average scores for School C compared with Chicago Indian pupils. (The lower score indicates a more favorable attitude.)

	Teachers	White Culture	Indian Culture
School C	3.47	3.34	1.93
Chicago	2.07	2.20	1.90

Here we see that the School C students are much less favorable to Teachers and to the White culture than they are to Indian culture, and that they differ from the Chicago Indian students by being more negative to Teachers and White culture.

Reading the interviews with the School C students reveals a considerable degree of ambivalence on the part of the Indian pupils toward the life they lead in the city. Nearly all of them reported that they travel frequently (by bus or automobile) to the lake country or to the Indian reservations where their grandparents or aunts and uncles are today. Weekly or monthly visits are the rule, and the junior high school youth often make these trips alone. Some quotations from these interviews illustrate the ambivalence of some students, and the actual preference of others for the "Indian way." The most hostile girl (a Chippewa) says, of the lake area where her forbears lived, "I like it and I would like to stay there." A boy says, "I go up almost every weekend to visit my grandfather. I like to hunt and fish up there. I'd like to stay there all the time because I like to hunt and fish and the dog can run free." The most frequent kind of comment is this from a girl, "I like it there. You can do almost anything you want. But I wouldn't want to stay there all the time. I like the city and have friends here." A rare comment came from a boy. "I'd rather live down here because some of the adults are funny up there and it's always quiet and a little restricted."

When we consider that the pupils of School C were all in the age range 12 to 15, it is not strange that there should be a general romantic feeling about the woods and the lakes and the free life, especially on the part of the boys. It is surprizing that the girls of school C are somewhat more negative to the school than the boys are, as measured by the Semantic Differential.

Apparently, very few of these young people of either sex can see themselves growing up into a satisfactory future through achievement in school. Most of their parents have not done so, and cannot set them an example of rewards gained from schooling. Just at present their parents are actively dissatisfied with employment and housing in Minneapolis, and are setting an example of protest against White institutions.

Parents and students alike at School C are strongly in favor of studying Indian culture. The schools are moving in that direction. It will be interesting to see whether this has any influence on the attitudes of Indian students toward education and life in the city.

Table 3

MEAN RATINGS FOR "WHITE CULTURE" AND "INDIAN CULTURE"
FOR INDIAN STUDENTS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA
(Lower score is more positive rating)

Area	(N)	White Culture	Indian Culture	Indian-White Difference	Significance of Difference
Plains Indians	(495)	2.13	1.94	.19	N.S.
Southwest Indians	(759)	2.04	2.04	.00	N.S.
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(329)	1.90	1.79	.11	N.S.
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(182)	2.40	1.89	.51	$p < .05$
No. Carolina Indians	(57)	2.32	1.55	.77	$p < .05$
Oklahoma Indians	(56)	1.97	2.14	-.17	N.S.
Urban Indians	(114)	2.66	1.91	.75	$p < .025$
Non-Indian Controls	(167)	1.96	2.13	-.17	N.S.

Ratings of School and Teachers on Semantic Differential

In connection with the study of differential adjustment of the Indian students to Indian and White culture, it is useful to look at the data from the semantic differential on Teachers as a concept to be rated by the Indian students. Although this rating makes up one-third of the rating on White culture, it seems to throw a special light on the situation of the Urban Indians that is worth separate consideration.

Tables 4A and 4B give detailed data on the SD ratings by boys and girls, and by the various Indian and non-Indian sub-groups. The correlation between SD ratings on Teachers and This School was quite high, and indicated that the ratings of Teachers would be quite similar to those of This School.

Teachers were evaluated slightly more negatively than Myself by all the major groups except the Latin-American girls. The Anglo-Americans displayed a greater negative evaluation than the Indians, if the difference between the average ratings is taken as a measure. The differences between ratings for Myself and Teachers were .41 and .34 for Anglo-American boys and girls respectively, and .13 and .10 for Indian boys and girls.

Thus, in general, we might infer that Indian adolescents like their teachers better than the Anglo-American adolescents of the same general socioeconomic status. At any rate, we do not have any evidence here of widespread alienation from the school on the part of Indian adolescents aged 12-17, who are now in school.

Comparison of Indian Boys and Girls. When Indian boys and girls are compared on their attitudes toward Teachers, the boys have the more favorable attitude in 9 of the 10 possible comparisons. The differences are usually small, but consistent. Indian girls are slightly more critical of teachers than Indian boys.

There are two schools or school groups in which the Indian girls are much more negative toward teachers than are Indian boys. These two are in the Minnesota study. In three Wisconsin schools as a group, the girls average 2.58 against 2.32 for boys. For School C, the Minneapolis junior high school, girls are very negative, averaging 3.71 against 3.23 for boys.

Conclusions on Self-Esteem and Cultural Adjustment.

In conclusion, the results of this study of the relationship between "self-esteem" and cultural adjustment for Indian students revealed that most Indian groups showed a mild positive correlation between their "self-esteem" ratings and their ratings of White and Indian cultures. The correlations fluctuated across both geographical groups and age groupings. There appeared to be no clear difference in the relationship of the "self" to the two cultures. In rating the cultures themselves without regard to "self-esteem" the Indian students tended to rate Indian culture more positively than White culture; however, the differences in the ratings were not statistically significant in most cases. Urban Indians and North Carolina Indians appeared to be an exception to these generalizations, revealing both a higher correlation between their "self-esteem" and Indian culture than with White culture and a significantly more negative view of the White culture than Indian culture. This was

Table 4A

COMPARISON OF GROUP SCORES ON THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

INDIAN GROUPS ON TEACHERS. Age 12-17.

Group	Plains	South-west	North-west	Oklahoma	North Caro.	Balti-more	Hoopa	Minne-sota	School C	Chicago
Males										
Number	150	236	129	27	21	23	27	86	21	36
Adjective Pair										
Good-Bad	2.22	1.66	1.72	1.65	1.96	1.87	1.63	2.16	3.24	1.57
Happy-Sad	2.49	1.98	1.76	2.42	2.19	2.22	1.96	2.35	3.05	2.00
Strong-Weak	2.25	2.12	2.02	2.36	2.28	2.00	2.30	2.52	3.43	2.18
Active-Lazy	2.25	1.94	1.98	1.79	2.33	1.74	1.93	2.25	3.19	2.38
Average	2.30	1.92	1.87	2.06	2.19	1.96	1.96	2.32	3.23	2.03
Females										
Number	160	237	120	14	25	28	21	74	25	33
Good-Bad	2.45	1.65	1.77	2.11	2.35	1.71	1.81	2.55	3.75	2.38
Happy-Sad	2.49	1.84	1.95	2.15	2.40	2.11	1.86	2.85	3.29	1.98
Strong-Weak	2.13	2.32	2.26	2.26	2.35	2.33	1.81	2.68	3.79	2.10
Active-Lazy	2.25	2.22	2.06	2.01	2.20	1.89	1.90	2.24	4.00	1.94
Average	2.33	1.99	2.01	2.13	2.33	2.04	1.85	2.58	3.71	2.10

Note: Low score is the more favorable response.

Table 4B

COMPARISON OF GROUP SCORES ON THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

Non-Indian Groups on TEACHERS, Age 12-17

Group	Anglo-Americans			Latin-American	
	Chicago 1961	Chicago-Colorado 1969	Virginia-D.C. 1970	Buenos Aires 1961	Puerto Rico 1968
MALES					
Number	50	52	15	50	150
Adjective Pair					
Good-Bad	2.04	2.28	2.25	1.52	2.25
Happy-Sad	2.30	2.57	2.69	2.58	2.23
Strong-Weak	3.14	2.37	2.50	2.42	2.41
Active-Lazy	2.38	1.89	2.81	1.78	2.02
Average	2.47	2.28	2.56	2.07	2.23
FEMALES					
Number	50	52	16	50	150
Good-Bad	1.90	1.79	2.14	1.47	2.22
Happy-Sad	2.40	2.10	3.00	2.50	2.49
Strong-Weak	2.24	2.31	2.93	2.45	2.15
Active-Lazy	1.93	2.22	3.00	1.84	2.30
Average	2.12	2.11	2.77	2.06	2.29

Note: Low score is the more favorable response.

For description of these groups, see paper III, No. 9, "The Indian Self-Image as Evaluated in the Semantic Differential."

interpreted as meaning that the Urban Indians and North Carolina Indians had a clearer sense of cultural boundaries than the other groups and a closer identification with Indian culture than the other groups.

It did not appear from these data that there was a strong sense of what some have called "alienation" from either Indian or White culture among the Indian students studied. If "alienation" is meant to mean a mental health status, such as depression, negativism, or neuroticism, the data from this study did not reveal such symptoms. The data from one Minneapolis school did, however, reveal evidence of negativism. On the whole, the Indian students tended to be positive about both cultures and rated their own native culture slightly more favorably than White culture, as might be expected. If "alienation" is meant to mean a sociological state, such as feelings of powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation, our data did not show such feelings. It appeared that by and large the Indian students viewed themselves as belonging about equally to both cultures which they tended to rate positively.

Rather than make much of the term "alienation," it appeared that a more useful way to interpret these data was to view them as indicative of the Indian students' awareness of cultural boundaries and their sense of themselves as having a "self" which was clearly defined and clearly identified with a culture. Using the data in this sense, it appeared that most of the Indian students did not have a well differentiated notion of separate cultures and that they did not identify with a particular culture. The Urban Indian and North Carolina Indian groups, which were the most exceptional, provided a good example of students who did seem to have both a clear feeling of two distinct cultures and a sense of personal identification with one of those cultures, so that we could better see the issue as one of perception of cultural boundaries and a feeling of distance from cultures that are perceived distinctly. For most of the Indian students it appeared that cultural distinctions were blurred, so that they perceived themselves as not so much belonging or not belonging to a culture as attempting to adapt to a wide range of separate situations each of which had a different meaning for each individual. For the Indian students, being an "Indian" or a "White person" was not so important as being an individual, a boy or girl, a student, or a member of a family. Thus the entire issue of "adjustment to culture" did not seem to bear in an important way upon the Indian students' feelings of "self-esteem."

Self-Esteem and School Achievement

Perhaps the most widely published finding with regard to the "self-concept" and its measurement as "self-esteem" is that it is positively related to school achievement. A student who does well in school usually has a positive "self" image and higher "self-esteem" than others who do less well in school. Similarly a student who has high "self-esteem" is likely to have a high level of achievement in school tasks. Rosenberg (1965), for example, states that "Our data show that school grades are clearly related to self-esteem. . . " (p.51). To cite only one other example, the Coleman report on Equal Educational Opportunity (1966) included as part of the student questionnaires self-report items to measure attitudes such as "interest in school. . . pursuit of reading outside school. . . and self-concept," the results of which he stated were that

> These tables show that, whatever measure is chosen, the attitudinal variables have the strongest relation to achievement. It is, of course, reasonable that self-concept should be so closely related to achievement, since it represents the individual's estimate of his own ability... The relation of self-concept to achievement is, from one perspective, merely the accuracy of his estimate of his scholastic skills, and is probably more a consequence than a cause of scholastic achievement...(p.320).

Since most of these studies that reported the relationship between "self-esteem" and scholastic achievement were done with white students, this study proposed to see if the relationship also held for American Indian students. Initially the large literature supporting the relationship led us to expect that Indian students would also show a high correlation between their "self-esteem" ratings and their class rank ratings; however, one cautionary note regarding the relationship for minority group students was sounded by Coleman that led us to test this expectation carefully.

> ...Of the three attitudinal variables, however, it (self-concept) is the weakest, especially among minority groups, where it shows inconsistent relations to achievement at grades 9 and 12...(p.320).

The first analysis of our data with regard to self-esteem and scholastic achievement was to study the mean self-esteem scores of the Indian students who were ranked in the top, middle, and bottom thirds of their respective classes in school. Table 5 gives these results.

The figures for the total Indian group showed that "self-esteem" scores did tend to decrease with rank in class, a decrease which was significant from top to middle (t-test, $p < .005$) but not significant from middle to bottom thirds. The figures for the various geographical area groups revealed that three out of six groups showed such a decrease in "self-esteem" scores from top to middle thirds of the class but little difference between the middle and bottom thirds. Of the remaining three geographical groups, two showed an increase in "self-esteem" from top to middle thirds, and one showed a decrease across all thirds of the class. Thus, while there appeared to be a trend in the direction of a positive relationship between "self-esteem" and class rank, the relationship did not appear to be very strong, nor did it appear to be consistent across all groups.

To explore this relationship further the data were analyzed for individual students to see the nature of the correlation between "self-esteem" scores and rank in class. Table 6 lists the correlations for students of different ages for three geographical areas.

Table 5

MEAN SCORE FOR "COMBINED SELF" OF INDIAN STUDENTS IN THE TOP, MIDDLE, AND BOTTOM THIRDS OF THEIR CLASS IN SCHOOL

Area	Top 3rd			Middle 3rd			Bottom 3rd		
	(N)	Mean	S.D.	(N)	Mean	S.D.	(N)	Mean	S.D.
Plains Indians	(118)	27.4	5.6	(243)	26.0	6.2	(153)	26.2	5.9
Southwest Indians	(39)	25.1	7.9	(35)	27.1	6.2	(34)	24.1	5.2
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(51)	27.8	5.5	(111)	26.0	5.8	(167)	26.3	6.3
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(14)	28.5	3.3	(87)	26.6	5.7	(83)	24.5	5.9
No. Carolina Indians	(24)	31.8	3.4	(20)	29.2	4.5	(12)	29.2	4.4
Oklahoma Indians	(14)	28.9	6.3	(9)	29.8	4.4	(21)	25.6	6.7
Total Indians	(260)	27.7	5.6	(505)	26.4	5.9	(470)	25.8	6.0

Table 6

PRODUCT-MOMENT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN "COMBINED SELF" SCORES AND RANK IN CLASS OF INDIAN STUDENTS BY AGE AND GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Area	Age Group							
	(N)	8 - 11	(N)	12 - 14	(N)	15 - 17	(N)	18 - 20
Plains Indians	(142)	-.03	(168)	.06	(133)	.22*	(52)	-.03
Northwest Indians	(25)	.28	(89)	.15	(148)	.07	(67)	.09
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(22)	-.07	(111)	.24**	(49)	.10		

* $p < .025$
** $p < .005$

These correlations revealed that there was a very low order relationship between "self-esteem" and rank in class. In only two instances did the relationship appear to be significantly greater than zero, so that in most cases it could be said that there was no relationship at all between "self-esteem" and class rank. In fact, the correlations were even lower than might be expected given the trends revealed by Table 5 of mean level of "self-esteem" by various class rank groups.

It was noted in an earlier paper that Indian boys had "self-esteem" scores which were significantly higher than Indian girls, especially for ages 12 to 20. Given this earlier finding, the relationship of "self-esteem" and class rank was studied for the two sexes to see if the trends noted for the total group varied by sex. The mean scores for "Combined Self" for boys and girls in each of the three class rank groups are given in Table 7.

For males there appeared to be a trend in the direction of a positive relationship between "self-esteem" score and class rank. Self-esteem scores dropped as class rank dropped; however, the differences from one class rank group to another, from top to middle and from middle to bottom thirds, were not statistically significant. Females showed a significant (t-test, $p < .05$) drop in "self-esteem" score from top third to middle third, but then an increase in "self-esteem" from middle third to bottom third, so that there was no consistent relationship between "self-esteem" and class rank. For all three class rank groups boys had higher "self-esteem" scores than girls, the same finding that was noted earlier when "self-esteem" was studied for boys and girls of different age groups; however, in only the case of middle third students was this sex difference significant. The distribution of boys and girls among the three class rank groups revealed that boys were significantly more likely to be ranked in the bottom third of their class than were girls (chi-square, $p < .025$).

From these data it appeared that the relationship between self-esteem and class rank was weak for both sexes but seemed stronger in a positive direction for boys than for girls. An examination of the correlation coefficients between "self-esteem" and class rank for boys and girls of different age and geographical area groups confirmed the general weakness of the relationship and showed that for most cases there was no great difference between the sexes. The correlations for the two sexes are given in Table 8.

The results of these analyses led us to conclude that for Indian students "self-esteem" was not related to school achievement, at least not to the extent that it appeared to be related for white populations which were reported in most studies. The value placed upon the "self" by Indian students seemed to be quite separate from performance in school and led to the hypothesis that scholastic achievement was not an important factor in the overall thinking of Indian students.

Table 7

MEAN SCORES FOR "COMBINED SELF" OF INDIAN STUDENT MALES AND FEMALES BY CLASS RANK GROUPS

	Top Third			Middle Third			Bottom Third		
	(N)	Mean	S.D.	(N)	Mean	S.D.	(N)	Mean	S.D.
Males	(116)	28.0	5.5	(237)	27.3	4.8	(261)	26.4	5.2
Females	(119)	26.8	6.2	(249)	25.3	6.4	(197)	26.1	6.7

Table 8

PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN "COMBINED SELF" SCORES AND CLASS RANK FOR MALE AND FEMALE INDIAN STUDENTS BY AGE AND GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

	(N)	(r)	(N)	(r)	(N)	(r)	(N)	(r)
Plains Indians								
Males	(67)	.04	(83)	.12	(60)	.33***	(32)	-.15
Females	(75)	-.11	(85)	.04	(73)	.19	(20)	.15
Northwest Indians and Eskimos								
Males	(15)	.44*	(47)	-.02	(77)	.07	(47)	.11
Females	(10)	-.03	(42)	.36**	(71)	.11	(20)	.06
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians								
Males	(11)	-.36	(56)	.21	(30)	.11		
Females	(11)	.21	(55)	.31**	(19)	.08		

* $p < .05$
** $p < .025$
*** $p < .01$

It may be that Indian students are different from white students in their orientation toward school, and we believe that there is some truth in this proposition. However, we also believe that the previous studies on the relation of self-esteem to school achievement have over-simplified the situation.

One important fact is that economically disadvantaged students have as high or higher self-esteem as do economically advantaged students. The several studies of Soares and Soares indicate that elementary and secondary school students of low socioeconomic status in a New England community have higher self-esteem than do students of high socioeconomic status. These writers point out that self-esteem is partly a reference-group phenomenon. A person's self-esteem is related to the group (family, socioeconomic, ethnic) against which he is likely to compare himself. Consequently, since children of low SES are likely to attend school with and to play with other children of low SES, their self-esteem is based, in part at least, on comparison of themselves with other children whose school achievement is below average.

There is also some evidence that students from middle-class homes are more critical of themselves than students from working-class homes. Thus, Rosenberg found that high school juniors and seniors in the state of New York from "old Yankee" stock had lower self-esteem scores than students from ethnic groups who arrived later as immigrants. Possibly these students were subjected at home and in school to expectations of superior school achievement, and therefore were less likely to rate themselves high on a self-esteem scale.

Therefore the self-esteem scores of Indian students should be interpreted in relation to their socioeconomic status as well as to their Indianness. While middle-class white students appear to see school achievement as an important part of their total view of themselves, Indian students may view school achievement as a separate activity which does not influence greatly their personal feelings of self-esteem.

The Indian student appears to be psychologically less invested in his school work than middle-class white students, taking as self-evaluation measures his performance in other, non-academic areas of activity. If the Indian youth as a student is to be better understood, it might be by investigating these areas of the orientation towards school and the place which academic achievement has in the thinking of Indian students. It seems clear that commonly held notions about the importance of school performance for the overall "self-concept" of students do not hold for Indian students and that much more needs to be known about the other factors in an Indian student's life, such as his orientation towards his family and Indian society in general, before the "phenomenal self" of Indian students can be accurately assessed and the role of formal education among Indians can be understood.

Conclusions

This study attempted to investigate the relationship of Indian students' "phenomenal self-esteem" to factors such as orientation towards the future, attitudes about Indian and White culture, and school achievement. What was found was that Indian students were generally optimistic about their future and rated their future more positively than their present. Most of the student groups rated Indian culture more positively than White culture, as defined by a semantic differential instrument, but the differences in ratings for the two cultures were generally insignificant, leaving the impression that most Indian students do not see cultural boundaries between Indian and White very clearly and do not have a definite

sense of themselves as more closely related to Indian culture than to White culture. The relationship between "self-esteem" and rank in class for Indian students was weak, tending to be more positive for boys than girls, so that it seemed that Indian students did not view school performance as an important index of their overall self evaluation, a finding which is different from the relatively high relationship between "self-esteem" and school achievement noted for middle-class white students in so many previous studies.

It is important to remember that these findings were derived from studying Indian youngsters who were still in school and who therefore were likely to be "better adjusted," more upwardly mobile, and more accepting of White societal values that permeated their schools than other Indian youths who had left school. These students might be expected to see the future brightly, for the White society at large teaches that education is the key to future employment and a better way of life.

On the other hand, the Indian youth who are still in school do not perceive themselves as people who are better or worse in relation to their achievement in school. They seem to have made only tentative and weak commitments to the values of the school and the White culture which it represents. They do not appear to be heavily "future oriented" in the sense that they are "wrapped up" in plans for the future which involve vocational preparation and school success.

In addition to these "post-hoc" interpretations, it is useful to note that this study did not find evidence to support the often-made remarks about Indian students being mal-adapted, "alienated," or negativistic. The Indian students did not appear to view school achievement, for example, the same way as most studies report that white students do; however, the Indian students did not appear to be "alienated" from school so much as directed towards other activities and values which have not yet been clearly defined. In a similar way, the measures of Indian and White culture used in this study showed that the negative feelings about White culture, which appeared to be slight, were not so important as the Indian students' feelings of positive regard for Indian culture.

It seems important, from the point of view of the educator, to ask why White culture, including white-oriented schools, is treated with indifference by Indian youth except in places where there is a sharp contrast and some degree of Indian militancy. It seems important to study how the Indian student, who operates within two somewhat contrasting cultures, attempts to develop a sense of personal identity which is Indian in a positive sense, rather than non-White in a negative sense. It is this positive quality of the Indian students which seemed to emerge most strongly from this study.