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ABSTRACT
              In order to understand the adjustment of blacks in an
integrated situation, it is vital to study the response of the whites
to the blacks in those situations. This study is an analysis of data
collected in the summer of 1970. The area of inquiry is the
subjective one of emotional climate, feelings of affect, evaluations,
and socio-emotional behavior in an integrated setting. The study
investigated the behavior and attitudes of black and white junior
high school boys in small, "task-oriented" groups. The focus is on
the assertive member in each group. The most assertive group member
is defined as position number one on initiation and/or influence in
his group. The investigation was to answer two broad questions: (1)
Are there any differences between the way black and white subjects
feel and behave toward assertive members who are black and toward
assertive members who are white in these groups? and (2) Is the
nature of assertive behavior different for black and white subjects?
The practical importance of studying assertive behavior and responses
to it lies in the necessity of school personnel to plan for possible
differences in behavior in integrated classrooms. The data analyzed
in the study was collected by Elizabeth Cohen in her Expectation
Training II project. The major purpose of her study was to change the
racial status in small, "task-oriented" groups composed of two white
and two black junior high school boys. (Author/JM)

THE EFFECT OF RACE ON ASSERTIVE
BEHAVIOR IN SMALL GROUPS*

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The Problem Defined

Very few issues in education have attracted as much attention as that of
desegregation. Americans of various political persuasions have heatedly
debated the pros and cons of Black and White children learning together.
White liberals and Black moderates write of the benefits of desegregation for
Black students. In a discussion of educating Black youngsters, Kenneth Clark
states, "....the goals of integration and quality education must be sought
together; they are interdependent." (Dark Ghetto, p. 117) Black militants
believe that integration would have several deleterious consequences for
Black children. In Black Power, Carmichael and Hamilton predict that inte-
gration would force the Black child to give up his identity and forswear his
heritage. (Black Power, p. 55).

The issue of the effect of integration on the education of Black children is
an important one, but it cannot be pursued in isolation. Integration means
that Black and White children will be educated in the same school rooms. The
impact of integration on Whites will affect Black students. If integration is to
mean more than racial segregation within the same school, it must mean that
White and Black students will interact with one another. The "success" of
integration may well be related to the quality of Black and White interaction.
If Whites are hostile to Blacks or tend to dominate them, the outcomes of
desegregation for Black students will certainly be affected.

In his, "Review of Evidence Relating to the Effects of Desegregation on the
Intellectual Performance of Negroes," Irwin Katz suggests that hostility or
lack of "friendliness" on the part of White students toward Blacks in inte-
grated schools will constitute a "social threat" to Blacks and might impair

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their academic performance. If the Black student believes that good per-formance arouses negative behavior in White classmates, he may lower his achievement rather than risk hostility.

Two studies have found that Blacks are subjected to "social threat" in inte-grated situations. Yarrow (1958) observed the behavior of Black and White youngsters in integrated and segregated summer camps. He found that White children directed twice as much aggression toward Black cabin mates as they did to their White peers. Tension symptoms appeared in almost twice as many children in desegregated camps as in the segregated camps. (Katz, Education for the Disadvantaged, pp. 132-133.)

Katz and Cohen (1962) conducted a study of Black and White college students. The students worked in integrated dyads. One half of the dyads received "Assertion Training" which guaranteed that both the Black and Whites knew answers to half of the questions on the task, and that Blacks were required to state their answer. Subjects in the Control Condition did not receive Assertion Training; and Black partners were less assertive than White partners. On a subsequent judgmental task, Black subjects in the Assertion Trained dyads were as assertive on the task as their White partners, but Black subjects in the Control Condition were not as assertive as their part-ners. When interviewed about the task, the Whites in the Assertion Trained Condition, underrated the accuracy of their Black partners. They were also less likely to prefer working with the same Black partner on future tasks than were Whites in the Control Condition.

These studies provide some evidence that under certain conditions, Whites react negatively to Blacks and that integrated situations are stressful. They suggest that in order to understand the adjustment of Blacks in an integrated situation, it is vital to study the response of the Whites to the Blacks in those situations. The evidence, however, is scanty and out of date.

A concomitant of neglecting to study White reactions in integrated groups is neglecting to study the subjective aspects of integration. Few inquiries have

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been made into the emotional climate of integrated groups, the feelings of affect between group members or the perceptions of group members toward one another. It is in this area where the possibility of "social threat" situations reside. Educational researchers have focused instead on the achievement of Black students in integrated schools. Most researchers of integrated schools rely on test scores of Black students to evaluate the "success" or "failure" of integration. The proclivity to "measure the measureables" persists in spite of the fact that test scores do not answer many questions which educators and parents consider important.

In particular, test scores cannot answer or even provide any clue to the following questions: Will Black and White children enjoy attending school together? Will they like and respect one another? Will they behave differently toward members of their own race than toward members of the other race? These questions demand research in the subjective area of integration and researchers who look at the impact of integration on both Black and White children.

This study is an analysis of data collected in the summer of 1970. The area of inquiry is the subjective one of emotional climate, feelings of affect, evaluations and socio-emotional behavior in an integrated setting. More specifically, the study investigated the behavior and attitudes of Black and White junior high school boys in small, "task-oriented" groups. The focus is on the assertive member in each group. The most assertive group member is defined as position number one on initiation and/or influence in his group. The investigator is motivated by two broad questions: (1) Are there any differences between the way Black and White subjects feel and behave toward assertive members who are Black and toward assertive members who are \ .nite in these groups? (2) Is the nature of assertive behavior different for Black and White subjects?

The practical importance of studying assertive behavior and responses to it, lies in the necessity of school personnel to plan for possible differences in behavior in integrated classrooms. School personnel may misunderstand

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stylistic differences between Black and White youngsters and students may suffer from any misunderstanding. School personnel may also have to learn to deal with hostility on the part of White students in integrated situations. Unless they are able to cope with White hostility in integrated schools, Black childrens' academic performance may be affected.

This study is an analysis of some of the data collected by Elizabeth Cohen in her Expectation Training II project. The major purpose of Cohen's study was to change the racial status ordering in small, "task-oriented" groups composed of two White and two Black junior high school boys. The purpose of this investigator's study was to examine the behavior of the most assertive member of each group and the responses of other members in the group to him.

Successful treatment in changing the racial status ordering in the present experiment produced more Black subjects who were assertive in their groups than in previous studies in the program. Other studies have also attempted to increase the initiation rate and influence of Black subjects in integrated groups. This was the purpose of the previous experiment, Expectation Training I, "Altering the Effects of a Racial Status Characteristic." Lohman's dissertation, "Changing a Racial Status Ordering by Means of Role Modeling," was successful in increasing the initiation and influence level of Black subjects. The study by Katz and Cohen (1962) was also successful in making Black subjects more influential in integrated two-man groups.

The interesting question for this investigator is: What happens to the successes of these experiments? In other words, how do group members react to an assertive Black?

Special training to make Blacks more assertive in integrated situations may be the result of the above studies. If so, it is important to know if there are any detrimental side effects to the Black person who learns to behave in a more self-confident way.

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Theoretical Framework

Status characteristic theory is useful in predicting the status ordering of task-oriented groups composed of status unequals. It is also useful in explaining the position of the assertive White and the assertive Black in this study.

The Theory of Diffuse Status Characteristics was formulated by a group of sociologists at Stanford University. (Joseph Berger, Bernard Cohen, and Morris Zelditch, Jr.) The theory explains several studies in which the "power and prestige order" in small groups was determined by an outside status characteristic of the group members. The status characteristic determined the power and prestige order whether or not the status characteristic was directly relevant to the group task. A status characteristic is one basis upon which individuals form expectations of themselves and one another. The power and prestige order refers to differing rates of initiation, receipt, evaluation and influence in small groups.

The importance of predicting expectations of group members rests upon the relationship between expectations and performance. There is a large body of sociological literature documenting the close correlation between a person's performance and his own and another's expectations of his performance. The Theory of Diffuse Status Characteristics assumes that a power and prestige order develops in specific situations and is determined by how well group members expect themselves and others to do on the task. That is, if they expect a group member to be particularly skillful in a task, they will listen to him and give him a chance to talk. Since he feels that he is competent, he will probably respond to any opportunity to give his opinion, and will, therefore, initiate more than a member who does not feel he has much to contribute. His opinions will be evaluated by others and because they expect his ideas to make sense, they will tend to go along with him. He will initiate more, receive more remarks, and be more influential than the subject for whom there are low expectations.

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The theory predicts that under specific conditions in small, "task-oriented" groups, some status characteristics will "diffuse" into the newly formed group and determine the group members' expectations for one another, and, thus, also determine the power and prestige order in that group. Race is seen as a "diffuse status characteristic" because: (1) there are different states of race (Black and White) which are differentially evaluated; (2) there is a set of specific expectations associated with race (Blacks are thought of as being more musical and athletic than Whites); and (3) there are general expectations associated with race, (Blacks are expected to do less well in a variety of tasks).

In the integrated, four-man groups investigated, The Theory of Diffuse Status Characteristics would predict that Whites will be the most assertive members in the group. That is, they should initiate the most and be the most influential members in their group. Their positive state of the diffuse status characteristic (White) will produce high expectations for their performance on the new task and these expectations will result in active and influential behavior. The assertive White's performance is balanced with the expectations for his race. The general expectations for his race are positive, and the assertive behavior which makes him the "top man" in the power and prestige order is also evaluated positively.

When a Black group member becomes assertive, his performance is not balanced with his state of the diffuse status characteristic. According to balance theory, the Black subject who becomes the most assertive member in the group is an "imbalanced" unit. His self-confident and competent performance in the task receives positive evaluation, but his state of the diffuse status characteristic receives negative evaluation. Balance theorists predict that "imbalance" will generate tension and attempts to restore balance.

Specific Hypotheses

These predictions of Balance Theory generated the specific hypotheses of this study. The hypotheses predict the effects of tension in groups were Blacks are assertive and the methods by which White group members might

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attempt to restore balance in these groups. In addition, the hypotheses predict that tension and attempts to restore balance in groups where a Black member is assertive will determine that Black subject's behavior.

If imbalance produces tension, there should be more "Release of Tension" acts in groups where a Black is assertive than in groups where a White is assertive. (Hypothesis 1.) Assuming that tension is an unpleasant state and group members are aware that the source of tension is the Black assertive, group members will like White assertives more than Black assertives. (Hypothesis 2.) If there is more tension and less affect in groups where Blacks are assertive than in groups where Whites are assertive, the experience of participating in groups in which Blacks are assertive will be less enjoyable. (Hypothesis 3.)

The hypotheses predict that White group members will attempt to restore balance in two ways. First, White subjects will try to become the most assertive members in the group by attempting to unseat the Black assertive from his dominant role. Hypothesis 4 predicts that White subjects will direct more negative behavior toward Black assertives than toward White assertives. A second method whereby balance may be restored is if White subjects refuse to perceive that the Black assertive is indeed contributing the most to the group task. If this technique were used, it would reflect in the evaluations group members make of one another. The investigator predicted that Black assertives would, therefore, be rated lower than White assertives on the indices of leadership, best ideas and guidance. (Hypothesis 5.)

The situation of the assertive Black is predicted to contain more tension, hostility and opposition than that of the assertive White. The assertive Black must be able to handle these internal problems within his group. His ability to lead the group to a successful completion of the task will involve his success in coping with the tension, hostility and opposition he encounters. He will, thus, be forced into playing a "socio-emotional" as well as "task-oriented" role. That is, he must not only direct his attention to the task, but he must also manage the emotions of the group which may interfere with

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maintaining his assertive position. Hypothesis 6 predicts that Black group members who are the most assertive members in their groups will initiate a higher proportion of "socio-emotional" acts than White assertives.

Procedure

The study filmed fifty-seven groups, composed of two Black and two White junior high school boys as they participated in a cooperative task. In order to fulfill the scope condition of the Theory of Diffuse Status Characteristics that subjects have no means of differentiating between one another besides the diffuse status characteristic, a recruitment questionnaire matched subjects on the following criteria: attitudes toward school, aspirations for further education, age, height, parental education and parental occupation. In addition, subjects in each group had no prior contact with one another. All subjects lived on the San Francisco Penninsula. The research team transported subjects to experimental sites located in schools throughout this area.

Observers scored task-related interaction and socio-emotional behavior from videotapes of each group. Observers scoring both types of interaction met acceptable standards of inter-observer reliability. Interviews with subjects elicited information about their attitudes and perceptions of one another and the task.

As previously mentioned, the purpose of the larger study (E. G. Cohen, Expectation Training II) was to produce equal status interaction in these four-man groups. In order to reduce the prevalence of White dominated groups found in previous studies, Cohen treated expectations for Black group members through producing competent behavior of Black subjects on an intervening task. Before subjects worked on the cooperative task, Black subjects learned how to assemble a transistor radio and to teach someone else to build the radio. Observers scored interaction only on the criterion task, a cooperative board game called "Kill the Bull."

There were three conditions in the experiment. In one condition, the "Black Expectation Condition,'" the study treated only Black subjects's expectations for themselves. Black subjects learned to assemble the radio and to teach a staff member that skill. White subjects were not present. In the other two conditions, the "Black and White Expectation Conditions," the study treated expectations for both Black and White subjects for Black group members. Whites saw videotapes of Black subjects assembling the radio and Black subjects taught the Whites to assemble the radio. These Black "teachers" and their White "students" became team members when they played "Kill the Bull" together. These sessions were videotaped and provide the data presented in the results.

Results

The results did not confirm the hypotheses. Groups where Whites were assertive had more "Release of Tension" acts than groups where Blacks were assertive. (Hypothesis 1.)

TABLE 1

Mean Number of Release of Tension Acts in Groups:
By Race of Assertive

Race of Assertive	Mean Number
Black	20.9
White	27.6

Note --n = 24 Black assertives; n = 33 White assertives

Although the differences are not statistically significant at the .05 level, Black assertives were more popular than White assertives with both their Black and White teammates. (Hypothesis 2.)

TABLE 2

Rank Order Position on Liking Given By
<u>White</u> Subjects To Their Assertive:
By Race of Assertive

Race of Assertive	Rank Order Position*			Total
	1	2	3	
Black	53.2% (n=25)	29.8% (n=14)	17.0% (n=8)	100% 47
White	28.1% (n=9)	31.3% (n=10)	40.6% (n=13)	100% 32

*$p < .10$

TABLE 3

Rank Order Position on Liking Given By
<u>Black</u> Subjects To Their Assertive:
By Race of Assertive

Race of Assertive	Rank Order Position			Total
	1	2	3	
Black	54.5% (n=12)	36.4% (n=8)	9.1% (n=2)	100% 22
White	46.0% (n=29)	30.2% (n=19)	23.8% (n=15)	100% 33

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Subjects reported no significant differences in the level of enjoyment in groups where a Black was assertive as opposed to groups where a White was assertive. (Hypothesis 3.)

TABLE 4

Proportion of Subjects Reporting That They Enjoyed
Participating in the Game "a lot:"
By Race of Assertive

Race of Assertive	Proportion
Black	73.4% (n = 96)
White	69.5% (n = 132)

White subjects did not direct more negative acts toward Black assertives. (Hypothesis 4.)

TABLE 5

Mean Proportion of All Task Acts Scored as Negative
Directed Toward Assertives By White Subjects

Race of Assertive	Mean Proportion
Black	13.8%
White	11.6%

Note -- The proportion was based on the number of negative acts directed toward an assertive by a subject divided by the total number of acts directed toward an assertive by that subject.

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Black assertives received slightly higher evaluations than White assertives from their teammates on the index of leadership. (Hypothesis 5)

TABLE 6

Proportion of Most Assertive Members Chosen
as "Overall Leader" by His Teammates:
By Race of Assertive and Race of Rater

Race of Assertive	Race of Rater	Proportion*
Black	Black (n=48)	64%
	White (n=48)	78%
White	Black (n=66)	50%
	White (n=66)	56%

*p < .05

The proportion of acts initiated by Black assertives which were classified as "socio-emotional" was not significantly higher than the proportion of White assertives' acts in the "socio-emotional" area. (Hypothesis 6.)

TABLE 7

Mean Proportion of Socio-Emotional Acts
Initiated by Assertives
By Race of Assertive

Race of Assertive	Mean Proportion
Black (n=24)	42.4%
White (n=33)	40.4%

Interpretation

Methodological problems of the study may have affected the results. Difficulties in defining and measuring the concepts of "assertiveness," "tension" and, "socio-emotional" behavior were formidable. For example, in some cases the group member identified as the "assertive" was the most influential member in the group, but did not initiate the highest proportion of remarks. Tension is a particularly elusive concept and may not have been adequately measured by the "Release of Tension" categories. The modified Balesian system employed to capture socio-emotional behavior might have omitted important categories of behavior that could be classified as "socio-emotional."

The investigator was also limited by the lack of guidelines developed by Balance Theorists to measure behavioral interaction between subjects. Most studies using Balance Theory do not focus on behavior of group members. These studies examine reported attitudes of subjects to determine reactions to imbalanced situations.

The intervention of treating expectations of both Black and White subjects may have affected subjects' perceptions of balance in the cooperative, criterion task, "Kill the Bull." If subjects did not perceive the Black assertive as an "imbalanced unit," or if they did not perceive the White assertive as a "balanced unit," results would not be expected to support the hypotheses. The investigator analyzed the data in each condition and in general the hypotheses were more likely to receive support in the condition where the study did not treat White expectations, than in the conditions where the study treated both Black and White subjects' expectations. White subjects, however, did report high affect and evaluations of the Black assertive even in the condition where the study did not treat their expectations. For example, 58% of the White subjects reported that they liked the Black assertive the best in the Black Expectation Condition, while only 31% White subjects reported that they liked the White assertive the best in this condition.

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The study examined the nature of the task to determine if it was a factor in producing high ratings of Black assertives by White subjects. The game task was a cooperative task designed to produce team effort toward a common goal. Several studies have found that interpersonal relations between participants in cooperative tasks are much more positive than among participants in competitive tasks. Researchers have reported less aggressive behavior, higher attraction ratings, and a "warmer" atmospher in cooperative than in competitive groups. (Deutch 1949, Julian and Perry, 1967, Lerner et al., 1967, Sherif et al. 1961).

The task structure is one explanation of high ratings assigned to the assertive, but task structure does not explain why White subjects rated Black assertives higher than White assertives on affect and contribution to the task. White subjects may have been reflecting the rapidly changing attitudes of White America toward the Black minority. Previous contacts with Blacks, the mass media, or more liberal attitudes of parents and teachers may have affected subjects' attitudes. The reported ratings of White subjects possibly were normative responses indicating only that to display prejudice is no longer fashionable. The location of the study in a Far Western suburban complex, not particularly subject to racial strife, may also explain the positive attitudes toward Black team members on the part of their White teammates.

Implications

The study indicates that under certain conditions, (1) Whites will not penalize Blacks who display competent and self-confident behavior and (2) Blacks will not display a different type of behavior than Whites who also behave in a competent manner. The study suggests the use of more cooperative tasks in situations where interpersonal relations are important. In integrated classrooms, a curriculum including cooperative tasks might increase the possibility of interracial harmony. The study also implies that educators may be able to produce integrated situations attractive to both Blacks and Whites in taking advantage of the changing more positive attitudes of White Americans toward Black Americans.

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