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ABSTRACT

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(Abstract)

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The Impact of College upon Social Characteristics and Attitudes
of Students Enrolled in Three Predominantly Black Colleges

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Research concerning the impact of college on student attitudes has proliferated dramatically since Theodore Newcomb's (1942) seminal study at Bennington College in the 1930's. Indeed, the advancement of research on college impact was documented convincingly in Feldman and Newcomb's (1969) omnibus review, which revealed literally hundreds of pertinent investigations. But despite the broadened interest in college impact studies, literature reviews reveal few empirical studies which concentrated upon predominantly black colleges, (e.g. see Gurin and Katz, 1966).

At present, there is a special need for research-based information concerning the impact of predominantly black colleges, because these institutions are now facing new uncertainties and strong pressures to change their traditional mission and role. Until recently, the role of the black college was determined in large part by the constraints and inequities inherent in a segregated society. This role, of course, was to provide educational opportunities to students who were by and large excluded from other higher educational institutions in the country, i.e. on the basis on race, educational background, or economic circumstances.

Now, with the countermanding of the legal and social sanctions of dual higher educational systems, public colleges in the South have been required by HEW and federal courts to develop desegregation plans. As was true when public schools were desegregated, the black colleges are being forced to bear the greater burdens and suffer the greater disruptions of operational programs. Accordingly, in order to survive and compete, black colleges must reconsider and revise their traditional role by developing educational programs which will attract students from all ethnic

backgrounds and socio-economic levels. No longer can they plan and justify their programs fundamentally on the basis of their commitment to serve the underprivileged, disadvantaged, or minority youth.

This is not to say that these schools will no longer serve these youth or that they should renounce their traditional role. These schools have a unique heritage and special strengths in understanding and fulfilling the educational needs of blacks and other persons who have had to struggle from the grips of poverty to achieve an education. Educators familiar with black institutions are obligated to identify, preserve, and share knowledge of the special capacities these colleges have developed for educating individuals from poverty-stricken environments.

In assessing the special contributions of black colleges it is important that our analysis not be confined to the academic and intellectual outcomes of education. Indeed, it seems apparent that the ultimate impact of these colleges on the lifestyles, social attitudes, and aspirations of disadvantaged youth is of far greater importance in the long run than the impact of the colleges on specific abilities, test scores, or other indices of academic achievement. Of particular concern is the matter of how well these colleges prepare the students to understand and participate in the social, economic, and political affairs of the larger society.

The present study was designed to assess the broad social impact of three predominantly black colleges upon attitudes and interests in political, social, and cultural affairs, and upon orientations towards family and peers. These attitudes, interests, and orientations were assessed in accordance with constructs and scales developed for the College Student Questionnaires, Parts 1 and 2. CSQs 1 and 2 are recently developed, standardized instruments designed to measure various personal, educational, and social attitudes and characteristics of college students. The CSQs include five attitude scales: Family Independence, Peer Independence, Liberalism,

Social Conscience, and Cultural Sophistication. These attitude scales were selected for several reasons. First, because they purportedly measure attitude dimensions previously shown to be influenced by college experience (e.g. see Feldman and Newcomb, 1969). Second, these scales reflect student characteristics that are commonly posited as desirable outcomes of college education, in general, as well as for these particular institutions (Uhl, 1971). And third, the scales presumably reflect to a substantial degree the kinds of broad social attitudes that are normative, if not requisite, qualifications for the social and occupational roles characteristically assumed by college graduates (e.g. see Feldman, 1969).

In view of these considerations, it might have been anticipated or predicted that scores on each of the scales would increase over the total span of years of college attendance. However, specific hypotheses concerning the direction of changes on these scales were withheld when this study was undertaken because 1) there had been little previous research concerning the nature of impact of predominantly black colleges; 2) predicting and interpreting the direction of changes in college impact studies have frequently proven to be problematical and equivocal (e.g. see Feldman, 1969); and 3) there had been little research concerning the validity and meaning of these particular scales, in general, and no studies concerning the suitability of these scales for students from predominantly black colleges.

Previously reported studies (using this same data base) by Nelsen and Johnson (1971) and Nelsen & Uhl (1974) did evaluate the CSQ attitude scales according to their suitability for research with students attending predominantly black colleges. The results of the studies indicated that with a sample of black college freshmen, the Family Independence, Social Conscience, and Cultural Sophistication Scales were internally consistent, at least to a moderate degree. In certain respects the Peer

Independence and Liberalism Scales were not internally consistent within the sample. The methodological implications of this lack of internal consistency will be considered later in conjunction with the analysis of the data and discussion.

METHOD

Subjects

The samples were drawn from the student bodies of three predominantly black colleges located in the Central Piedmont region of North Carolina. All of the schools offered liberal arts degrees as well as programs leading to teacher certification. College A is North Carolina Central University, a state supported school which offers graduate and professional training. Colleges B and C are church related and privately directed. The schools are coeducational, although females outnumbered males at all three schools. During the period of the study, the enrollments of the three colleges were increasing gradually. College A enrolled approximately 3,500 students; B and C, approximately 1,000 each.

CSQ-1 was administered to all entering freshmen at College A in Autumn, 1968. The instrument had been administered to samples drawn from the freshmen classes at the Colleges B and C in Autumn, 1967*. In each institution CSQ-2 was administered to the same group of students near the end of the following spring semester, i.e. towards the end of the freshman year. CSQ-2 was administered again by each institution three years later, as those students who had remained in these schools approached graduation. Therefore the administration intervals were approximately the same at each of the schools. Of the 1,058 students at the three schools who completed CSQ-1 and CSQ-2 as freshmen, 334 also completed all scales as seniors. The final sample included 125 males and 209 females. These Ns do not reflect 17

*The authors are indebted to the National Laboratory for Higher Education (formerly the Regional Education Laboratories for the Carolinas and Virginia) for sharing the data from Colleges B and C for purposes of this research.

cases which were excluded from the analyses due to missing data items.

The Attitudes Scales

The general attitude areas under consideration in this study included Family Independence, Peer Independence, Liberalism, Social Conscience, and Cultural Sophistication. The conceptualization and measurement of these attitudes were based upon the research of Peterson (1968) and his colleagues. The CSQ Technical Manual describes the scales as follows:

- (FI) Family Independence refers to a generalized autonomy in relation to parents and parental family. Students with high scores tend to perceive themselves as coming from families that are not closely united, as not consulting with parents about important personal matters, as not concerned about living up to parental expectations, and the like. Low scores suggest "psychological" dependence on parents and family.
- (PI) Peer Independence refers to a generalized autonomy in relation to peers. Students with high scores tend not to be concerned about how their behavior appears to other students, not to consult with acquaintances about personal matters, and the like. They might be thought of as unsociable, introverted, or inner-directed. Low scores suggest conformity to prevailing peer norms, sociability, extraversion, or other-directedness.
- (L) Liberalism is defined as a political-economic-social value dimension, the nucleus of which is sympathy either for an ideology of change or for an ideology of preservation. Students with high scores (liberals) support welfare statism, organized labor, abolition of capital punishment, and the like. Low scores (conservatism) indicate opposition to welfare legislation, to tampering with the free enterprise system, to persons disagreeing with American political institutions, etc.
- (SC) Social Conscience is defined as moral concern about perceived social injustice and what might be called "institutional wrongdoing" (as in government, business, unions). High scorers express concern about poverty, illegitimacy, juvenile crime, materialism, unethical business and labor union practices, graft in government, and the like. Low scores represent reported lack of concern, detachment, or apathy, about these matters.
- (CS) Cultural Sophistication refers to an authentic sensibility to ideas and art forms, a sensibility that has developed through knowledge and experience. Students with high scores report interest in or pleasure from such things as wide reading, modern art, poetry, classical music, discussions of philosophies of history, and so forth. Low scores indicate a lack of cultivated sensibility in the general area of the humanities.

Each attitude scale is based upon the responses to 10 Likert-Type items. The attitude measures in CSQ-1 and CSQ-2 were based upon essentially identical items repeated in both instruments. Scores were computed on the basis of standard instructions.

Results

The scores on each of the attitude scales were analyzed with a $2 \times 3 \times 3$ repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance design. The Statistical Interface System (Uhl, 1972) was employed which makes use of the MANOVA program (Cramer, 1970) at the Triangle Universities Computer Center. The factors in the design were Sex, School, and Time (i.e. the repeated administrations of the CSQ attitude scales).

A multivariate rather than a univariate model was chosen because the assumption of the univariate model that the correlation of responses between the first two administrations are equal to the correlation between the first and third and second and third administration is not necessarily tenable. One would expect them to be different just because of the unequal differences in time between the CSQ administrations. When this occurs, the multivariate test is likely to be the most accurate and most powerful (Finn, 1969; McCall and Appelbaum, 1973). One phase of this analysis involves a simple two factor (Sex x School) univariate ANOVA performed on the students' mean score. Another phase of this analysis involves a multivariate analysis on two dependent variables, the difference between the first and second questionnaire responses (T_{12}) and the difference between the second and third questionnaire responses (T_{23}). This includes a test of the main effect of time and the interaction of time with the other independent variables. In addition to the multivariate F s which are based on both T_{12} and T_{23} (labeled T_{123}), univariate F s are presented separately for T_{12} and T_{23} .

The results of the SIS-MANOVA analyses are presented in Table 1. The table reveals several statistically significant main effects of Sex and School, but these results are of only passing interest in the current study because they do not reflect change associated with college attendance. Of greater interest are the findings concerning changes, represented as effects of Time, including the main effects of Time and interactions of Time with Sex and School.

The multivariate analyses for the five attitude scales revealed main effects of Time (T_{123}), in each case statistically significant beyond the .001 level. The univariate analyses testing the effects of T_{12} and T_{23} revealed T_{12} effects upon Cultural Sophistication, significant beyond the .001 level. The T_{12} effect upon Liberalism barely failed the .05 level. The T_{23} effects were significant for all five scales, beyond the .05 level for CS and beyond the .001 level for all other scales.

Examination of the means in Table 2 relating to the main effects of time revealed that the T_{12} and T_{23} means (for all groups combined) in every instance revealed positive changes, although, as noted above, not all of these increases between the freshmen and sophomore years and between the sophomore and senior years were statistically significant. Further comparisons of the T_1 , T_2 , and T_3 means revealed that the T_{12} difference was arithmetically greater than the T_{23} mean for the CS scale, but the T_{23} differences were greater than the T_{12} differences for the other four scales.

With respect to possible interaction effects involving Time, the analyses revealed only one Sex x Time interaction, i.e. upon Peer Independence. Examination of the means and the univariate tests of the T x S interaction indicated that during T_{12} males' PI scores increased slightly while females' decreased slightly. On the other hand, during T_{23} females' scores appeared to increase slightly more

than males', although this comparison was not significant at the .05 level ($p=.057$). While these trends are interesting, they are of slight magnitude, and interpretation is complicated by the lack of unidimensionality of the PI scale. Further analyses will be necessary before conclusions can be drawn from the findings concerning this Time x Sex interaction.

The analyses also revealed School x Time interactions affecting Family Independence and Cultural Sophistication scores. Examination of the means and the univariate analyses of the difference scores indicated that for School A, FI scores increased more during T_{12} than the corresponding measures for schools B & C. The reverse pattern was revealed for the T_{23} FI scores, especially for school B which showed the greatest increase during T_{23} . The CS scores increased more during T_{12} within School B, although examination of the Sex x School x Time interaction and the corresponding CS means revealed that the females in School B accounted for substantially greater changes than any other group.

Further analyses of these data are planned, especially with respect to the Peer Independence and Liberalism Scales, which did not meet the customary criteria for unidimensionality. The analyses presented herein were limited to the standard scales, as scored according to the prescribed technical procedures.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the attitudes of students who attended these predominantly black colleges increased measurably in the direction of independence from family and peers, liberalism, social conscience, and cultural sophistication. Thus, the data suggest that the impact of these schools upon their students is generally towards greater self reliance and autonomy and broader attitudes and interests in political, social, cultural affairs. Moreover, the directions of

the changes are consistent in most respects with the findings from previous studies of predominantly white colleges, although there are of course some inconsistencies among these earlier studies (e.g. see Feldman and Newcomb, 1970, p. 47).

While the findings concerning the general nature and direction of changes are in accord with the general expectations noted above, the findings concerning the extent of change are more difficult to appraise. In terms of actual magnitude, the overall mean changes were about 2 to 3 raw score units on each scale. These gains can be considered in relation to the standard deviations for these schools individually (ranging from 3 to 5 points) or for the schools in the national norm group (ranging from 4 to 6 points).

There are several other matters that should be considered when assessing the magnitude of the changes for the overall group. First there is the question of the sensitivity of the CSQ attitude scales to actual changes over this span of time. On the one hand, it is possible that these students' attitudes did change only slightly during the four year span. On the other hand, it is possible that their underlying attitudes changed substantially, but these measures were only minimally sensitive to the changes. In discussing repeated measures and longitudinal studies, Bereiter (1963) has noted the importance of determining a scale's sensitivity to change.

One way of determining the sensitivity of the CSQ scales' sensitivity in measuring changes in these broad attitudes is through the accumulation of longitudinal studies which employed the instrument. Although the CSQ was published about 10 years ago, few if any longitudinal studies have been published. Frequently studies conducted within a single institution are not disseminated widely, but presumably some reports of longitudinal studies will emerge soon, and these studies would provide information pertinent to the question of the magnitude of changes in

this study. Thus, we must await the future reports of research to refine the interpretations of the data in this study.

In addition to the findings concerning general changes over time, the analyses also revealed some differential patterns of change within the sexes and/or schools for certain scales. Students attending College A revealed greater increases in FI Scores over the freshman year in comparison with students in Colleges B and C. On the other hand FI scores for College B showed greater increases than College A over the sophomore to senior years. This pattern suggests that the impact of College A on family independence was more immediate, while the impacts of Colleges B and C were delayed. Alternatively it is possible that the students at College A were already growing more rapidly independent from their families when they enrolled in college, while the process for students in Colleges B and C was delayed. Examination of the T_1 means suggests that students at College B were less independent when they enrolled in college, but this was not true for College C. The observation that the impact of College A on family independence was more immediate seems generally consistent with the facts that College A was substantially larger and publically controlled, although these facts do not really "explain" the causative processes. The smaller sizes and church related control of Colleges B and C may have been associated with more protective and supportive experiences which tended to sustain family ties during the first year of college, but of course these are speculations.

Differential patterns of scores were also revealed on the PI scale, although the Sexes rather than Colleges produced the differences. It should be noted that males entered the colleges with higher PI scores than females, and that males revealed greater increases in PI scores during the freshman year than females. During the ensuing years, however, PI gains for males were not greater than PI gains for females.

But in no instance did the females' senior level PI scores equal or exceed the corresponding scores for males. Thus the findings suggest that males enter these colleges with greater independence from peers than females and that they increase this independence, by and large, during their initial year in college at a greater rate than females. During the ensuing years, however, the process of developing greater independence from peers apparently accelerates for females to a rate equaling or exceeding that of males.

School X Sex X Time interactions were revealed for both the Liberalism and Cultural Sophistication Scales. These patterns are noteworthy because they suggest the individual schools did influence males and females in differing and unique ways. However, the actual changes are difficult to interpret in terms of general principles, because this study did not include measures of school environmental characteristics that might account for these differential patterns of change. Further analyses and future studies should give greater attention to circumstances that account for the unique influences of these schools on selected subgroups.

Finally, we wish to note that the analyses presented and the issues discussed in this paper do not represent a full or final treatment of the data collected in this longitudinal study. There are several issues that must be pursued in order to achieve more precise interpretations and conclusions. First, the limited internal consistency of some of the scales raises the possibility that changes in one direction on some of the items, along with changes in the opposite direction on other items, would result in diminished overall change scores for the given scale. Second, even for those scales with greater internal consistency, it is possible that a few items could account for all or the greater portion of overall changes on the given scales. Accordingly, in order to achieve a clearer picture of which aspects of these attitudes are changing, it is necessary to analyze the changes on an item

by item basis. It is also possible that certain groups or types of students account for greater changes, and we plan to investigate this possibility.

Nevertheless, the analyses presented in this study are noteworthy in themselves. First, they represent a broad assessment of change in student attitudes in terms of a standardized instrument. As such, the results of this study can be compared meaningfully with results of other longitudinal studies employing the same instrument. More significantly perhaps, the results of this study provide substantive documentation that students attending these predominantly black colleges are developing the kinds of broadened social attitudes and characteristics which can contribute to their understanding and participation in the social roles and cultural processes of American society.

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MANOVA Results of Comparisons by Sex, College, and Time as Factors Relating to CSQ Attitude Scores

Table 1

	Family Independence	Peer Independence	Liberalism	Social Conscience	Cultural Sophistication
	F	F	F	F	F
Univariate Tests: 1. Sex	1.7	33.1***	1.7	5.6*	.2
2. College (C)	1.8	.1	5.4**	2.1	1.1
3. S x C	.9	.4	2.6	1.0	1.8
Multivariate Tests: 4. Time (T ₁₂₃)	70.9***	9.2***	26.9***	47.4***	15.3***
5. S x T ₁₂₃	1.1	3.6*	.4	.1	1.6
6. C x T ₁₂₃	4.1**	.2	.7	1.3	2.5*
7. S x C x T ₁₂₃	.9	.6	3.9*	.9	2.5*
Univariate Tests: 4a. T ₁₂	1.9	.2	3.7	.5	15.9***
b. T ₂₃	98.7***	13.8***	28.1***	64.8***	4.3*
5a. S x T ₁₂	-	6.5**	-	-	-
b. S x T ₂₃	-	3.6	-	-	-
6a. C x T ₁₂	3.4*	-	-	-	4.6*
b. C x T ₂₃	6.2**	-	-	-	.3
7a. S x C x T ₁₂	-	-	4.9**	-	4.5*
b. S x C x T ₂₃	-	-	3.3*	-	.5

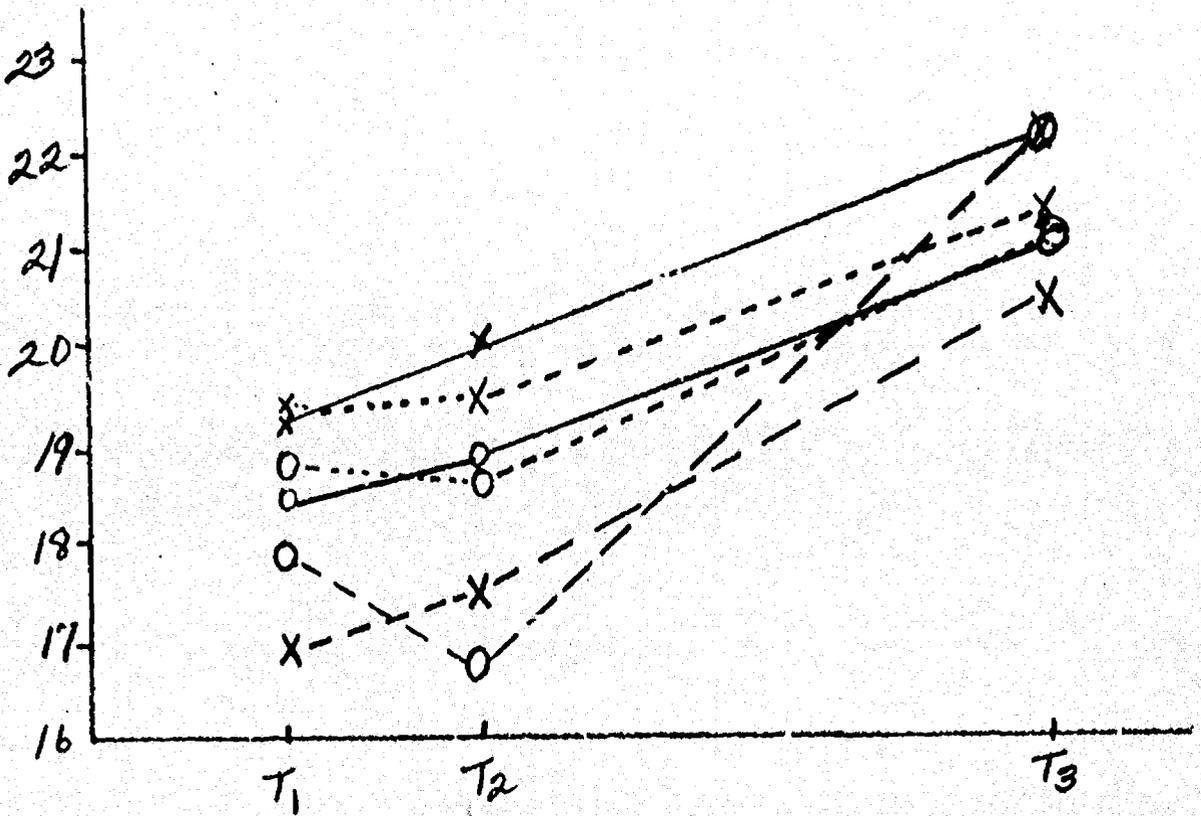
* P < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

Note: Univariate tests involving Time are reported only when the corresponding multivariate tests were significant (p < .05).

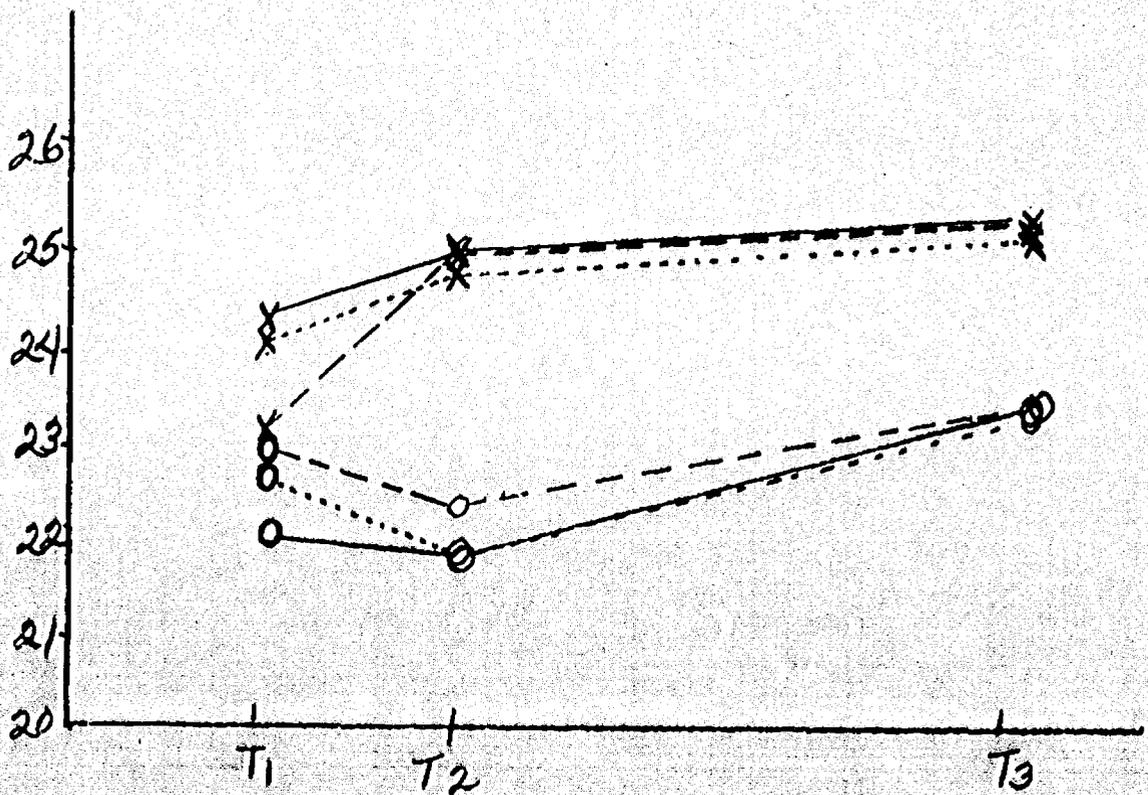
Table 2

Mean Scores on CSQ Attitude Scales for Entering Freshmen (T_1), End of Year Freshmen (T_2), and Seniors (T_3) Attending Three Predominantly Black Colleges

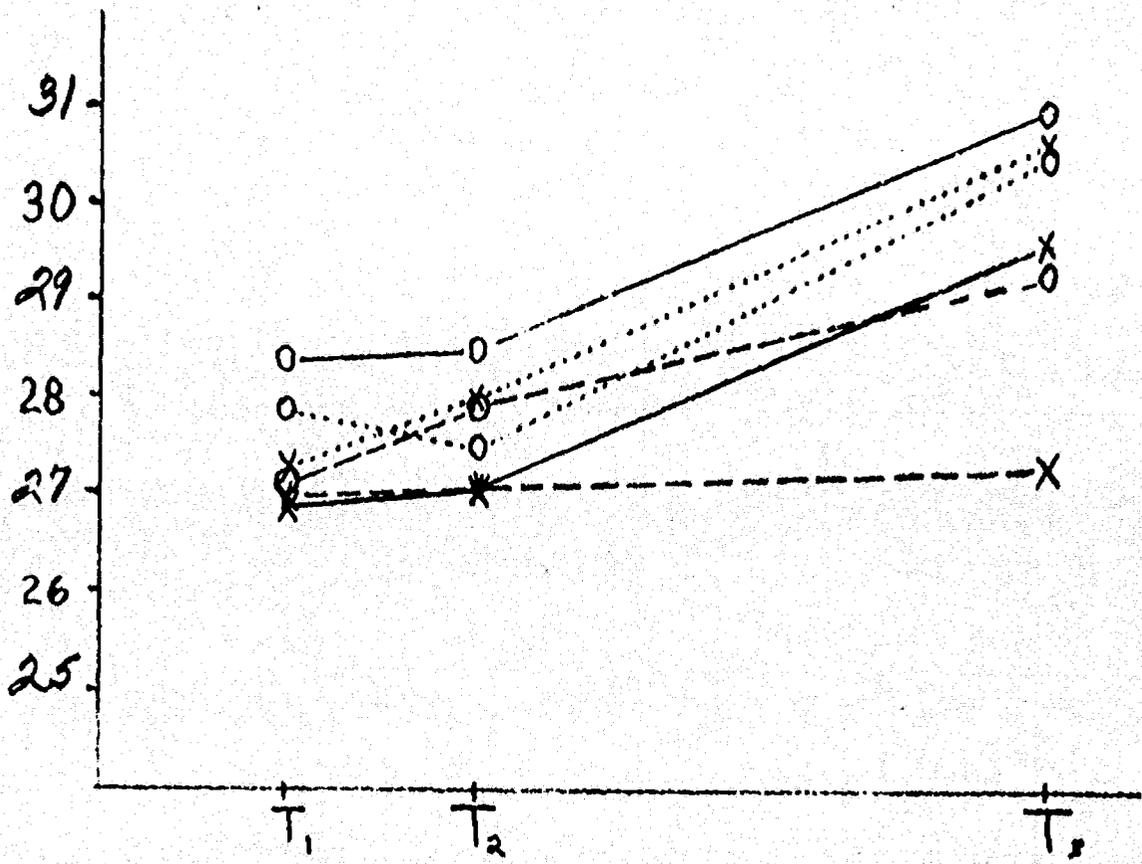
	<u>College</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>N</u>	T_1	T_2	T_3	T_{13} Diff.
Family Independence:	A	M	56	19.2	20.0	22.2	3.0
		F	135	18.4	18.9	21.0	2.6
	B	M	22	16.9	17.5	20.5	3.6
		F	34	17.9	16.7	22.2	4.3
	C	M	47	19.3	19.5	21.4	2.1
		F	40	18.8	18.6	21.0	2.2
Peer Independence:	A	M		24.3	24.9	25.2	.9
		F		22.0	21.8	23.3	1.3
	B	M		23.1	24.9	25.2	2.1
		F		22.9	22.3	23.3	.4
	C	M		24.0	24.7	25.0	1.0
		F		22.6	21.8	23.2	.6
Liberalism:	A	M		27.9	28.2	29.2	1.3
		F		27.4	27.7	29.5	2.1
	B	M		24.7	28.3	27.3	2.6
		F		26.5	26.4	28.3	1.8
	C	M		27.9	27.7	29.9	2.0
		F		25.9	26.6	27.4	1.5
Social Conscience:	A	M		26.9	27.1	29.6	2.7
		F		28.4	28.5	31.0	2.6
	B	M		27.0	27.1	27.3	.3
		F		27.1	27.9	29.3	2.2
	C	M		27.3	28.0	30.7	3.4
		F		27.9	27.5	30.5	2.6
Cultural Sophistication:	A	M		20.1	20.4	23.3	3.2
		F		21.4	21.7	22.2	.8
	B	M		20.1	20.4	21.9	1.8
		F		20.4	23.4	23.2	2.8
	C	M		21.6	22.7	23.6	2.0
		F		22.6	23.1	22.7	.1



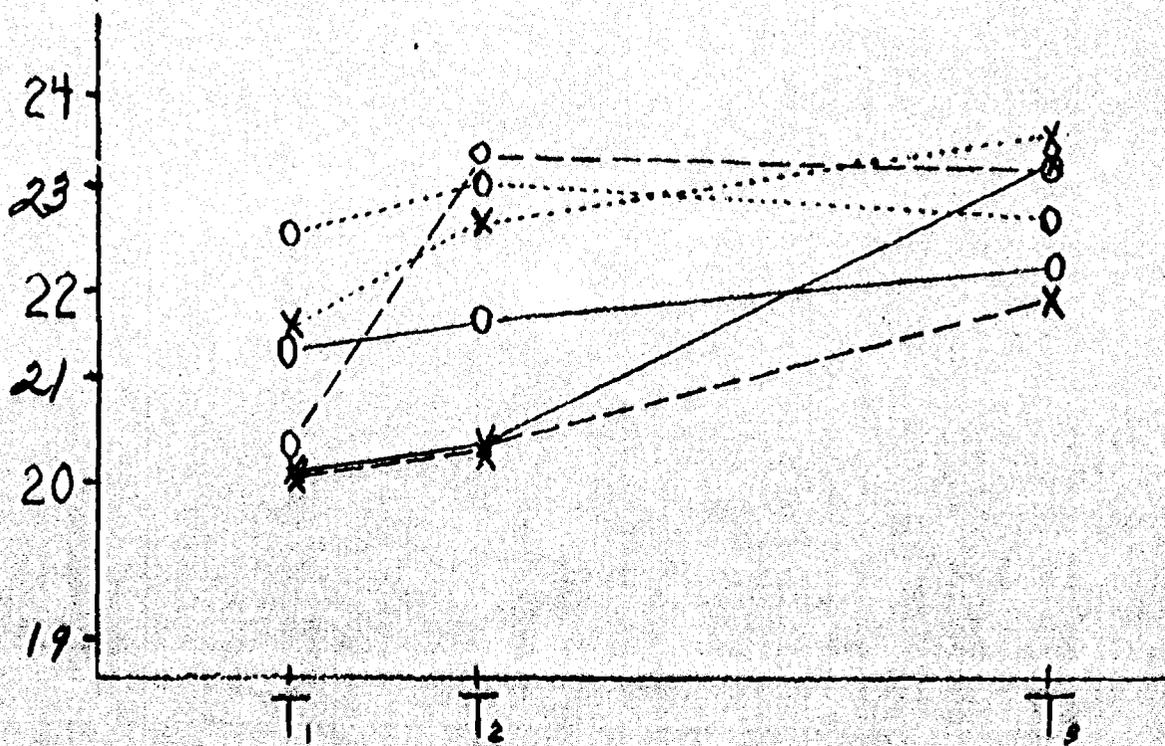
Family Independence



Peer Independence



Social Conscience



Cultural Sophistication

