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ABSTRACT

The attitudes of nine teachers in three graded, open classrooms toward their home-base pupils were measured using Schaefer's Classroom Behavior Inventory (CBI). CBI explores teacher perception of the child's behavior in the area of extraversion-introversion, task orientation-distractability, and hostility-considerateness. The total group of 87 white and 54 black 4th, 5th, and 6th grade pupils, including 12 black Educable Mentally Retarded (EMR) subjects, were significantly different on all three dimensions. Black subjects were seen by their teachers as more introversive, more distractable, and more hostile than were white pupils. Random samples of white and black non-retarded children were matched for number of boys and girls and by grade, with the group of black EMR children. There were no white EMR children in the classes. Significant differences were found among the 12 non-retarded white, the 12 non-retarded black, and 12 EMR pupils on two of the three dimensions, namely, task orientation-distractability and hostility-considerateness. The differences between black and white, and EMR and white subjects were significant, while those between EMR and black students were not. Teachers described their black non-retarded and their black EMR as similar while seeing their white students as different on the dimensions measured. Race was more potent than intellectual ability in determining teacher attitudes toward their students. (Author/RJ)

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Relative Potency of Teacher Attitudes Toward
Black and Retarded Children

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The integration of many exceptional children into regular classes while reducing "tracking" or self-contained special class placement, particularly for minority group children, is being implemented more and more frequently today. Open classrooms in particular, with their flexible organization and individualized programs, are seen as facilitating integration of these children in a non-tracked program. Assuming for the moment that placement in an open classroom provides a learning environment for minority and exceptional children that is more efficacious than the segregated, self-contained classroom (whether segregated by minority group or level of intellectual ability) there remain other educational problems of importance.

The attitudes held by teachers towards their students become increasingly germane in response to these trends in current educational practice. At this point even descriptive data about the attitudes of teachers towards children in open classrooms is lacking. There has been a great deal of interest in exploring the proposal that teacher expectations influence children's accomplishments in school. While the controversy surrounding the effect of teacher attitudes on IQ is not yet resolved, there is sufficient evidence that they do influence the academic achievement and behavior of children in the classroom, at least in self-contained classrooms, to make further emphasis in this area worthwhile (Baker & Crist, 1971; Brookover, Paterson & Thomas, 1962; Felsenthal, 1970; Gansneder, 1970; Harvey, Prather, White & Hoffmeister, 1968; Becker, Madsen, Arnold & Thomas, 1967; Rist, 1970; Stern, 1963).

Although there has been surprisingly little research into the attitudes held by teachers toward various groups of exceptional students in any setting (Stroman, 1972), the general attitudes of special

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education and regular class teachers toward exceptional children have been compared (e. g., Haring, Stern, & Cruickshank, 1958; Platow, 1969; and Shaw, 1971). General patterns of classroom behavior have been related to teacher attitudes (Felsenthal, 1970), and the goals of special education and regular class teachers have been explored (Schmidt, 1968). In the Haring, Stern, & Cruickshank (1958) study, attention was focused on differences between the groups of teachers rather than on attitudes toward different groups of children for a particular group of teachers.

The attitudes of teachers towards normal children who have been categorized by such demographic variables as socioeconomic status, ethnic group membership, and sex have been explored to a greater extent. Boys have been described more frequently as maladjusted or as behavior problems by their teachers than girls (Beilin, 1959; Davidson & Lang, 1960), and girls were found to be less active and influential (Zander & Van Egmond, 1963). As reviewed by Charters (1963) a substantial amount of evidence exists showing that lower class children were less likely to be responded to favorably by their teachers than middle class children. Brophy and Good (1970) found that teacher behavior was different with students from whom they expected good academic performance than with those from whom they expected poor academic performance. When there were expectations for high student accomplishment better performance was demanded, while poor performance was accepted from students for whom expectations were low.

Attention has also been directed at teacher attitudes toward black students. Deitz and Purkey (1969) found that experienced teachers did not make differential judgements of the performances they expected of black or of white students when they had not actually taught the individuals judged.

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Datta, Schaefer and Davis (1968) examined teacher attitudes toward their junior high school students in terms of their race, socio-economic status (defined by kind of neighborhood) and sex. Scores for three factors obtained from a series of 64 five item rating scales of student behavior and from a group IQ test were available for the seventh grade students. Scholastic aptitude did not account significantly for the variance found but:

1. Black students were described as less task oriented and more verbally aggressive than were non-black students, and
2. Girls were described as significantly more task oriented, less aggressive and less introversive than boys.

Method. In the study to be reported here nine teachers from three graded, open classrooms were asked to rate the behavior of all of their home-base pupils using Schaefer's Bipolar Classroom Behavior Inventory (CBI) as part of a larger study. The CBI, for which the items are shown in Table 1, is a reliable, more sophisticated version of the one used by Datta, Schaefer and Davis (1968). It explores teacher perception of the child's behavior along the three dimensions; extraversion-introversion, task-orientation-distractibility, and hostility-considerateness (Schaefer & Aaronson, 1966; Schaefer, Droppleman, & Kalverbaer, 1965). Each dimension is measured by two scales focused on either end of the continuum. Each scale consists of the three items shown in the table. The names of most of the scales reflect their content quite satisfactorily with the exception of the one titled "Introversion". You will notice that the items in that scale have a sad, withdrawn, and solemn or un-responsive quality to them.

Twelve black, educable mentally retarded (EMR) children were among the 141 children who were rated in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in the spring of the 1971-1972 school year. There were one fourth,

TABLE 1

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CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR INVENTORY
 Short Form, K-12
 Earl S. Schaefer and May Aaronson
 (Items by Categories)

TASK ORIENTED

Works earnestly at his classwork; doesn't take it lightly.
 Watches carefully when teacher or a classmate is showing how to do something.
 Sticks with a job until it's finished, even if it is difficult for him.

DISTRACTIBILITY

Is quickly distracted by events in or outside the classroom.
 Sometimes pays attention; other times must be spoken to constantly.
 Often cannot answer a question, because his mind has wandered.

HOSTILITY

Tries to get even with a child with whom he is angry.
 Gets angry quickly when others do not agree with his opinion.
 Ridicules and mocks others without regard for their feelings.

CONSIDERATENESS

Awaits his turn willingly.
 Tries not to do or say anything which would hurt others.
 Gives the other an opportunity to express his point of view.

EXTRAVERSION

Laughs and smiles easily and spontaneously in class.
 Likes to express his ideas and views.
 Does not wait for others to approach him, but seeks out others.

INTROVERSION

Has a low, unsteady or uncertain voice when speaking to teacher or a group of classmates.
 Is usually sad, solemn or serious looking.
 Tends to withdraw and isolate himself, even when he is supposed to be working with a group.

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two fifth, and nine sixth grade students in the group, of whom six were male and six were female. A control group of 12 black children who were not identified as retarded was randomly selected from the available population of 42 black students. Similarly, a control group of 12 white children who were not identified as retarded was randomly selected from the available population of 87 white students. Control group subjects were matched with the EMR subjects for sex, grade placement and home base teacher. Thus, scores were available for a group of 12 EMR students, and for control groups of 12 white and 12 black subjects.

The average ages of the children were 11.00 years for the EMR group and 11.01 years for the white group and 11.72 years for the black group. These differences were not significant. Average IQ was 66.75 for the EMR children, 114.77 for the white sample, and 90.60 for the black sample, differences which were significant. Newman-Keuls tests indicated that the mean difference between each pair of groups was significant with $p < .01$.

Ratings by six teachers were represented among the scores for the selected group of subjects. None of the teachers was black.

Findings. The data were examined by two-way analysis of variance for differences among the three groups and between boys and girls. As can be seen in Table 2, black, white, and EMR students were described as differing significantly in the task-orientation and distractibility dimensions and in the hostility-considerateness dimensions. There were non-significant differences among the groups on the introversion and extroversion dimensions.

Newman-Keuls tests (see Table 3) of the differences between pairs of groups for the task-oriented and distractible dimensions indicated that

TABLE 2

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Mean Scores for EMR Sample and Matched Random Samples of Black and of
White Subjects on the Schaefer Bipolar Classroom
Behavior Inventory Dimensions

	EMR (N=12)		Black (N=12)		White (N=12)		F
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Task Orientation	8.33	1.66	8.83	1.74	10.50	1.83	4.84*
Distractibility	9.41	2.10	8.16	2.28	6.83	2.75	3.75*
Extroversion	7.91	2.90	8.66	2.01	9.33	1.66	1.28
Introversion	7.41	3.11	6.25	3.19	5.25	2.34	1.63
Considerateness	8.33	1.55	9.25	1.54	11.16	.83	15.73**
Hostility	7.58	2.64	6.83	2.51	4.83	1.58	5.64**

Note: Subjects are in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.
1971-1972

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

TABLE 3

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Newman-Keuls Tests for EMR Sample and Matched Random Samples of White and
of Black Subjects on the Schaefer Bipolar Classroom
Behavior Inventory Dimensions

	White-Black	White-EMR	Black-EMR	F
Task-Orientation	4.21*	4.21*	ns	4.84*
Distractible	ns	3.87*	ns	3.75*
Hostility	3.34*	4.59**	ns	5.64**
Considerateness	5.25**	7.77**	ns	15.73**

Note: Subjects are fourth, fifth, and sixth grade children, 12
in each group.
1971-1972

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

white subjects were seen as significantly more task-oriented than either black or EMR subjects, and as significantly less distractible than EMR subjects. White subjects were described as less hostile and more considerate than black or EMR subjects; there were no significant differences between black and EMR subjects on these dimensions. Boys in all three groups were seen as significantly more distractible, extroverted and hostile, and less considerate than were girls. These sex differences were generally consistent with those found for each of several other groups of subjects studied with the CBI.

Discussion. The teachers in this study did not appear to differentiate between their black EMR and non-retarded black students on the dimensions measured, except that EMR children were seen as more distractible than white students while other black students were not. The teachers did, however, describe white and black students, and white and EMR students differently, with black and EMR students seen in more negative ways, i.e., as more hostile, less task-oriented and less considerate than white students.

Racial differences in teacher ratings appear to be very stable, at least for children in the school used for the study. The distribution of significant differences between black and white (and where applicable, EMR) subjects on the CBI have been found in other sets of data. Among all children in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades the same differences between the 87 white and 54 black students (including the 12 EMR children) were found and, in addition the black children were found to be significantly more extroversive and less introversive. In fact these differences are stable for the entire population of the school (which includes the same fourth, fifth and sixth grade children).

Among two complete second grade classes involved in another study, for whom ratings on the CBI were obtained in the Fall of 1972

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(this school year), the same differences were found for the 67 white and 29 black children. The differences between teacher ratings of black and white children are, therefore, well established and stable. Children are differentially rated by their teachers according to race.

It is possible, of course, that black children actually behave differently in the classroom than do white children. This possibility is readily researchable, and is in fact, currently being investigated.

One would expect that groups of children who are perceived similarly by their teachers would be rated similarly by them. Since the EMR children, who are all black, were described as not differing from the random sample of black children and both were described as different from the white children in spite of similar age and different mean IQ scores, it appears that they were perceived in terms of their race rather than as a group different from both non-retarded white and non-retarded black children. Their intellectual level does not set them apart in the perceptions of their teachers from others of the same race.

The fact that significant differences in IQ exist among the three groups of children studied does not detract from the significance of the findings. While their teachers described the behavior of white children as different from that of both EMR and black children and described EMR and black children similarly, all three groups differed in IQ.

An additional question raised by this finding relates to the nature of these particular EMR children. They may be retarded in terms of academic accomplishment and IQ measurement but not in terms of social adjustment, as has been suggested by Mercer (1972) as a major reason for the disproportionate placement of minority group children into special education classes.

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