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**The relationships among achievement, self-concept, and role  
models for Black students**

Spicer, Patricia Black, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1989

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THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ACHIEVEMENT, SELF-CONCEPT, AND ROLE  
MODELS FOR BLACK STUDENTS

by

Patricia Black Spicer

A Dissertation Submitted to  
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The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
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APPROVAL PAGE

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The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among black student achievement, self-concept, discipline, and the number of black teachers a subject was assigned during grades K-8. The study focused on the characteristics of eighth graders who had attended the same urban school district in the piedmont area of North Carolina since kindergarten.

Information for the study included California Achievement Test scores, Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory scores, and the number of black teachers for each of 146 black eighth graders. In addition, suspension data collected by the school district was used as an indicator of overall student behavior.

The study addressed the role that black educators play in the overall achievement of black students. It was hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between the number of black teachers a black student has had and his or her measured achievement. It was also hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between the number of black teachers a student has had and his or her measured self-concept. In addition, it was hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between achievement and self-concept. Finally, it was hypothesized that there is a



significant relationship between the number of black educators in a school and the behavior of students in that school.

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were developed:

1. Black students, as a group, continue to score lower than white students on achievement tests.

2. The theory that Blacks have an inherently low self-concept is not supported by this study.

3. Although conventional wisdom supports the relationship between self-concept and achievement this relationship was not observed for black students in this study.

4. There is evidence that black students may achieve at a higher rate in reading when provided with a black teacher.

5. The proportion of black teachers on a staff appeared to be a positive factor in black student discipline.

Further observations that resulted from the study led the researcher to conclude the following:

1. Teacher expectation continues to be a key variable in student achievement for Blacks and Whites.

2. Black educators will be virtually non-existent as role models for students within a decade unless the current decrease is reversed.

3. The relationships among achievement, self-concept, and educational role models are complex and difficult to identify through statistical methods.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Introduction and Overview of the Problem

Education is one of the most important concerns in our country today. Although philosophical differences exist concerning what constitutes an adequate education, it is generally accepted that assessment of knowledge on standardized tests in academic areas such as mathematics, language arts, science and social studies can provide an indication of educational achievement. The results of such indicators can be used for comparisons among schools, school systems, states, and even nations. The results are also used to compare achievement between Blacks and Whites. Lower scores for Blacks are often attributed to the differences in the educational histories of the two races (Ogbu, 1987; Clark, Deutsch, Gartner, Keppell, Lewis, Pettigrew, Plotkin, and Riessman, 1972; Ashmore, 1954).

Black achievement in the 1980's is a partial function of the educational history of the United States, a history that can be depicted as a dual track, one for Whites and one for Blacks. Not just two tracks, but two very unequal tracks (Bond, 1934; Meir, Stewart & England, 1988). The inequality originated during slavery. Clark et al. (1972) suggested

that the ill treatment and lack of status of slaves was more acceptable to Whites because slaves were generally seen as falling into a "subhuman" category.

As Blacks entered the era of freedom after the Civil War, they faced a future devoid of adequate funding for their schools. With the exception of a few years during the reconstruction period, the per capita expenditures for black education showed a steady decline. In 1916-1917 the ratio of expenditures for Whites was 3.08 times as great as that for Blacks (Bond, 1934,). Although the twentieth century brought with it a wave of educational advancement, the racial inequities continued. In 1940, the nine southern states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and South Carolina averaged a per capita education expenditure for Whites of \$50.14 and \$21.54 for Blacks (Ashmore 1954).

Although desegregation has ended virtually all racially imposed expenditure differences, Clark et al. (1972) pointed to the continued poor academic performance of black students in comparison to white students which he referred to as "academic retardation." Meir, Stewart, and England (1988) maintained that black students are still subjected to less than equal access to a quality education. They argued that "unequal access to education makes discrimination in other areas easier" (p. iii).

Another aspect of achievement that relates to race is behavior. Inappropriate behavior in school is often linked to low achievement (Gold, 1978; Persons and Pepinsky, 1966). Indicators of severe or chronic inappropriate behavior most common to public schools are suspensions and expulsions. Meir, Stewart, and England (1988) cited the disproportionate numbers of black students who receive the suspensions and expulsions. Whether valid or invalid, these suspensions result in time away from the instructional process.

Currently, the gap between black and white academic achievement is steadily narrowing (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1988). Nevertheless, a recent study by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) determined that black students in Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia consistently scored lower than white students in mathematics and history (Southern Regional Education Board [SREB], 1987).

A variety of theories has been advanced to explain the consistent failure of Blacks to compare favorably with Whites academically. These theories include the often challenged belief that Blacks are innately inferior intellectually (Jensen, 1968) and identification of "cultural deprivation" as the key factor (Havinghurst, 1964; Clark et al., 1972). Cultural deprivation theorists suggested a functional failure to adapt to society. Clark et al. (1972) took exception to



the term cultural deprivation and its implications. He suggested that it has been used as an "alibi" for educators who are unsuccessful in teaching minority children.

It is paradoxical that educators would accept the cultural deprivation theory as an excuse for minorities' failure to learn, while espousing a belief that education is the only hope for improved quality of life. Even so, myriad projects have been designed to provide supplemental or compensatory education for low achieving students. These efforts have not been seen as satisfactory and have actually contributed to poor performance by grouping large numbers of lower socio-economic students and identifying them as under-achievers (Katz, 1972). Meir, Stewart, and England (1988) saw the problem as a vicious cycle. Failure to receive quality education leads to poor job skills which in turn leads to employment in low paying jobs. Citizens with low paying jobs generally lack the political skills to bring about quality education for their children. They also see ability grouping and other attempts to address the "under-achieving" student as a form of "second-generation discrimination".

Regardless of the label attached to the current status of black education, it is apparent that a more thorough understanding of the factors that relate to improved learning is indicated. This study examined role models, achievement, and self-concept. In so doing, it was helpful to briefly

review studies that examined the significance of self-concept and role models to achievement and discipline. Such significance suggested a need for specific research into the relationships among these factors in an educational setting.

### Self-Concept

Efforts to understand achievement invariably incorporate the importance of what students believe about themselves. These beliefs may include how the student perceives his/her physical or mental ability, personal appearance, popularity, and social and racial status. Such beliefs about self or, as it is more commonly known, self-concept, have been a subject of concern to educators for decades.

Purkey (1970) presented a collection of research results that identify "a persistent and significant relationship between the self concept and academic achievement" (p. 27). A study by Caplin (1966) found that this relationship is not affected by race. Regardless of color, students with low self-concept were more likely to perform poorly in school.

Although a predisposition to low self-concept has been associated with Blacks (Della-Dora, 1963; Lewin, 1948), there is substantial evidence to the contrary (Soares & Soares, 1969). Coopersmith (1967) provided indicators for positive self-concept that transcend racial boundaries. Wylie (1979) provided an in-depth review of studies related to the self-concept of Blacks. The results showed little evidence of

lower self-concept among Blacks than Whites when other factors such as intelligence and socio-economic status are controlled. If anything, the self-concept scores of Blacks were slightly higher.

A better understanding of the contradictory findings regarding self-concept of Blacks was offered by Banks and Grambs (1972). It was suggested that more important than the black student's own valuation of self is the perception of how the larger society views him or her. This view has generally been one of inferiority. The black student is often expected to perform poorly. A self-fulfilling prophecy often occurs and the student sees him or herself as less competent than white students. The generally positive self-concept that the black student may have had in earlier days of education may actually be eroded by what is seen as failure.

Banks and Grambs (1972) prescribed that "teachers at all levels must believe that black children can achieve and communicate this belief to them if these students are to gain confidence in their ability and more positive self-concepts" (p. 18).

Despite a variety of approaches taken to the study of self-concept, there is ample evidence that it is related to the understanding of achievement. In addition, the specific

relationship between the race of the teacher and the self-concept of the student is of particular interest.

### Role Models

Role models are those persons who play significant parts in the development of individuals. A relationship between role models and self-concept has been established. Manis (1958) found parents, a child's original role models, to be critical in the development of self-image. Various findings such as those by Davidson and Lang (1960) pointed to a relationship between a child's self-perceptions and the expectations of those who serve as role models.

Although great emphasis has been placed on the development of self-image during the preschool years, Taylor (1976) reported evidence that role models can directly affect student attitude and behavior during adolescence. At this point in a youth's development, parents lose some of their influence as models. This may be partly explained by the fact that adolescents are attempting to break away from their dependence upon parents. Havighurst, Robinson, & Door (1946) suggested that it is during this period that young people look for other role models.

Traditionally, role models have been identified as parents, teachers, ministers, and other adults with whom a child forms a close association. Evidence that teachers are significant role models for students was found in a study by

Lipka, Beane, and Ludewig (1980). In the category of adult guidance the teacher was cited by the students in 87.9 percent of the responses. Comer (1988) pointed to the "notion of teacher as parent surrogate" as he contrasted the modern role of the teacher to that of earlier decades.

The effort to limit the role of the teacher and the school to academics is one of the primary reasons America's great experiment in education - the effort to educate more than the intellectual elite and economically privileged - has been less successful than it might have been. This limitation has been one of the reasons that so many students drop out and only about 20 percent actually thrive in our schools. (p. 34)

Although extensive research existed in the areas of self-concept and achievement (Wylie, 1979), relationships between racial role models and achievement or self-concept have seldom been examined. Taylor (1976) identified the "dearth of research on psychosocial development among black youth" as a serious concern. He cited Hauser (1971) in describing the "model deprivation" that affects the ability of young Blacks to make commitments for the future or to develop realistic expectations for themselves.

In a recent study Meier, Stewart, and England (1988) concluded that:

In school districts with larger proportions of black teachers, fewer black students are placed in EMR and TMR classes, more blacks are placed in gifted classes, fewer blacks are punished, suspended, or expelled, and more blacks graduate from high school. (p. 262)

The research cited strongly suggested that role models are important in the development of children. The signifi-

cance of role models, specifically teachers, to educational achievement was implied. Moreover, there may be a relationship among the proportion of black teachers, how black students are treated, and how black students perform.

### Achievement

The study of achievement has resulted in numerous theories relating to specific factors that negatively or positively affect academic attainment. Achievement research contributes to the ongoing search for greater insight into solutions for underachievement and improved learning for all students.

Higher achievement has been linked with "effective schools" research. This research concluded that there are five correlates of an effective school. One of those five is the high expectations of the teachers for their students to learn (Edmonds, 1978). A study by Henderson and Long (1973) concluded that this belief is affected by racial bias. Black teachers had higher expectations for black students than white teachers had for those same students.

Robert Morgan (1976) examined the relationship between teacher race and the academic achievement of majority black classes in pupil segregated schools. The findings revealed that the race of the teacher and experience in the school district were significantly related to reading gain for second, third, and fourth grades combined.

In examining the relationships among self-concept, teacher perception, and student achievement, Krupczak (1972) found that there was a significant, positive relationship between self-concept and school achievement. In addition, the study found that black students were perceived as having more ability by their black teachers than by their white teachers.

The studies cited indicated that teacher expectation is an important factor in student achievement. There was further evidence that those expectations may be affected by the race of the teacher and the student.

#### Discipline

An issue that cut across the lines of self-concept, role models, and achievement was discipline. Research directly related low self-concept to misbehavior and delinquency (Fitts, 1969; Gold, 1978; Purkey, 1970). In addition, Taylor (1976), Persons and Pepinsky (1966) cited the significance of positive role models as a factor in producing appropriate behavior. Gold (1978) stated that lack of achievement in school can be seen as "a major provocation to delinquent behavior" (p. 25). Finally, failure of teachers to interact effectively with black students has been blamed for the disproportionate numbers of Blacks who are disciplined in schools, suspended, or expelled (Meir, Stewart, and England, 1988; Oden and MacDonald (cited in Gold, 1978).

### Summary of Self-concept, Role Models, and Achievement

A brief overview of the literature related to self-concept, achievement, and role models suggested an inter-relationship. In addition, the research provided a foundation for the consideration of the race of the teacher as a significant factor in the achievement of black students. The limited number of studies that examined the relationship of the teacher to achievement generally concluded the following:

- 1) Expectation of the teacher is crucial to achievement,
- 2) Black teachers have higher expectations of black students,
- 3) Teacher expectation can affect self-concept,
- 4) Self-concept has been directly related to achievement and
- 5) The presence of black teachers has been related to a decrease in school suspension for black students.

Desegregation and various educational efforts to provide compensatory education have not closed the gap between recorded academic achievement of Blacks and Whites. Research in the areas of achievement, self-concept, and role models provided sufficient evidence of the significance of each to education and strongly suggested an interrelationship among the three. The indication that role models help develop self-concept and that there is a relationship between self-concept and achievement established a need for the further study of the classroom teacher as role model.



### Statement of the Problem

The achievement level of black students is lower than that of white students. Although a specific cause for this gap cannot be identified, factors such as an unequal history and inferior educational opportunities have been suggested. Currently, segregated public schools are not legal. Nevertheless, black students often attend schools that have few if any black teachers.

The literature has identified role models as a significant factor in child development. It has further identified possible relationships among race of teacher, self-concept, achievement, and discipline. In searching for an answer to improving black student achievement, there is evidence that providing black teachers may be significant.

### Purpose of Present Research

It was the purpose of this study to examine the relationship among the number of black teachers under which a black student has studied and his or her measured academic achievement and self-concept and to examine the relationship between the proportion of black teachers and black student discipline.

### Research Questions

This study investigated relationships among the presence of black teachers in a black student's educational history and academic achievement and self-concept. Specifically, the

research attempted to determine whether the number of black teachers teaching a black student is significantly related to his/her academic achievement as measured by a standardized, group achievement test. The research further attempted to determine whether the number of black teachers teaching a black student is significantly related to his/her self-concept as measured by a self-concept instrument. Finally, the research attempted to determine if the percentage of black teachers in a school is significantly related to the number of black students receiving suspensions.

Based on previous research and the inferences they suggest, the following hypotheses were developed and are stated here in the null form:

1. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his or her most recent achievement test scores.
2. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his or her measured self-concept.
3. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between a students measured self-concept and his/her most recent achievement test scores.
4. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between the percentage of black staff members in a school and the percentage of suspensions received by black students.

#### Definition of Terms

Achievement has a variety of meanings. For the purposes of this study achievement was defined as the academic attain-

ment measured by standardized instruments such as the California Achievement Test (CAT).

Self-Concept/Self-Esteem are terms used to denote a person's self-perception. Although self-esteem is generally used as a more specific term for the evaluative process of the individual's report of self, Well and Marwell (1976) report that in self-concept writings ". . . self-concept is sometimes virtually equated with self-esteem" (p. 59). They further note that many writers feel the ". . . explicit definitional efforts are, in many cases, superfluous" (p. 60). For the purposes of this study, the terms were used interchangeably. In citing research, the term used by that writer was used. For the purpose of this study self-concept was identified by the student's score on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI).

Role Model is a term used to depict a significant adult in the life of a child that serves as a model for behaviors or attitudes that child may imitate as he or she moves toward adulthood. For the purposes of this study the classroom teacher was the role model under consideration.

Number of Black Teachers. In this study the researcher examined the number of black teachers that each subject had been assigned to from kindergarten through eighth grade. To facilitate the reading during Chapters four and five, the phrase "number of black teachers"; used in conjunction with

the subjects of this study, will consistently mean all the black teachers that were assigned to the subjects during grades K-8.

Discipline. The term discipline referred to strategies used in schools to maintain appropriate behavior. The number of suspensions assigned was the factor used as a measure of discipline within a school.

#### Limitations of the Study

A research study involving variables such as achievement and self-concept is bound by certain limitations. A major concern is the environmental nature of the concepts. Statistical methods of analysis are limited in their capacity to "tease" out relationships that may exist. Based on this limitation, any relationships approaching significance were examined closely.

A second limitation is related to the first. The measures for achievement and self-concept are limited to the California Achievement Test (CAT) and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories. Although these instruments are nationally accepted as among the most valid and reliable they are nevertheless imperfect. This is particularly true of the SEI. Self reports of self-perceptions are difficult. Students may report the way they think they should feel. In addition, adolescents experience a great many emotions that

may impact on subjective reactions to questions at any given time.

A third limitation is the lack of data to analyze the impact of socio-economic status on the investigated variables. Conflicting research into the significance of socio-economic background provided questions as to the actual limitation of the absence of such data. Gordon (1972) studied self-concept, race, and family as determinants of adolescent orientation to achievement. Among his findings was the statement that "Social class has a much smaller total postulated causal effect upon blacks than upon whites (.222 as compared to .375). . ." (p. 104).

Recent studies into effective schools, typified by Edmonds (1978) suggested that previously held assumptions about socio-economic influence may be inaccurate. Coleman (1971), who provided one of the most renowned studies associating achievement with family background in 1966, actually came to challenge some of his own previously held convictions.

#### Delimitations of the Study

The group studied was restricted to students who have attended the Greensboro Public Schools for their entire public school careers. This was necessary to guarantee accurate data collection for each member of the study. Although CAT test data for all eighth graders was available,

it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to determine all the teachers under which a student studied from kindergarten through the eighth grade, and their race, unless the student data were local.

The study was further delimited to students for whom parental permission was obtained.

#### Significance of the Study

As educators search for answers to underachievement of all students, it is crucial to be aware of any indication of factors that may be correlated to higher achievement. A positive relationship between an increased number of black educators and the achievement scores of black students or the self-concept of students will be extremely important to those who administer schools.

The study will be of particular interest to North Carolina educators in view of a recent North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) study (1986). The report described a steady increase in the number of minority students in North Carolina during the last ten years. During that same time span, the minority teaching force has steadily decreased. The situation is summarized as follows:

There clearly is a need to analyze this problem of eroding minority educators in North Carolina in light of a growing minority student population. If this trend continues, many minority youth will enter an educational system in North Carolina void of role models. Experts predict that "other eventual consequences of the problem may be incalculable" (p. 8).

Educational reports such as A Nation Prepared (1986) and The Holmes Report (cited in ATE, 1986), echo the concern for what can be seen as a crisis in the supply of black educators.

The results of this study will be shared with all school administrators who participated in the study. In addition, the Greensboro Board of Education, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) will receive the results.

#### Organization of the Study

The basic organizational plan for the rest of this study will be as follows:

Chapter Two. This chapter will consist of a review of the literature as it relates to student achievement, self-concept, role models, and discipline.

Chapter Three. This chapter will provide the methodology used to gather and analyze the data. Information will be provided on the population, the students studied, the instruments, and the procedures used in the study.

Chapter Four. This chapter will include a complete reporting of the results of the data analysis. When pertinent; tables, figures, and other information needed for a thorough discussion of the findings will be provided.

Chapter Five. This chapter will summarize the study and

its major findings. It will further present conclusions that can be made from the findings, implications that the results have for education, and any recommendations for further research.



## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Achievement

The history of American public schools follows the path of the history of the United States itself. From the days of Thomas Jefferson, education of the masses has been seen by many as an important, if not critical, aspect of our concept of democracy. The process for determining the means toward that end continues to develop. Ravitch (1983), has likened this development to a crusade against ignorance, more specifically, a "troubled crusade." It is the "trouble" of the crusade that provides the backdrop for this study.

Americans, as a whole, have always expected a great deal from educational institutions. Those expectations, and often the lack of them, are woven into every phase of the crusade. One basic expectation for education is that students will learn. During the first century of American education the focus appears to have been on content and not on process.

As we entered the twentieth century, the learning process itself became a major force in education. Learning theories were developed and tested. Concepts such as the influence of repetition and the influence of rewards and punishment (Thorndike, 1932; Lewin, 1935), reflex conditioning (Pavlov,

1927), operant reinforcement (Skinner, 1938), and social fields of force (Lewin, 1935) have remained fundamental to students of educational theory. A major concern of critics, and often of the theorists themselves, was the differentiation between learning and performance (Thorndike, 1932). With this differentiation came a change in focus.

Out of the ideas developed during the early 1900's came a movement that is known as Progressive Education. This "new education" emphasized a child-centered approach. Schools were places where children could express themselves in a variety of activities such as music, drama, and art (Piaget, 1929). Despite a number of proponents of progressive education, no name was linked more prominently than that of John Dewey (1940). In his Pedagogic Creed he stated that "the school is primarily a social institution" (p. 6). Nevertheless, Dewey was disappointed in what he saw as the misuse of progressive concepts. Freedom to learn had been interpreted to mean freedom from any form of adult guidance. In response to this approach he stated:

. . . many of the current interpretations of the child-centered school, of pupil initiative and pupil-purposing and planning, suffer from exactly the same fallacy as the adult-imposition method of the traditional school--only in an inverted form. That is, they are obsessed by the personal factor; they conceive of no alternative to adult dictation save child dictation. What is wanted is to get away from every mode of personal dictation and merely allow personal control. (pp. 219-220)

Progressive education was attacked by a number of critics

such as Adler and Prosser who saw it as unproductive and lacking in discipline (cited in Ravitch, 1983). Opponents led a revolt that emphasized the need for "functional" education. Preparation for vocations was seen as the main purpose of education. It was interesting, if not frustrating, to note that this battle between the forces for "child development" and "preparation for life" continued to present day. Mortimer Adler, himself, was a major voice in the recent calls for reform (Adler, 1983).

Regardless of the approach taken to education, it was apparent that all children did not learn. Those who learned well were considered achievers and those who did not were considered underachievers. Questions that began to replace the what and how of education centered around why. Why did some children achieve while others did not? Theories that developed to explain the phenomenon basically fell into two categories, motivation and ability.

Motivation theory. Motivation was described by Atkinson (1964) as "a coherent conception of the contemporaneous determinants of direction, vigor, and a persistence of action" (p. 274). Theories of motivation, as related to achievement, were generally founded on principles developed by Lewin (1944), McClelland (1953, 1958, 1961, 1965) and Atkinson (1957, 1958, 1964). Lewin (1944) provided the foundation for later studies with two of his concepts,

a) need and the creation of tension, and b) level of aspiration. The need to achieve was the main focus of study for David McClelland.

McClelland's (1953) earliest work involved measuring motivation. Measurement of motivation was directly linked to a need to achieve, identified as n achievement. McClelland demonstrated that motivation to achieve could be manipulated by stimulating other human motives such as hunger. McClelland's research in achievement motivation continued into the 1980's and has direct implications for education, e.g., educational testing.

In a lecture to the Educational Testing Service (ETS), McClelland (1978) took exception to "the validity of intelligence and aptitude tests" (p. 1). He labeled the overall testing movement as games that people either play well or do not. The fact that tests predicted grades in school proved nothing substantive to him. Due to the fact that the tests were generally little samples of activities that teachers required, it was logical to find a strong correlation between scores and grades. If the grades one received in school went on to predict "success" in life, the test might be justified. "Researchers have, in fact, had great difficulty demonstrating that grades in school are related to any other behaviors of importance." (p. 2)

A final area of McClelland's research involved motivation

training. In a variety of experiments McClelland (1953, 1961, 1961) concluded that increased n achievement can be instilled in low achievers through training programs. As a part of this research, McClelland made extensive observation of classrooms. As a result, he identified teacher behaviors and settings that he concluded were more conducive to student motivation (1969). McClelland (1958) questioned the school setting as it relates to the student's role and suggested that:

. . . if schools and colleges are to serve increasingly as a screening device for all sorts of subsequent achievements they must be subjected to close scrutiny as social systems. We need to know to what extent the role requirements of being a student are the same as or different from those of various other status systems in later life. (p. 251)

Such a determination can best be made by considering academic achievement settings.

The achievement setting for public schools. Historically, educational settings in the United States have been developed in one of three main eras: a) the era of education for Whites only, b) the era of separate and unequal education for Blacks and Whites, and c) the era of integrated education for all students. For the purposes of this study, the review focused on the last era.

It can be stated that since Brown v. Board of Education (1954) the public schools of this country have gone through major changes. It can also be stated that there were

individuals or groups that expected immediate improvement in achievement of Blacks once they had the "benefit" of attending desegregated schools. When this did not occur, a variety of claims and "blames" were leveled at Blacks, Whites, and especially at the schools themselves.

Amidst the attacks and counterattacks that were being waged, one voice of reason offered some insight into possible aspects of the problem. Seymour Sarason (1972) stated:

There are three aspects to the term confronting history. The first is a way of thinking that points one to the past on the assumption that where one is (in relation to the proposed setting) does not solely reflect chance factors. I mean more than the fact that at any one point in our lives our past is playing a role, an obvious point we all recognize although we struggle in different ways and degrees to avoid its recognition. What I am placing greater emphasis on is that an individual's relation to a proposed setting involves or implies actual or potential relationships with many other settings and this totality has an understandable past and a significant future. It is my observation that the more an individual (or small group) is aware of his relation to the proposed setting, in terms of his personal history, the less he is able to perceive that personal history as an incomplete examination of the present. There is much more that has been set off or is now occurring in the earliest phases than is contained in the need, motivation, and goals of an individual. . . .

A second aspect of the term confronting history is implied in the first and that is that one is always dealing with the history of structured relationships. It can be counted on that the new setting reflects the history of relationships among diverse but related settings. . . .

The third aspect of confronting history is that the individual or small group assuming or given responsibility for the new setting utilizes this historical knowledge for actions which maximize the chances that the new setting will be viable and in ways consistent with its values and goals. The problem is not how to have a live

and functioning setting but how to have one which is true to its purposes. (p.42-43)

The public school setting immediately following Brown was very much a confrontation of history. In retrospect, it is easy to see that little, if any, effort was made to create a setting "true to its purposes". Since that time, the educational community has continued to establish a setting, much as a sailor bails water out of a leaking boat. In an attempt to provide "surface" equality the history of segregation as well as the history of black Americans has been ignored or forgotten (Ravitch, 1983).

Educational Environments. To what extent, then, is the public school setting "true to its purposes". Despite the conflicting theories over what constitutes an appropriate education, and the variety of pedagogical approaches used, it is the statutory purpose of the school to provide for the education of all the children. A number of researchers have investigated the relationship between educational environment and student achievement.

Brookover and Lezotte (1977) identified school characteristics that were related to increased student achievement. A belief that all students can learn and high expectations for the achievement of all student were two important characteristics cited.

Ethnographer, Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot (1978, 1980, 1983) has captured a picture of current educational environments as

well as any other researcher. Regularly she cited the significance of relationships between families, school, and community. Central to these relationships is an understanding and appreciation for individual cultures and lifestyles. In productive schools she found high expectations for all students. Poverty was seen as a condition, not an offense.

Edmonds (1980) went beyond the relationships essential for effective schooling and provided specific factors crucial to the education of all children, especially the poor and black children. Chief among these was strong leadership, high expectations, and an atmosphere conducive to learning. An atmosphere conducive to learning was seen as safe, orderly but not rigid, and one that put acquisition of basic skills above all other activities.

Goodlad (1984) provided an ethnographic study of American schools. Intertwined with his observations were commentaries and recommendations. He stated that:

Schools and classrooms cannot be understood or accurately and usefully described by the relatively simplistic input-output factory model so often used; they are better understood as little villages in which individuals interact on a part-time basis within a relatively constrained and confining environment. (p. 113)

Although these researchers provided a diverse perspective on educational environments, they shared a commonality. Each stressed the importance of factors that are difficult, if not impossible, to legislate. Factors such as a belief in the



ability of all students to learn, appreciation for culture and background of students, high expectations, and positive school climates develop in properly "created settings".

The impact of black education's history on current educational environment. Blacks met two general assumptions as they entered the previously all white schools. First, majority citizens assumed that schools that were all black must have been inferior and therefore discounted any educational background that they represented. Second, at the time of school integration, Blacks were just beginning to claim their legal rights to full citizenship. Black students were often treated as second class citizens because, for many Whites, that is how they had been perceived for decades (Weinberg, 1977). As late as 1971, Coleman stated that "[a]n important liability for Negroes is the prejudice of many whites that leads them to act differently to Negroes than to other whites" (p. 30).

Black teachers suffered from similar assumptions as they attempted to enter the integrated environment. Whites often assumed that black children in segregated schools had been taught by only black teachers. In actuality, many teachers in all-black schools were white. An example of this was seen in New York in the mid 1900's. Only 1.5 percent of all permanent teachers were black (Weinberg, 1977). It was also often assumed that if black teachers were members of the

"second class" population, they were inherently of poorer quality than white teachers. Du Bois (1923) challenged this notion saying:

I believe in Negro school teachers, I would to God white children as well as colored could have more of them. With proper training they are the finest teachers in the world because they have suffered and endured and nothing human is beneath their sympathy. (p. 172)

Despite erroneous assumptions that may have been made about Blacks, a look at black educational history showed approximately 200 years of struggle. As cited by Bond (1966) and Weinberg (1977), this history followed a path from being prohibited to learn, to the late 1800's when they were allowed to learn as best they could provide for themselves, to the early 1900's where public schools were provided with only a fraction of the financial assistance provided for white schools, to the 1960's when they were allowed to enter "white" schools. Integrated schools were not seen as belonging to Blacks, but simply shared with them as a result of the Supreme Court ruling. Even this legal decision did not make equal access easy. Blacks were forced to demand the right to attend white schools. White schools in the South and the North have fought a variety of efforts to make access possible or realistic. Physical violence has been common, often requiring police and National Guard to protect black students. Du Bois (1971) put the following epitaph on black educational history. "Probably never in the world have so

many oppressed people tried in every possible way to educate themselves" (p. 16).

This analysis of the setting and history of black education, makes our efforts during the last 25 years look naive at best. Sarason (1973) suggested that this naivety was the result of a lack of understanding of time in relationship to race. Using an example of the Jewish race, he stated that the history of an experience of "Jewishness" carried into new settings. Whether intentional or not, conscious, or not; these feelings, attitudes, fears, and prejudices must be accounted for as a minority race enters the environment of the majority. Schien (1985) concurred, citing a knowledge of, and an understanding of the culture of the organization as prerequisite to making changes within the organization.

The literature identified the importance of the history of Blacks in the educational setting and the significance of proper creation of settings. It also pointed to failure to address these two factors as educational settings were established. Nevertheless, it was those guided or misguided actions that have resulted in the current status of public school education.

#### Current Status of Achievement in Public Schools

Testing movement. In order to define what is meant by achievement in public schools, it is important to point out the role of the testing movement in determining achievement.

For the last twenty-five years it has been the practice in this country to determine the achievement level of any student, class, school, or state by relying on achievement test data. Although educators and the public give lip service to other measures of learning, they have relied, for the most part, on test scores.

Educational achievement testing has become a major business. Researchers are constantly revising, renorming, and revalidating tests. We even have a national assessment organization known as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to provide a report card on education in the United States.

The concept of testing for achievement was not found to be bad in and of itself. It was generally accepted that if something has been learned then it should be possible to "sample" that learning. A student who has learned to use a baseball bat, or play the piano can show what has been learned. The problem with testing was related to the construction and administration of achievement tests. The tests were limited to knowledge that can be demonstrated by verbal or symbolic terms (Ebel, 1965). In addition, the test only showed what had been demonstrated at any given moment, regardless of the conditions under which the test was given. And finally, the tests could not show how such knowledge was used in relationship to any other aspect of learning or

behavior. The limitations of achievement testing efforts were widely acknowledged (Baker, 1978; McClelland, 1978; Resnick and Resnick, 1988). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, references to achievement consistently meant achievement as determined by these standardized tests.

Achievement gap between Blacks and Whites. Reports from organizations such as Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB), the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have all cited what must be viewed as a major gap between white student achievement and black student achievement. A sample of data from the Digest of Educational Statistics (1988) supported the existence of this gap. Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for 1984-85 showed a verbal average for Whites at 449 and for Blacks at 346. The mathematic average for Whites was 491 and for Blacks 376. Forty-five percent of the black 17 year olds in 1981 scored at what was identified as the cut-off for achievement, while 63% of the white 17 year olds scored at the achievement level. Reading scores showed a similar gap with 88.9% of white 17 year olds and 65.8% of black 17 year olds scoring at or above proficiency levels for 1983-84. Despite such bleak statistics, it should be noted that the gap has narrowed. The number of black 9 year olds reading at a basic level or higher was 22% in 1970-71 and rose to 39% in 1983-84. The SAT verbal scores in 1975-76

showed a difference between Whites and Blacks of 119 points. In 1984-85 that gap had narrowed to 103, with white scores showing a two point decline since 1975 and black scores up 14 points. A similar pattern was noted in each of the other areas cited.

Educational authorities disagreed on factors influencing the achievement or lack of achievement among black students. Theories tended to fall into one of three categories, a) intelligence, b) cultural deprivation, or c) educational deprivation.

Intellectual inferiority of Blacks was generally accepted during slavery and into the twentieth century (Bond, 1954; Weinberg 1977). As late as 1969, Arthur Jensen espoused the theory that black intelligence was inherently limited. In an overview of the education of Blacks, Clark et al. (1972), reviewed studies that investigated the intellectual ability of Blacks. These studies consistently showed that race could not be identified as a major factor in variations of ability (Klineberg, 1935; Arlitt 1922; Sherman and Key (1932).

The intellectual community found purely racial theories distasteful. The terms cultural deprivation and educational deprivation, although often little more than euphemisms for black inferiority, were more acceptable. For a variety of reasons, including convenience, cultural deprivation was

generally accepted as the main factor in "educational deficit" (Havighurst, 1964; Clark et al., 1972).

Socio-economic theory, or the importance of social class was interwoven into the studies of cultural deprivation (Havighurst, 1976; Della-Dora, 1963; Cleft, 1961). The idea that one's social class can explain educational performance has been disputed by a number of theorists (Lipton, 1962; Bloom, 1964; Landers, 1964). An interesting study by Stodolsky and Lesser (1967) looked at various ethnic groups. They found a wide variety of abilities and patterns of performance within socio-economic levels.

Due to numerous and conflicting theories regarding the abilities and inclinations of black students, as well as the evidence that the achievement gap between Blacks and Whites has narrowed in the years since educational opportunities have become more equitable, it can be assumed that there is no one answer as to why Blacks achieve or do not achieve.

It has been suggested that academic achievement is viewed by many Blacks as a characteristic of Whites and that they resist "acting white" (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986). Other factors that have been identified as playing a negative role in black schooling are "difficulty in crossing cultural/language boundaries, folk theory of making it and survival strategies, and distrust of white people and the public schools" (Ogbu, 1987, p. 332).

If Ogbu's theory is correct, can public schools provide for the needs of all Blacks? Possible answers were found in research on effective schools.

Effective schools research. A landmark study by Coleman (1966) reported that there was little that schools could do to offset the effects of background and socio-economic status. Intensive research efforts during the 1970's and early 1980's, known as effective schools research, have generally refuted Coleman. Edmonds (1978) cited a number of attacks on the methodological design of his study (Armour, 1972; Bowles and Levin, 1968; Cain & Watts, 1970; Hanushek and Kain, 1972; Jencks, 1972; Smith, 1972).

In his review of the literature on effective schools, Edmonds (1978) stated that the fundamental question under consideration was: "Are there schools that are instructionally effective for poor children?" (p. 34) Weber (1971), Lezotte, Edmonds, and Ratner (1974), and Brookover (1976) were a few of the researchers providing the resounding answer, yes. In a summary of the studies, Edmonds (1978) stated:

While recognizing the importance of family background in developing a child's character, personality, and intelligence, I cannot overemphasize my rejection of the notion that a school is relieved of its instructional obligations when teaching the children of the poor. (p. 31)

He voiced a mutual recommendation that further research into school and teacher effectiveness is important.



Literature related to the nature of achievement and the current status of education provided evidence of the complexities of the factors related to black student achievement. It also pointed to evidence that all students can learn. As a result of this review, an investigation of other variables generally associated with achievement was indicated. The first of two areas studied was self-concept, a characteristic historically associated with achievement.

### Self-Concept

Self-Concept theory. The study of self-concept has resulted in a proliferation of research. It was not the purpose of this study, nor was it feasible, to present an in-depth review of the total field. Rather, a conceptual framework was established through a review of key theories and studies.

The self-concept has, no doubt, been of interest since Descartes (1644) declared "I think, therefore I am". Nevertheless, sophisticated studies related to self generally dated to William James (1890). James' work provided the foundation for many of the theorists that followed. Reduced to the fundamental precepts, James presented his ideas within three main constructs: a) the constituents of the self, b) the feelings of self, and c) the actions of self. He believed that there could be as many selves as a person needed in presenting himself to various groups.

Mead (1934) also had a major impact on studies of the self. Similar to James, Mead's theory of the self existed only as it related to others. The self reacts to itself as it perceives others responding to or considering it. Not only did the self exist as a result of this relationship to others, but, Mead theorized that there could be different selves for different group settings. He suggested that there could be a family self, a social self, and a school self, among others.

Allport (1937) was less convinced of the need to have a separate concept of self. He presented the self as "the proprium". Allport (1961) identified seven aspects of self-hood that develop over time. They were, in order of appearance, a) a sense of bodily self, b) a sense of continuing self-identity, c) self-worth, d) the extension of self, e) the self-image, f) self-awareness of ability to reason, and g) intention, or long range goal setting.

Lewin (1937), although not a self-theorist, placed consideration of self within his field theory. He saw actions of the self as a function of the forces in a field at the time the behavior occurs. The self operated in a psychological environment with which it combined to form the life space. Lewin presented his concepts in mathematical terms, expressing the value of various regions of the self as

valence. Positive valences were seen as attractive to the self while negative valences increased tension.

Lecky (1945) presented an optimistic view. He not only believed that the self can create "unified personality" but that such unification is very important. Pleasure in life was seen as a by-product of that unification, and not an end in itself. External contact with others was a very important aspect of the self. Regardless of the changes occurring in this external world, the self remained at the center. Lecky theorized that, although flexible in its various functions in the world, the individuals "concept of self" was held firm.

Modern theorists, often called humanistic, were represented by Rogers (1951) and Snygg and Combs (1959). Rogers developed a theory of self as a result of conducting therapy in a clinical setting. His theory has become known by the term client-centered. Rogers (1951) determined that "Behavior is basically the goal-directed attempt of the organism to satisfy its needs as experienced, in the field a perceived" (p. 491). Two predominant needs identified by Rogers are the need for positive regard and the need for self-regard. As the self-concept develops it is strongly affected by perceptions of the self as to the regard of others.

In analyzing the perceptions of the self as accurate or inaccurate, Rogers stressed the fact that each individual has

his/her own reality. As a result each responds to situations and experiences in life differently.

Snygg and Combs (1959) saw the self as phenomenal. They saw all behavior as a result of what a person thinks or feels. The experiences one encountered in the phenomenological field were seen as most significant in the development of these perceptions. Nevertheless, Snygg and Combs (1959) did not develop a theory of self as object. Instead, they saw the self as product and producer. The experiences form the thoughts and feelings which in turn motivate the behaviors which impact on the world outside the self.

A summary of the various theories of the development of self-concept suggested that a fundamental precept of each is the interaction of the individual with others and his/her internalization of those interactions. This precept has tremendous implications for education as a process of continual interaction between students and teachers. The results of that interaction were investigated in studies of achievement and self-concept.

The relationship of achievement to self-concept. Purkey (1970) observed that:

for generations, wise teachers have sensed the significant and positive relationship between a student's concept of himself and his performance in school. They believe that the students who feel good about themselves and their abilities are the ones who are most likely to succeed. (p. 14)

A number of studies have been conducted to determine whether such a relationship actually exists.

In an exhaustive study of the research on correlations between self-concept and achievement, Wylie (1963) questioned the identification of a global self-concept factor. She restricted her own research on self-concept to a self-evaluation of ability to do school work. Such specificity of approach varied greatly in the sample of studies presented in this review.

Piers and Harris (1964) compared self-concept scores with achievement and IQ scores of third and sixth grade students. The results showed a low, but significant correlation between academic achievement and general self-concept.

In a landmark study by Brookover, Thomas, and Peterson (1962) it was found that even when the measured IQ is controlled, there is a significant, positive correlation between self-concept and achievement. Although they found that the self-concept correlated significantly and positively to the perception of how others evaluated the student, it ". . . is the composite image rather than the images of specific others that appear to be most closely correlated with the student's self-concept in specific subjects" (p. 278).

Paschal (1968) studied the self-concepts of achievers and non-achievers. The 152 subjects were considered to be similar in ability as determined by the School and College

Ability Test. He considered achievers to be those students who maintained a C or better average for the first six weeks. Those having averages below a C were considered nonachievers. The comparisons showed that significantly more subjects with "adequate" self-concepts fell into the category of achievers. Paschal also determined that there was a relationship between the grades teachers gave the students and their self-concepts.

Fitts (1972) observed that:

The student's concept of self appears to be a significant variable in academic performance when such performance is considered in a broad sense. When more narrow criteria of performance such as achievement tests are considered, the relationship with the self concept is clouded and relatively insignificant. (p. 43)

He acknowledged that a person's general self-image would show a slight relationship to academic performance, but would "be more closely related to the noncognitive aspects of his behavior within the academic setting" (p. 43).

Campbell (1967) compared scores on the Coopersmith SEI and the achievement scores of students in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. The results indicated a low, positive correlation.

In a study of the relationship between self-concept and sociometric status, Goodman (1972) found a correlation of .25 ( $p < .05$ ,  $N=53$ ) between achievement and self-concept.

Legette's (1979) study found significant, although relatively low, positive correlations between global self-concept

scores and grade point average. In addition, the correlations between achievement and global self-concept were "also significant and were generally higher than those for teacher assigned grades" (p. 96).

Brookover, LePere, Hamachek, & Erikson (1965) determined that academic achievement can actually be enhanced through increased self-concept of ability.

The literature provided more than ample evidence of a relationship between self-concept and achievement. Such a relationship raised questions about possible differences in the self-concept of Blacks.

Self-Concept and Blacks. Research concerning the self-concept of Blacks is conflicting. Early studies were summarized by the work of Lewin (1948), Clark (1959), and Ausubel (1958) in the belief that Blacks had a self-hatred. Ausubel stated:

Being a Negro, however, had many implications for the ego development of young children that are not inherent in lower-class membership. The Negro child inherits an inferior caste status and almost inevitably acquires the negative self-esteem that is the realistic ego reflection of such status. (cited in Wylie, 1979, p. 123)

Lewin saw black self-hatred as a natural result of being a forced member of an underprivileged class of people. His recommendations for improving such a self-image included 1) developing a strong, positive identity with the minority

group and 2) raising the status of the minority group to that of the majority.

Wylie's (1963) findings supported "the idea that differences in cultural learning opportunities result in differences in self-concepts concerning one's intellectual abilities" (p. 222-23). In a later study, Wylie (1979) cited a broad survey of studies involving preference and evaluation of white and black dolls ( Clark and Clark, 1939, 1940, 1947, Gregor and McPherson, 1966; Goodman, 1946; Greenwald and Oppenheim, 1968; Simon, 1974). Although, in general, results showed a consistent preference for or identity with the white dolls; Wylie found the data inconclusive evidence of black self-hatred or self-rejection. She pointed to a variety of methodological problems that limited the usefulness of much of the research.

Since the 1970's the body of research related to self-concept and Blacks generally presented more positive results. Zirkel and Moses (1971) found that the black children in their study actually had higher self-concepts than the white children. The Coopersmith SEI was used to determine self-concept. Trowbridge, Trowbridge, and Trowbridge (1972) found similar results with black children scoring a mean of 73.6 and other children scoring a mean of 69.0 on the Coopersmith SEI.

Rosenberg and Simmons (1972) offered a reference group



theory. They suggested that Blacks do not demonstrate low levels of self-esteem because they evaluate themselves in comparison to significant others who may also achieve at low academic levels. This theory did not account for instances in which self-esteem is reported to be higher than that of Whites. Stephan and Rosenfield (1979) concluded from their study that Blacks do not differ from Whites in self-esteem. There was no evidence of self-rejection of their ethnic group. Blacks "actually evaluated blacks more favorably than whites or Mexican Americans evaluated their ingroup members" (p. 714).

Entwisle, Alexander, Pallas, and Cadigan (1987) found that there was no difference in children's academic self-image according to race or parent background at the beginning of the first grade.

Although a number of studies cited evidence of negative self-concept in Blacks, the more current theories generally disagreed. Most recent studies found that assumptions based purely on race are unsubstantiated.

Previously cited support for the positive relationship between achievement and self-concept, and conflicting data regarding the self-concept of race, dictated a review of studies that examined all three variables.

Self-concept, race, and achievement. Caplin (1966) conducted a study of black students and found that those with

more positive self-concept reports also tended to have higher achievement.

As stated previously, Legette (1979) found a significant relationship between self-concept and achievement. This relationship was true for both the Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Scale (CSCS) and the Coopersmith SEI. When the data were further analyzed race differences were found. Black students' Piers-Harris scores were significantly related in only two areas of the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT), science and reading. She also found that "self concept scores and teacher-assigned grades, with the exception of mathematics, were markedly lower for Blacks than for Whites" (p. 100). A higher relationship was found between self concept and achievement test scores for Blacks than between self concept and grades assigned by teacher.

Laryea (1972) found a significant correlation between academic self concept and achievement for black and white sixth graders. The only difference in race was the fact that the correlation for white girls was greater than that of black girls. The difference was significant at the .05 level.

Lay and Wakstein (1984) analyzed data on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) used for college admissions. Extreme differences were found between the scores of Blacks and Whites, with Blacks averaging over 200 points lower on com-

bined SAT scores. When self-concept was analyzed it was found that when academic achievement was equal, Blacks actually had higher reports on all three dimensions of ability than Whites. Although there were differences in self-concept based on geographical areas of the country, the differences did not affect the relationship between race and self-concept.

Self-concept and behavior. Works previously cited relating one's actions to perceptions of self suggested a review of literature relating self-concept to school behavior.

Fitts' (1969) research on self-concept and delinquency yielded several conclusions, including:

1. The self concept is intimately related to behavior. Individuals who are deviant in terms of antisocial, delinquent, or criminal behavior have self concepts that are also uniquely deviant.
2. Those who would correct, rehabilitate, educate, or otherwise help public offenders need to first understand them from an internal frame of reference - to know the nature of their self concepts.
3. Presently available data indicate that delinquents whose self concepts improve the most during treatment have lower recidivism rates. (pp. 83-84)

Gold (1978) defined delinquent behavior as a defense against factors in the environment which pose a threat to the self-esteem of a student. He further observed that a situation that endangers a student's self-concept should be considered a "provocation to delinquency: it is an experience

that motivates an individual to be disruptive and delinquent" (p. 25).

Although a variety of theories of self-concept were reviewed, there was no evidence of a singular causal factor. Instead, it became clear that a number of variables can and do play a part. The concept of role models was examined as a possible variable.

### Role Models

Throughout psychological and educational literature the term role model was used. There seemed to be a general acceptance of the validity of the concept. A search for theoretical background led to general role theory.

Mead's (1934) theory of self emphasized the importance of role taking by infants. He identified parents and surrogates as crucial to the child learning life roles. It is a mutual relationship. As the adult learns to be a parent or role giver, the child learns to be a person.

Sarbin (1954) suggested that roles are performed only to the degree that samples of role behavior have been "stored away" for future reference. The significance of role-taking was also cited by Kohlberg (1981). He referred to mutual role-taking as "seeing myself as others are seeing me as we interact" (p. 326). In his stages of moral development it is crucial to have a model of the behavior needed in the next

level. Kohlberg defined the process for making moral decisions as "ideal role taking" (p. 199).

An excellent bridge between self theory and role theory was provided by Goffman (1959). His "presentation of self" described the necessary, but often contrived, roles that one plays in life. He defined the social roles as "the enactment of rights and duties attached to a given status" (p. 16).

The works reviewed suggested a blending of self and role development. In light of previously cited relationships between self-concept and achievement, such a blend had strong implications for this study. A search for relationships between various role models and self-concept was conducted.

Role models and self-concept. Psychological literature accepted the premise that family members play an important role in the development of a child's self-concept (Wylie, 1979). It was assumed that the child's dependence on, and affection for, his/her parents made them the logical instrument for helping in the determination of characteristics and behaviors.

Sullivan (1953) went even further with his belief that the truly human characteristics are developed only through interaction with others. This interaction provides us with pictures that we consistently refer to in acting out what we determine to be our "self".

Accepting the significance of the family, specifically

parents, in the development of the self, it appeared that great contribution was also made by persons outside the family. "Significant others" and their involvement in the development of self is at the very foundation of psychological theory (James, 1890; Mead, 1934).

Bandura (1969), cited in Wylie (1979), stated:

. . . although wide differences of opinion exist among personality theorists in what they consider to be the most suitable reference events for identification, it is generally agreed that identification refers to a process in which a person patterns his thoughts feelings, or actions after another person who serves as a model. (p. 334)

Given the general acceptance of role models as a major factor in the development of human beings in general, it was necessary to consider the implications for the development of self-identification in Blacks.

Blacks and role models. Taylor (1974) addressed the importance of and the need for role models for black adolescents. His concern that self is still developing during the years beyond childhood was in harmony with Allport's (1961) final stages of development of self. Taylor concluded that it was useful to see the process of becoming an adult as

. . . one in which the youth gradually acquires a variety of commitments as revealed through his selections and identifications with certain role models who influence as well as constrain his psychosocial development. (p. 368)

Kaluzny, Boyer, and Somervil (1973) determined that a prejudice toward adult models of different races did not

exist in the pre-school children they studied. Although on the surface this appeared to suggest that it is not important to supply black teachers, it actually raised a number of questions regarding the environment of preschool children as opposed to school children and the experiences that occurred in those environments.

Brooks (1987) stated the need for appropriate role models for minority children. "Without positive role models to pattern their lives after the children often are influenced by society's losers" (p. 240). He considered black teachers to be crucial role models for black and white students. As such, the current shortage of black teachers was cited as a crisis affecting excellence in education.

In reference to black teachers, Cooper (1988) maintained that "these professional adults are the 'significant others' for black children - persons who act as appropriate role models and are capable of enhancing the self-concept of the young" (p. 123). Henderson (1977) conducted a study to determine whether the self concepts of black and white students were affected by the race and sex of the teacher. The results did not show significant increases for black students taught by a black teacher.

Teacher as role model. Brookover, Lepere, Hamacheck, and Erikson (1965) not only acknowledged the role of significant others, but conducted an investigation that " has shown

that the student's self-concept of ability can be modified by significant others and thereby affect their achievement" (p. 212).

Carew and Lightfoot (1979) identified the teacher as the central figure dominating and controlling the activities of children. After the age of five, most children spend the majority of their "active" hours in school classrooms. Teachers are the adults with whom children spend as much time, or more, as with their own parent(s). Is the teacher, then, considered a role model? If so, what effect can that modeling have on children?

Cramer, Bowerman, and Campbell (1966) found that when students were asked to name the most important influence on their educational plans, teachers ranked second only to their parents. "The child's affect, negative or positive, toward the educational process focuses on teachers as its representatives." (p. 173)

Comer (1988) makes a direct comparison between good parenting and good teaching and calls for surrogate parenting in the classroom. "All adults involved with children either help or thwart children's growth and development - whether we like it, intend it, or not." (p. 34)

In studying self-concept and the curriculum, Lipka, Beane, and Ludewig (1980) found that of all mentions related to adult guidance, 87.9 percent were the teacher. They went



on to state that " . . . about a fifth of a child's sense of self is derived from the school experience and that self within the institution and self as engaged learner are the most salient categories within that experience" (p. 22).

Teacher (as role model) and achievement. The literature on school achievement was rich with indications that teachers affect learning in one of two ways: a) Directly through use, or lack of use, of effective teaching techniques (Brophy and Good, 1974; Edmonds, 1978), or b) Indirectly through expectations of students (Brophy and Good, 1974); or through use of affective behaviors (Alexander, Entwisle, Thompson, 1987; Fordham and Ogbu, 1986).

A classic, but highly challenged, study of teacher expectations was conducted by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968). They presented one-fifth of the children in a school as intellectually advanced. The children were selected at random. At the end of the year the selected children actually scored significantly higher than the rest of the students. The researchers concluded that the results could only be explained as "self-fulfilling prophecy". Unfortunately, teachers were assumed to have behaved differently toward the "advanced" students, but no direct observation of teachers was included in the design of the study.

Additional studies of teacher expectations have found that teachers have lower expectations of black students and

that those low expectations adversely affect performance (Rubovits and Maehr, 1973; Persell, 1978; Rist, 1970). In a study patterned after that of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) Rubovits and Maehr (1977) observed teacher behavior toward students whose abilities had been randomly "determined". Students who had been labeled as gifted were given more time and called on more often. In short, the teachers expected them to do well. Within the gifted group, white students were treated more positively than black. Most of the criticism leveled at gifted students by the teachers was directed at the black students.

Hargrove (1981) found the students taught by black teachers demonstrated higher reading comprehension and vocabulary gains than those taught by white teachers. In an earlier study, Stout (1973) reported similar results. He not only found that black students in the study performed better with a black teacher than with a white teacher, but also found indications that black students' performance was better when affective language was used rather than neutral language. Morgan (1977) reported mixed results that showed black students with greater reading achievement when taught by black teachers, but higher mathematics gain when taught by white teachers.

In a study that showed black and white students at comparable levels of achievement at the beginning of the first

grade, Entwisle and Alexander (1988) found some disturbing results. At the end of the first grading period there was a striking difference between the math and reading scores for black and white children. Blacks scored significantly lower in both areas.

Although the study raised many questions, the authors made two important observations. First, the data gathered suggested that for black students, teachers are significant others more than they are for white students. Second, Blacks received mixed messages from their teachers. They received conduct grades that were positively related to their reading and math grades but negatively correlated to their achievement test scores.

Entwisle and Alexander (1988) found that teachers marked the conduct of high achieving black students as lower than that of lower achieving Blacks. Passive black students seemed to be rewarded by the conduct grades they received.

White teachers have been observed to provide negative feedback to black students at a rate two and one-half times greater than for white students (Aaron and Powell, 1982). Other studies showed black students receiving less praise than white students (Gay, 1974; Mangold, 1974; Grant, 1984).

In examining the teachers relationship to achievement, studies consistently found that teacher expectation directly affected achievement. In addition, it was found that

teachers routinely treated black students differently than white. Expectations were lower and criticism was higher. An overview of all literature related to teacher behavior strongly indicated a need for Blacks to be educated by teachers who feel positively about them and who believe that they can achieve.

Black Teachers as role models for achievement. The need for black teachers as role models was consistently cited throughout current literature. Combined with an acknowledgment of the importance of black teachers is the alarm over the decline in minority members of the teaching force. Baratz (1986) provided grim statistics that show a decrease in black educators of 1970 at 12 percent to a predicted 5 percent in 1990. Irvine (1988), reacting to such a prediction, stated:

A minority teaching force of that size [5%] would mean that the average student, who has about 40 teachers during his pre-collegiate years, can expect at best to encounter only two teachers who are members of a minority group during his entire school career. (p. 506)

The Association of Teacher Educator's Blue Ribbon Task Force (ATE) (1986) documented a call from three major reform proposals to provide additional black teachers. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Educators Redesign stated that the "faculty should reflect cultural diversity" (p. 6). The Holmes Group called for "increasing the number and quality of minority candidates in teacher education"

(p. 8). Federal incentives to increase the number of minorities in teacher education programs were recommended in the Carnegie Forum.

Meir, Stewart, and England (1988) provided extensive data on the relationship between the presence of black educators and achievement. A sample of this data included the fact that:

school districts with larger percentages of black teachers consistently have higher proportions of black students who graduate from high school. This relationship increases modestly over time so that by 1982 a one percent increase in black teachers results in a .18 percent increase in the black student graduation ration. (p. 183).

They also found that black teachers are the strongest predictor of black access to gifted classes and in the reduction of Blacks being assigned to TMR and EMR classes. The percentage of black teachers directly related to discipline. A one percent increase in black teachers equaled a .5 percent decrease in instances of discipline for black students.

Cooper (1988) stated that black teachers are "particularly important in the lives of inner-city children, who may otherwise lack daily contact with educated, intelligent, successful Blacks" (p. 123). She considered black teachers and administrators as important to non-Blacks as well. These students need to know that black adults are capable, contributing citizens. "Daily contact with academically successful Black professionals in schools will be helpful in eradicating

stereotypes held by non-black students and adults." p. 123

Cole (1986) identified the same concern. She stated that a reduction in numbers of black teachers will impact not only the black community, but the entire nation as well. The seriousness of the need for black teachers has even become a source of news in the media (Greensboro News and Record, 1989).

Behavior and black teachers. Evidence was found that inappropriate behavior, specifically violence and vandalism, is associated with racism on the part of the school faculty (Gold, 1978; Person & Pepinsky, 1966; Kunjufu, 1986). Oden and MacDonald (cited in Gold, 1978) observed that discriminating behaviors of teachers often alienated students and influenced their criminal behavior. They stated:

Schools with racist policies, or clearly prejudicial faculty are often the targets for considerable vandalism, classroom control problems, and worse. Other direct results of racism and prejudiced behaviors by faculty members are absenteeism, academic indifference and low student body morale. (p. 103)

Meir, Stewart, and England (1988) found a disproportionate number of black students receiving severe consequences, such as suspension, for inappropriate behavior. In the same study they found that as the number of black educators in a school system increased, the number of suspensions decreased. In a study that subjected discipline to intense scrutiny, Educational Images (1982) also found disproportionate numbers of black students receiving suspensions. Although black

students made up only 26 % of the student population they were assigned 53% of the out-of-school suspensions. "Despite this disproportion, no overt bias was apparent in applying the Code of Conduct rules to suspensions (especially at the administration level)" (p. 75). Among the recommendations was the need to place emphasis " . . . on building more positive interpersonal relationships between persons of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds" (p. 73).

A summary of observations cited in this section points to two main considerations: a) The number of black teachers is decreasing drastically, and b) it is generally accepted that black teachers are an important aspect of public schools.

Having reviewed literature showing relationships between self-concept and achievement, self-concept and the teacher (role model), and achievement and the teacher, this author investigated the existence of relationships among all three variables.

#### The Relationships Among Achievement, Self-Concept, and Role Models

In a frequently cited study, Davidson and Lange (1960) attempted to "relate children's perception of their teachers feelings toward them to self-perception, academic achievement and classroom behavior" (p. 116). The major conclusions included:

1. The children's perception of their teachers' feelings toward them correlated positively and significantly with self-perception. The child with the more favorable self-image was the one who more likely than not perceived his teacher's feelings toward him as more favorable.
2. The more positive the children's perceptions of their teachers' feelings, the better was their academic achievement and the more desirable their classroom behavior as rated by the teachers.
3. Further, children in the upper and middle social class groups perceived their teachers' feelings toward them more favorably than did the children in the lower social class group. (p. 116)

Ford (1985) observed that the way "a student perceives school will probably have some bearing on how well or how poorly he/she performs" (p. 82). Her conclusions suggested that black students may or may not have a poor self-concept. Those who demonstrated a high self-acceptance score also saw their teachers as individuals who "genuinely liked, accepted, and understood them and treated them as responsible individuals" (p. 88). She concluded that since a negative self-concept tended to result in a negative view of teacher or school, that those negative views could result in lower achievement.

In an attempt to increase the understanding of black achievement, Holliday (1985) looked at the interrelationships of a variety of factors such as a child's school self-esteem, teacher attitudes, and academic achievement. Among other findings, the study found that "black children's achievement is minimally influenced by their own self-perceptions but



significantly influenced by teachers' perceptions denoting orientation and evaluation transactions" (p. 78).

### Summary

The review of literature in the areas of achievement, self-concept, and role models (teachers) yielded evidence of relationships between each and among all three. The support for the relationships varied occasionally and at times was contradictory. In addition the breadth of research in the various domains was not balanced. Nevertheless, there was sufficient foundation for the following propositions:

1. Achievement is the measure of educational learning. This measurement is currently difficult to determine.
2. Measurement instruments consistently show black students achieving lower than white students.
3. Students have a personal view of themselves and their abilities that is referred to as self-concept, self-esteem, self-regard, among other terms.
4. There is a positive relationship between self-concept and achievement.
5. Role models are crucial to the development of self-concept.
6. Teachers serve as role models for students.
7. Teachers can affect student achievement through their expectations, among other things.
8. White teachers have lower expectations of black students than of white students.
9. Educational authorities call for additional black teachers to serve as appropriate models for black students, as well as white.
10. Behavior is affected by the adult role models provided for students in schools.

11. Educational authorities stress a need for additional research on the factors related to black achievement.
12. Relationships exist among achievement, self-concept, and teachers/role models.

Given these propositions, it was apparent that additional studies into the significance of supplying black teachers were needed. It was of particular interest that the literature addressed educational settings in which the proportion of black teachers was related to educational outcomes. The current reduction in the number of available black teachers has been seen as a crisis. Regardless of philosophical agreement or disagreement with such an observation, it is important to investigate a possible relationship between the presence of black teachers and black student achievement.

### CHAPTER 3

#### METHOD OF STUDY

It was the purpose of this study to examine the relationship among the number of black teachers under which a black student has studied and his or her measured academic achievement and self-concept and to examine the relationship between the proportion of black teachers and black student discipline.

#### Population and Subjects

The population for this study was all black eighth graders enrolled in the Greensboro Public Schools during the 1987-88 school year who had never attended school in another school system.

Greensboro is located in the northwest piedmont of North Carolina. Statistical data provided by the United States Bureau of Census (1988) estimated the city population at 176,659. The racial composition of the city was identified as 66% white and 34% non-white. The per capita income was listed as \$11,686. This exceeded the state per capita income of \$9,517 by more than \$2,000. Adults in Greensboro who had finished four or more years of college was recorded as 25%, almost twice the state average of 13%. There are five colleges and universities in the city. The majority of all

employment fell in the managerial, professional, and technical categories (56%). Only 12.8% of the city population fell below the poverty level, in contrast to 14.6 of the state population.

The Greensboro Public Schools system is an urban school system within a subset of the city of Greensboro. The school district boundary lines and the city boundary are not necessarily the same. The Greensboro Public Schools system had a student body of 20,953 pupils in the 1987-88 school year. The racial composition of the student body was 47.70% white, 50.03% black, and 2.27% other.

There were approximately 300 black eighth graders who had attended Greensboro Public Schools for their entire public school careers. The subjects were the 146 students for whom parent permission was obtained and for whom all necessary data were available.

The methodological approach used was that of a census survey. "A survey is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables." (Gay, 1987, p. 191) Unlike a sample survey, the goal of the census survey was to collect data from every member of the population.

### Test Instruments

The collection of data for this study involved the use of

an achievement test, a self-esteem inventory, school system records, and student records.

Academic achievement was determined by a previously administered California Achievement Test (CAT). The CAT was administered to the subjects in March of 1988 as a part of the state mandated testing program. Test results for each eighth grader in attendance on the days of administration were filed in his or her school record.

A Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) was administered to each subject during May of 1988 (see Appendix A). It has been determined to be one of the most familiar and widely used of the many self-esteem instruments (MMYB, 1985). It possessed enough "reliability and validity to recommend [its] use in research" (p. 397).

The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories (SEI) are three self-report questionnaires intended to measure "the evaluation a person makes and customarily maintains with regard to him or herself." Each questionnaire presents respondents with generally favorable or generally unfavorable statements about the self, which they indicate as "like me or "unlike me". The School Form is a 25 item inventory to be used for individuals of school age, but younger than 16 (pp.396-97).

A study of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory by Johnson, Redfield, Miller, and Simpson (1983) provided the following specific data:

The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) was examined using a modified version of the Sabers and Whitney model for construct validation. The SEI, Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (CSCS), and Children's Social Desirability Scale (CSDS) were administered to 55 males and 50 females enrolled in six intact fifth-grade

classes. Each student also received a teacher rating of self-concept using the Coopersmith Behavioral Academic Assessment Scale (BASE). Regression analyses indicated that the SEI has convergent validity with regard to the CSCS ( $p < .01$ ) and BASE ( $p < .01$ ) has discriminant validity with regard to the CSDS ( $p < .05$ ), is sensitive to differences in achievement level ( $p < .01$ ), and is internally consistent (coefficient alpha = .86). Intrarater stability for the BASE ranged from .85 to .97; average interrater agreement was .86 ( $p = .907$ ).

School system records used included Civil Rights Office data regarding pupil and staff accounting statistics, compilation reports of suspension data, CAT summary reports, and personnel data regarding the race of individual teachers assigned to subjects.

State records documented in the 1988 North Carolina Statistical Profile of Public Schools provided additional information.

Individual student records for each subject were used to collect CAT results and the names of teachers assigned during grades K-8.

### Procedure

The procedure consisted of four phases: 1) Identification of subjects, 2) Measurement of self-esteem, 3) Collection of data regarding achievement and classroom teachers assigned to students, and 4) Collection of data regarding suspensions in middle schools and racial makeup of those schools.

Identification of subjects. A conference was held with all middle school principals to explain the project in full.

Arrangements were made for working within each school through a designee of the principal. In each case that designee was a school counselor. The school system provided a printout of all students who had maintained continuous enrollment in the Greensboro Public Schools since kindergarten. Address labels for these students were also provided. Of the 400 students listed, only 300 were found to be currently enrolled. A letter inviting each of the 300 students to participate in the study (see Appendix B) was mailed home. Students were instructed to return the permission forms to their teachers who then returned them to the school counselor. After schools had been given two weeks to collect forms, the researcher followed up on those who had not responded. A second letter was mailed as a reminder, and to provide for lost letters. After two additional weeks had passed, phone calls were made to the last of those who had not responded. At that point permission from 182 students had been obtained. Due to missing data or the unavailability of a record, 36 students were eliminated, reducing the number of subjects to 146.

Measurement of Self-Esteem. It was necessary for each participant to have a measure of self-esteem. Having chosen the Coopersmith SEI, the researcher made arrangements with each school for administration. To facilitate this administration, as well as to provide useful information to the schools, all eighth graders were given the SEI to complete.

To provide for the "least threatening" environment, it was decided by the researcher and school personnel that the SEI would be administered by the eighth grade teachers during the home base period of the school day. The researcher met with eighth grade team leaders at each school and reviewed the procedures for administration. The teachers were given a full week of school for administration to provide for any schedule conflicts within schools. The administration was, however, limited to one week to assure that all students were inventoried at approximately the same point in their school careers.

Although the SEI is designed for use with students from grades three up, teachers were encouraged to read any or all items to students who might have any difficulty with the reading. The student's attitudes toward self were the only objective.

The SEI consisted of 50 short statements to which the student was asked to respond that the statement was "like me" or "not like me". Although timing was not required, thirty minutes was more than ample for completion of the inventory.

Completed inventories were returned to the researcher for scoring. All results were returned to the schools for their records (see Appendix C). The SEI results for subjects were recorded on a data collection form (see Appendix D).

Collection of student data. The cumulative records of



the 182 subjects were reviewed under the supervision of each school counselor. The CAT scores for Total Battery (TB), Total Language (TL), Total Reading (TR), Total Math (TM) were recorded on the data collection form. In addition, the name of assigned teachers for each grade K-8 were recorded. In grades 6-8 students were taught by a team of teachers. It was necessary to consult guidance records to determine the names of classroom teachers for those grades. Personnel data were used to determine the race of each teacher.

Collection of data from school records. Through the cooperative efforts of the personnel department and the computer services department of the Greensboro Public Schools, information was provided regarding the suspensions by race and gender for each middle school for the past three years, as well as the racial composition of those schools for the same time span.

### Data Analysis

The first step in the data analysis was to create a computerized database using the S1032, a relational database management system. The database contained two data sets. The first data set included information about the CAT achievement test scores and the SEI self-esteem scores. The second data set contained information on the race of each teacher in grades K-8 for all subjects.

The second step in the data analysis consisted of trans-

forming the data into an American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) file. The data were then analyzed using Statistical Practices for Social Science #10 (SPSSX) statistics which included correlation coefficients, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), and the Chi square test of significance.

Hypothesis One. Hypothesis one stated that there will not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his or her most recent achievement test scores. To examine the relationship between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his/her most recent achievement scores, a product moment correlation coefficient (Pearson  $r$ ) was calculated. Gay (1987) stated that the Pearson  $r$  is "the most appropriate measure of correlation when the sets of data to be correlated represent either interval or ratio scales" (p. 355).

Rather than perform separate analysis of variance on the various subscales of the CAT batteries, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. The MANOVA is an appropriate test when the dependent variable is more than a single measure. The MANOVA takes into consideration the interrelation among the dependent variables. The analysis reduces the risk of spurious relationships resulting from from such an interrelationship (Norusis, 1988). The depend-

ent variables were total language (TL), total reading (TR), and total math (TM).

Hypothesis Two. Hypothesis two stated that there will not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his or her measured self-concept. To examine the relationship between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his/her self-esteem as measured by the SEI, a Pearson  $r$  was calculated as in hypothesis one. Similarly, a MANOVA was performed. The dependent variables were general (G), social (So), home (H), and school (Sch).

Hypothesis Three. Hypothesis three stated that there will not be a statistically significant correlation between a student's measured self-concept and his/her most recent achievement test scores. To determine the relationship between self-esteem scores and achievement scores, a Pearson  $r$  was calculated for each of the subscales of the CAT (TL, TR, and TM) and the subscales of the SEI (G, So, Sch, and H).

Multivariate analysis was needed to remove any effect of the third variable, number of black teachers. Partial correlations were calculated. Ferguson (1959) stated that partial correlation "deals with the residual relationship between two variables where the common influence of one or more other variables has been removed " (p. 388).

Hypothesis Four. Hypothesis four stated that there will

not be a statistically significant correlation between the percentage of black staff members in a school and the number of suspensions received by black students. To determine the relationship between the percentage of black teachers on a staff and the number of suspensions that were assigned to black students, a Chi square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of significance was used to determine whether or not a disproportionate number of black students received suspensions. A Chi square test, is a "nonparametric test of significance appropriate when the data are in the form of frequency counts occurring in two or more mutually exclusive categories" (Gay, 1987; p. 397). Finally, a Kendall correlation was calculated between the percentage of black teachers in a school and the percentage of suspensions that were received by black students. Kendall correlations are appropriate when relating ordinal variables (Ferguson, 1966).

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

This study examined the relationships among the number of black teachers under which a black student has studied and his or her measured academic achievement and self-concept and examined the relationship between the proportion of black teachers on a school staff and the black student discipline in that school. To investigate the existence of significant relationships among these variables, it was necessary to determine criteria by which to identify each.

The number of black teachers was determined by identifying each classroom teacher assigned to the subjects in grades K-8. This information was found in the school files kept on each student. The race of each teacher was determined with help from school personnel and personnel records.

Achievement was identified by scores from the state mandated CAT achievement test, administered to all eighth graders during March of 1988. The CAT provided scores for total battery (TB), total language (TL), total reading (TR), and total math (TM).

Self-concept was identified by scores from the Coopersmith SEI. The SEI was administered to all eighth graders during May, 1988 as a part of this study. The SEI provided

scores for total self-esteem (TOT), general self-esteem (G), social/peer self-esteem (So), school/academic self-esteem (sch), and home/parents self-esteem.

Behavior was indicated by the suspension data which was collected and compiled by the school district. Suspensions consisted of 1) in-school suspensions which restrict the student to a separate classroom, and 2) out-of school suspensions which restrict a student from coming onto the school campus. Suspensions are generally reserved for serious or chronic offenses. The rate of suspensions within a school or subset of the school can serve as one indicator of the behavior in that school.

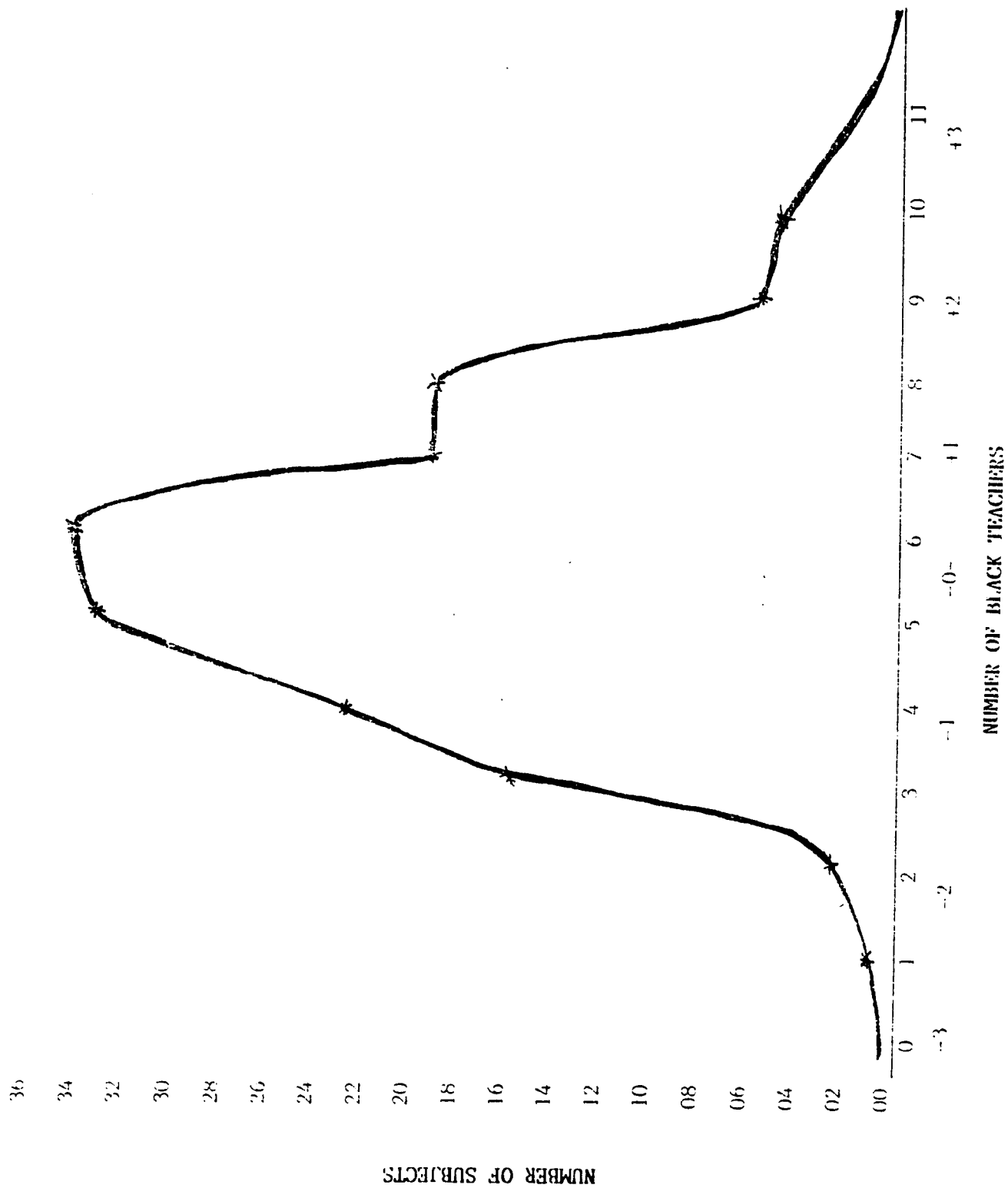
#### Data

The data collected for each variable in this study were entered into an S1032 database management system. The database was converted to an ASCII file from which basic statistical analysis was possible. The data were analyzed using SPSS-X.

Black teachers. The number of black teachers provided for each student K-8 approximated the normal curve (see Table 1). The mean number of black teachers was 5.50. Seventy-two percent of the subjects had between 3.74 and 7.26 black teachers ( $\pm 1$  standard deviation) during grades K-8. Ninety-seven percent of the subjects had between 1.98 and 9.02 black teachers ( $\pm 2$  standard deviations) during grades K-8. It was

Table 1

Distribution of Black Teachers Among Subjects



determined that all subjects had been assigned at least one black teacher.

In addition to studying directly with certain black teachers, the subjects attended schools with staffs composed of varying numbers of black teachers. Data available for school years 1986-1988 provided the racial ratios for the middle schools involved in the study. Although the ratio of black teachers to students varied among the six schools, no school had less than 25% or more than 50% certified black staff (see Table 2). There was greater fluctuation in the student body ratios among the middle schools. The racial ratios of the schools ranged from 34% minority to 85% minority (see Table 3).

The six middle schools were a segment of the local public school system, as well as the state public school system. The percentage of black, certified, school-based educators in North Carolina for 1987-88 was 19% (N.C. Board of Education, 1988). During that same year the Greensboro Public Schools system provided a certified, black school-based staff of 30%, approximately 11% higher than the state average.

Achievement. Achievement data, measured by the CAT, provided median percentile scores in each area of the test for each subject. Scores identified for the subjects were found to be higher than those for black students in the school system as a whole, the region, and the state (see



Table 2

## School Staff Racial Ratios

School	1988		1987		1986	
	Minority	Majority	Minority	Majority	Minority	Majority
A	28	72	30	70	36	64
B	43	57	45	50	50	50
C	39	61	41	59	52	48
D	25	75	35	65	25	75
E	27	73	34	66	28	72
F	31	69	29	71	36	64

Table 3

## Student Enrollments and Racial percentages \*

School	1988			1987			1986		
	Enroll.	Maj.	Min.	Enroll.	Maj.	Min.	Enroll.	Maj.	Min.
A	676	30	70	698	32	68	737	35	65
B	752	47	53	770	52	48	769	53	47
C	707	15	85	724	17	83	722	18	82
D	737	47	43	746	55	45	746	57	43
E	927	65	35	928	66	34	958	66	34
F	676	53	47	708	51	49	693	51	49

\* Figures reported for fall semester of each year

Table 4

California Achievement Test Data \*  
For Eighth Graders

Group	Total Reading	Total Language	Total Math	Total Battery
<b>Blacks</b>				
In North Carolina	41	45	46	44
In the Region	44	47	47	46
In School System	46	48	47	46
School A	53	53	53	53
School B	45	48	49	47
School C	45	47	45	45
School D	44	47	46	46
School E	43	45	47	45
School F	46	50	45	46
Subjects in Study	55	56	56	54
<b>Whites</b>				
In School System	62	61	61	62
In the Region	56	58	58	58
In North Carolina	55	57	57	57

\* Scores represent median national percentiles

Table 4). In contrast, the scores for the subjects were lower than those for white students in the school system, the region, and the state. Black students at five of the middle schools had scores that paralleled the median percentile scores of blacks in the total school system. The sixth school had scores that were from five to seven percentile points higher than those of the total school system.

Self-Concept. Self-concept data resulting from an administration of the Coopersmith SEI, provided mean scores in each area of the test for the individual schools represented in the study and for the six schools as a whole (see Table 5). The mean scores of the subjects, those of the schools, and the system were quite similar with a range of from 64.62 to 67.97. Coopersmith (1987) provided normative samples, but suggested that they be used for comparison purposes only. The samples that provided data for eighth graders were studies by Kimball (1972), Donaldson (1974), and Trowbridge (1972) (see Table 5). Scores for the Greensboro students did not vary substantially from those of the normative samples, but they were slightly lower than two of the three studies cited.

#### Data Analysis

The data used to test each hypothesis was subjected to statistical analyses appropriate to the dictates of the data and hypothesis format. Initial analysis for hypotheses one,

Table 5

## Coopersmith SEI Data

Group Means	General	Social Peers	Self/	Home/ Parents	School/ Academic	Total
School A	17.13	6.36		4.56	4.18	64.62
School B	17.57	6.18		4.85	3.94	64.99
School C	17.65	6.48		4.92	3.95	65.45
School D	18.32	6.38		5.08	4.79	67.97
School E	17.98	6.25		5.11	4.61	67.64
School F	17.93	6.24		4.98	4.54	67.30
All 8th Graders	17.76	6.32		4.92	4.34	66.33
Subjects	17.76	6.35		4.80	4.53	66.65
Kimball (1972) *	*	*		*	*	68.00
Trowbridge (1972)	*	*		*	*	68.50
Donaldson (1974)	*	*		*	*	66.90

two, and three was provided by a product-moment correlation (Pearson  $r$ ) of all variables.

#### Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one, stated in the null form, theorized that there would not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his or her most recent achievement test scores. To investigate the existence of a statistically significant correlation of achievement scores and the number of black teachers of the subjects in this study, a Pearson  $r$  was calculated for TL, TR, and TM (see Table 6). The level of significance of the hypothesis test was set at .05. Based on the absence of statistically significant correlation coefficients ( $p = <.05$ ) the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Examination of correlations between achievement scores and the number of black teachers subjects studied under showed a relationship between TR and the number of black teachers that approached significance ( $p = .08$ ). To investigate any possible effect that this relationship may have had on total achievement, a Pearson  $r$  was calculated for TB and the number of black teachers assigned to black students. The correlation coefficient of .05 was not statistically significant ( $p = .26$ ).

Due to the strong relationship between reading and the

Table 6

Correlations of the Number of Black Teachers  
and Academic Achievement

---

California Achievement Test	# of Black Teachers Grades K-8
Total Language	.03
Total Reading	.11 *
Total Math	-.01

---

\*  $p = .08$

number of black teachers, the data was subjected to multivariate analysis.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). The MANOVA allows for simultaneous analysis of dependent variables. When the dependent variable is not a single measure, but made up of two or more scores, the MANOVA is more appropriate than the univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA). With ANOVA the interrelationship of the dependent variables is ignored. In this MANOVA the variables were TL, TR, and TM. Table 7 shows the means and standard deviation by number of black teachers for the TL, TR, and TM. The within group variance matrices showed that they did not differ; therefore, the assumptions of MANOVA were met. The results of the MANOVA were not statistically significant.

#### Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two, stated in the null form, theorized that there would not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student had studied under and his or her measured self-concept. In this study self-concept was measured by scores from an administration of the Coopersmith SEI. To investigate the existence of a statistically significant correlation between SEI scores and the number of black teachers of the subjects in this study, a Pearson  $r$  was calculated for G, So, Sch, and H (see Table 8). The level of significance of the hypothesis test was set at



Table 7

## Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) for Achievement

Dependent Variable	F	DF	P
Total Language	0.16	2, 143	0.8509
Total Reading	0.79	2, 143	0.4553
Total Math	0.28	2, 143	0.7544

Table 8

## Correlations of the Number of Black Teachers and Self-Esteem

---

Coopersmith SEI	# of Black Teachers Grades K-8
General	-.09
Social	-.12
Home	-.06
School	.01

---

.05. Due to the absence of statistically significant correlation coefficients ( $p = < .05$ ) the null hypothesis was not rejected.

The variance of the subscales was subjected to multivariate analysis.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). As in hypothesis one, a MANOVA was calculated to analyze the effect of the number of black teachers on the SEI subscales, G, S, Sch, and H. Table 9 shows the MANOVA results for the SEI variables. The within group variance matrices showed that they did not differ, therefore once again the assumptions of MANOVA were met. The results of the MANOVA were not statistically significant.

#### Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three, stated in the null form, theorized that there would not be a statistically significant correlation between a student's measured self-concept and his or her most recent achievement test scores. To investigate the existence of a statistically significant correlation of self-concept and achievement, a product moment correlation (Pearson  $r$ ) was calculated for SEI subscales (G, So, Sch, and H) and CAT subscales (TL, TR, and TM) (see Table 10). The level of significance of the hypothesis test was set at .05.

Although no statistically significant, positive correlations were found, a significant, negative relationship ( $p =$

Table 9

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) for Self-Concept

---

Dependent Variables	F	DF	P
General	1.01	2, 143	.3684
Social/Peers	1.67	2, 143	.1918
Home/Parents	0.72	2, 143	.4878
School	1.17	2, 143	.3148

---

Table 10

## Correlations of Self-concept and Academic Achievement

<u>California Achievement Test</u>	<u>Coopersmith SEI Subscales</u>			
	General	Social	Home	School
Total Language	-.03	-.07	.00	.11 ***
Total Reading	-.02	-.15*	-.00	.13 **
Total Math	-.06	-.02	-.08	.08

\* p= &lt;.05

\*\* p= &lt;.06

\*\*\* p= &lt;.11

.03) was found between social self-esteem/peers (So) and total reading (TR). In light of this significant relationship, additional analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between overall achievement (TB) and overall self-esteem (TOT). No statistically significant correlations were found.

Based on an absence of statistically significant correlation coefficients ( $p = <.05$ ), the null hypothesis was not rejected for all areas of measured self-esteem and achievement with the exception of social self-esteem/peers (So) and total reading (TR).

The data used in hypothesis three were subjected to multivariate analysis.

Multivariate analysis. To account for any effect the third variable, number of black teachers, may have had on the relationships between SEI scores and CAT scores; partial correlations were calculated. Each CAT variable was correlated with each SEI variable with the correlation to number of black teachers partialled out.

The results of the partial correlations showed no effect of the third variable on the relationships between SEI and CAT variables (see Table 11).

#### Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis four, stated in the null form, theorized that there would be no statistically significant correlation

Table 11

Partial Correlations for SEI and CAT, Controlling  
for Number of Black Teachers

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	California Achievement Test		
Self-Esteem Inventory	Total language	Total Reading	Total Math
General Self-esteem	-.033	-.021	-.062
Social Self-esteem/Peers	-.074	-.164	-.022
School/Academic Self-esteem	.109	.129	.082
Home/Parents Self-esteem	.008	.020	-.081

---

between the percentage of black teachers in a school and the percentage of black suspensions. The investigation of the existence of a statistically significant correlation required two steps.

Step one. Due to differences in the student enrollments and racial ratios at each school, it was necessary to calculate a chi square test of significance on the number of suspensions (see Tables 12-17). The level of significance was set at .01. The results showed a highly significant difference ( $p = <.001$ ) between the expected proportion of suspensions for black students and the actual number received in three of the six schools. In the other three schools the number of suspensions received by black students was not significantly different from the number to be expected.

Step two. Schools were assigned two ranks, one for chi square value and one for the percentage of black teachers on staff. A Kendall tau was calculated. The significance of the value of the tau is most conveniently tested in terms of the S factor (Ferguson, 1959). The S is equal to the total agreements minus the total inversions (see Table 18). The degree of association between percentage of black suspensions and the percentage of black staff members was significant beyond the .05 level. The higher the percentage of black staff, the lower the percentage of suspensions. The null hypothesis was rejected.



Table 12

Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Calculation for School A

	Suspended		Nonsuspended		Totals
Blacks	362.3	Observed	Expected	Observed	1427
		382	1064.7	1045	
Whites		154		530	684
	173.7	Observed	510.3	Observed	
	Expected		Expected		
		536		1575	2111

Calculation of Expected:

$$A) \text{ Black Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1427 \times 536}{2111} = \frac{764872}{2111} = 362.3$$

$$B) \text{ Black Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1427 \times 1575}{2111} = \frac{2247525}{2111} = 1064.7$$

$$C) \text{ White Suspensions Expected} = \frac{684 \times 536}{2111} = \frac{366624}{2111} = 173.7$$

$$D) \text{ White Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{684 \times 1575}{2111} = \frac{1077300}{2111} = 510.3$$

$$\chi^2 = \sum_i \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{1552.36}{2111} = .7361 \quad (p = >.01)$$

Table 13

Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Calculation for School B

	Suspended		Nonsuspended		Totals
Blacks	Expected 254.5	Observed	Expected 875.5	Observed	1130
		237		893	
Whites	261.3 Expected	Observed	899.5 Expected	Observed	1161
		516		1775	2291

Calculation of Expected:

$$A) \text{ Black Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1130 \times 516}{2291} = \frac{583080}{2291} = 254.5$$

$$B) \text{ Black Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1130 \times 1775}{2291} = \frac{2005750}{2291} = 875.5$$

$$C) \text{ White Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1161 \times 516}{2291} = \frac{598560}{2291} = 261.3$$

$$D) \text{ White Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1161 \times 1775}{2291} = \frac{2060775}{2291} = 899.5$$

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^4 \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{1225}{2291} = .5347 \quad (p \Rightarrow .01)$$

Table 14

Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Calculation for School C

	Suspended		Nonsuspended		Totals
	Expected	Observed	Expected	Observed	
Blacks	632.1	639	1160.91	1154	1793
Whites	126.9	120	233.1	240	360
	Expected	Observed	Expected	Observed	
		759		1394	2153

Calculation of Expected:

$$A) \text{ Black Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1793 \times 759}{2153} = \frac{1360887}{2153} = 632.1$$

$$B) \text{ Black Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1793 \times 1394}{2153} = \frac{2499442}{2153} = 1160.9$$

$$C) \text{ White Suspensions Expected} = \frac{360 \times 759}{2153} = \frac{273240}{2153} = 126.9$$

$$D) \text{ White Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{360 \times 1394}{2153} = \frac{501840}{2153} = 233.1$$

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{191}{2153} = .08771 \quad (p = >.01)$$

Table 15

Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Calculation for School D

	Suspended		Nonsuspended		Totals
Blacks	Expected 140.3	Observed	Expected 833.70	Observed	974
		244		730	
Whites		77		1178	1255
	180.7 Expected	Observed	1074.3 Expected	Observed	
		321		1908	2229

Calculation of Expected:

$$A) \text{ Black Suspensions Expected} = \frac{974 \times 321}{2229} = \frac{312654}{2229} = 140.3$$

$$B) \text{ Black Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{974 \times 1908}{2229} = \frac{1858392}{2229} = 833.7$$

$$C) \text{ White Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1255 \times 321}{2229} = \frac{402855}{2229} = 180.7$$

$$D) \text{ White Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1255 \times 1908}{2229} = \frac{2394540}{2229} = 1074.2$$

$$\chi^2 = \sum_i \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{43014.76}{2229} = 19.29778 \quad (p = <.001)$$

Table 16

Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Calculation for School E

	Suspended		Nonsuspended		Totals
	Expected	Observed	Expected	Observed	
Blacks	165.2	351	800.8	615	966
Whites	315.8	130	1531.2	1717	
	Expected	Observed	Expected	Observed	
		481		2332	2813

Calculation of Expected:

$$A) \text{ Black Suspensions Expected} = \frac{966 \times 481}{2813} = \frac{464646}{2813} = 165.2$$

$$B) \text{ Black Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{966 \times 2332}{2813} = \frac{2252712}{2813} = 800.8$$

$$C) \text{ White Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1847 \times 481}{2813} = \frac{888407}{2813} = 315.8$$

$$D) \text{ White Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1847 \times 2332}{2813} = \frac{4307204}{2813} = 1531.2$$

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = \frac{138086.56}{2813} = 49.09 \quad (p = <.001)$$

Table 17

Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Calculation for School F

	Suspended		Nonsuspended		Totals
Blacks	Expected 201.8	Observed	Expected 803.2	Observed	1005
		296		709	
Whites		121		951	
	215.2 Expected	Observed	856.8 Expected	Observed	1072
		417		1660	2077

Calculation of Expected:

$$A) \text{ Black Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1005 \times 417}{2077} = \frac{419085}{2077} = 201.8$$

$$B) \text{ Black Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1005 \times 1660}{2077} = \frac{1668300}{2077} = 804.2$$

$$C) \text{ White Suspensions Expected} = \frac{1072 \times 417}{2077} = \frac{447024}{2077} = 215.2$$

$$D) \text{ White Nonsuspensions Expected} = \frac{1072 \times 1660}{2077} = \frac{1779520}{2077} = 856.8$$

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = 25494.56 = 17.09 \quad (p < .001)$$

Table 18

Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Results for Middle School Suspensions  
And Three Year Average of Staff Racial Ratios

School	X	Rank	Average % Black Teachers	Rank
E	49.09	1	29.67	2
D	19.30	2	28.33	1
F	17.09	3	30.00	3
A	.74	4	31.33	4
B	.53	5	46.00	6
C	.09	6	44.00	5

## Discussion

Achievement and Black Teachers. The literature referred directly and indirectly to the achievement gap that has been documented between black and white students throughout the history of public education. Although there was evidence that the gap has narrowed, achievement indicators such as the CAT and college entrance examinations still showed lower black achievement (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1988). The data gathered in this study showed similar negative comparisons between black and white student achievement, with lower black scores in all areas of the achievement battery.

Such data are discouraging and clearly indicate a need for improved approaches to black education. Caution is advised, however, in interpreting the data to mean low ability for Blacks or lower potential for success in life. The literature challenges standardized testing, often seen as the very heart of education (McClelland, 1978; Baker, 1978; Resnick and Resnick, 1988). Educators must look carefully at the overall assessment of students. If our test instruments show that black students score lower after being in the public school setting (Entwisle and Alexander, 1988), we must look at what is happening in the classroom and at what is being tested.

Although no statistically significant correlations were found between achievement variables and the number of black



teachers that a subject studied under in grades K-8, one of the relationships was note-worthy. The number of black teachers in grades K-8 correlated with the total reading scores of the subjects at a level approaching significance ( $p = .08$ ). A similar relationship was found in a previously cited study by Hargrove (1981). She found that the students who were taught by black teachers had greater reading comprehension and reading vocabulary scores. Morgan (1977) found similar results with majority black classes making greater gains in reading with black teachers than with white.

Other studies that related to more general behaviors of teachers indicated a relationship between affective behaviors of teachers and black student achievement (Alexander et al., 1987; Thompson, 1987; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Questions raised by these studies include: 1) Are black teachers more affective in their behavior toward students, particularly black students?, 2) Is affective behavior of the teacher more critical in the teaching of reading than in other subjects?, and 3) What implications do the answers to questions one and two have for the overall education of black students?

Despite the absence of statistically significant correlations between achievement scores and the number of black teachers, it is difficult to dismiss the strong relationship between reading and the number of black teachers. In seeking ways to improve student achievement, reading ability has long

been recognized as a vital component. The slightest possibility that an association exists between providing black teachers and reading achievement strongly suggests the need for further investigation in this area.

Self-Concept and black teachers. The literature provided conflicting evidence regarding the self-concept of Blacks. Although traditionally accepted theories (Lewin, 1947; Ausubel, 1958) considered low self-concept to be a natural consequence of membership in the black race, current theories did not consistently agree. Since the 1970's the body of research generally provided more positive results (Zirkel and Moses, 1972; Trowbridge, Trowbridge, & Trowbridge, 1972; Rosenberg and Simmons, 1971).

The data gathered in this study did not support the theory of a negative self-concept among blacks. The subjects SEI scores were approximately the same as those of all other eighth graders in the school system and not dissimilar to results in documented SEI studies.

Lewin (1948) himself, may have predicted a contributing factor to comparable self-concept between Blacks and Whites. He recommended that developing a positive identity with the minority group and raising the status of that group would improve self-image among minorities. In the forty years since Lewin's death, major changes in civil rights have led to improvement in both areas. Black power, black pride,

black awareness, and many other avenues to positive identity with being black are a part of the heritage of the adolescent of 1988. In addition, the overall status of Blacks has been raised legally and socially. These changes cannot be discounted when examining the current self-perception of black students.

Although there was no research citing a relationship between the number of black teachers assigned to a student and self-concept, studies suggested such a relationship. Role models were found to be significant in developing self-concept (Wylie, 1979). In addition, teachers were identified as role models (Cramer, Bowerman, & Campell, 1966; Lipka, Beane, and Ludewig, 1980). Finally, black teachers were cited as important to developing positive self-concepts in black children (Brooks 1987; Cooper, 1988).

The correlations investigated in hypothesis two did not identify a statistically significant relationship. It must be noted, however, that the subjects are products of a school system that has consistently provided a percentage of black teachers above the state average. Further, these subjects have self-concept measures in line with those of their white counterparts. Regardless of the number of black teachers, the subjects have been a part of an overall educational environment in which Blacks are generally well represented.

It is quite possible that the collective relationships

of teachers and their students clouds the ability to factor out the effects of teacher race on self-concept.

Achievement and self-concept of black students. The literature consistently provided evidence of a positive relationship between self-concept and achievement (Brookover et al., 1962; Paschal, 1968; Laryea, 1972). The results of this study did not find relationships similar to those earlier studies. Nevertheless, in examining relationships between SEI scores and CAT scores, it was noted that two relationships approached significance. The correlation between Sch and TL showed a significance level of .10. The relationship between Sch and TR was significant at the .06 level. It was interesting to note that Sch and all three achievement subscales were more closely correlated than other SEI variables. This finding was supported in the literature. Research often indicated a relationship between the way students saw themselves in the school setting and their subsequent achievement (Brookover et al., 1965; Fitts, 1972; Alexander et al., 1987).

Once again it is important to note that the subjects have been a part of a school system in which black leadership has played an important role. During this study there were five assistant superintendents and one associate superintendent. Exactly one-half of those positions were held by

Blacks. Of the thirty eight principalships, black principals occupied approximately 40% of the positions.

Black students who have attended schools in a school system where black educators occupy a substantial number of leadership positions may benefit emotionally and educationally as a group. The overall impact of seeing numbers of their own race routinely in authority may contribute to self-esteem and increase the difficulty in identifying a relationship between a specific number of black teachers and the self-esteem of a given student.

Student behavior and black teachers. The literature reviewed relating student behavior to racial make-up of the school staff suggested that the proportion of black educators would be a positive factor (Gold, 1978; Meir et al., 1988). The importance of non-racist attitudes of faculties for improved behavior and self-concept was supported by Oden and McDonald (cited in Gold, 1978). The results of the data analysis for hypothesis four were in agreement with the literature. There was strong evidence that the percentage of black teachers in a school relates to the likelihood that black students will or will not be disproportionately suspended.

In one-half of the middle schools there was a disproportionate number of black student suspensions ( $p = <.001$ ). It must be noted that this datum is not evidence of racist

practices. Further investigation into the causes for each suspension would be necessary in order to draw such a conclusion. In an earlier study (Educational Images, 1982), researchers found that racial bias could not be substantiated when disproportionate black suspensions were analyzed for cause. It should also be noted that the leadership of the six middle schools is predominantly black. When the schools were examined according to significance of black suspension rates, the three with significantly high black suspension rates had two black principals and one white principal. This composition was identical to that of the three schools with black suspension rates that were not significantly high.

The datum does, however, suggest that something is working better in some schools than in others. Although a number of variables are involved in any school climate, the Kendall tau certainly demonstrates an interesting relationship. While this relationship cannot identify the percentage of black staff as a causal factor in lowered black suspensions, it cannot be ruled out as a significant factor in overall school setting.

It is possible that one could theorize that schools with higher percentages of black staff have lower standards for behavior. These lower standards would, no doubt, be reflected in lower achievement. In this study that was clearly not the case. The three schools with the lower proportions of

black suspensions had achievement scores comparable to those of Blacks in the system and the state. Moreover, the school with the highest achievement scores for Blacks in the system was the school with the lowest proportion of black student suspensions.

It is also possible that one might suggest that the schools with the lower proportions of black suspensions were more affluent, having students from higher socio-economic backgrounds. This again was not the case. All three schools with low proportions of black suspensions serve populations that are generally lower socio-economically than those of the schools with the higher black suspension rates.

The data supported the theory that schools with higher percentages of black staff have lower percentages of black suspensions. These results would suggest that the positive factors in all of the middle schools be examined to determine what is working for black students and why. A plan to continue providing black role models should be a top priority.

#### Summary

This study examined relationships among the number of black teachers, achievement, self-concept, and behavior of black students. The results of the study were mixed. Although the statistical results were often contrary to the hypotheses of the researcher and the literature, the data provided encouraging indications.

The school system has created a learning environment for students that provides the opportunity to interact with a number of black educational role models that exceeds the state average. The eighth graders in the system exceed the state and regional average CAT scores. The Blacks in the eighth grade exceed the CAT averages for Blacks in the region and state, as do the Blacks in the study.

Although there was not a significant relationship between self-esteem scores and CAT scores, it was encouraging that Blacks in the study demonstrated self-esteem equal to that of their white classmates.

The absence of a relationship between the number of black teachers and self-esteem may be the result of living in a community and attending schools where a large number of positive black role models are available for all black students. It is also possible that the way an adolescent views him or herself is not heavily influenced by teachers. The literature suggested (Taylor, 1974) that adolescents tend to look toward hero type role models such as movie stars and athletes. The Blacks in this study would certainly have any number of such black models with which to identify.

The absence of disproportionately high black suspension rates at one half of the middle schools is encouraging. The fact that these schools also have the highest proportion of black teachers demonstrates a positive relationship and sug-



gests a closer look at the role these black teachers play. It is even more encouraging that there was no indication of lower academic standards for schools with lower percentages of black suspensions.

This study has examined the significance of providing adequate black educational role models for black students. It in no way was intended to suggest that any one teacher or any one group of teachers is superior to another. Further, it was not intended to suggest that black students do not or cannot learn with white teachers. Specificity of race has been based purely on the minority status of Blacks in the United States and of the history of public education for Blacks in this country. The creation of an overall educational setting appropriate for such a group of students demands research into any aspect of that setting that offers clues for higher achievement.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY

The academic performance of students is a national concern. Black student performance is of particular interest for a number of reasons, including the continuing gap between measured student achievement of Whites and Blacks. Throughout the twentieth century theories of self, learning, and racial characteristics have failed to identify a specific method for increasing student achievement.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among black student achievement, self-concept, discipline, and the number of black teachers a subject was assigned during grades K-8. Information from the study was used to help determine the role black teachers play in our on going attempts to raise student achievement.

The study focused on a survey of educational characteristics of black eighth graders. These characteristics included CAT scores, SEI scores, the number of black teachers, and the suspension rates of the schools they attended. The cooperation and assistance of school personnel at each middle school and at the central office was crucial to the study. All black eighth graders were eligible to participate.

The student information needed for the study was avail-

able in student and school system records, with the exception of a measure of self-concept. In order to provide a measure of self-concept, all eighth graders completed a Coopersmith SEI during a home-based guidance period.

Once the data was collected, it was subjected to statistical analysis to support or reject the following hypotheses which are stated in the null form:

1. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his or her most recent achievement test scores.

2. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between the number of black teachers a student has studied under and his or her measured self-concept.

3. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between a student's measured self-concept and his/her most recent achievement test scores.

4. There will not be a statistically significant correlation between the percentage of black staff members in a school and the percentage of suspensions received by black students.

### Findings

The data analysis resulted in the following findings:

1. There was no statistically significant relationship

between the number of black teachers and achievement scores. Hypothesis one was not rejected.

2. There was no statistically significant relationship between the number of black teachers and measured self-concept. Hypothesis two was not rejected.

3. There was no statistically significant, positive relationship between the achievement scores and the self-esteem scores.

4. There was a statistically significant, negative relationship between the social/peers scale of the SEI and the total reading scale of the CAT. Hypothesis three was partially rejected.

5. There was a statistically significant disproportion of black students suspended at three of the six middle schools.

6. There was a statistically significant relationship between the proportion of black suspensions at the middle schools and the proportion of black staff members. Staffs with higher ratios of black members had lower percentages of black student suspensions. Hypothesis four was rejected.

### Conclusions

Based on the findings the following conclusions were developed:

1. Black students, as a group, continue to score lower than white students on achievement tests.

2. The theory that Blacks have an inherently low self-concept was not supported by this study.

3. Although conventional wisdom supports the relationship between self-concept and achievement this relationship was not observed for black students in this study.

4. There is evidence that reading achievement for black students is positively influenced by instruction from black teachers.

5. The proportion of black teachers on a staff was a positive factor for the black students in this study.

Further observations that resulted from the study led the researcher to conclude the following:

1. Teacher expectation continues to be a key variable in student achievement for Blacks and Whites.

2. Black educators will be virtually non-existent as role models for students within a decade unless the current decrease is reversed.

3. The relationships among achievement, self-concept, and educational role models are complex and difficult to identify through statistical methods.

#### Recommendations for Education and Research

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

##### Educational

1. Continue to search for effective measures of academic

achievement and self-concept that account for various learning and reporting styles.

2. Examine student placements to assure that black students have black teachers assigned to them at a rate comparable to the number available in the school.

3. Examine suspensions and other discipline data to identify any racial bias.

4. Provide workshops in human relations and teacher expectations to increase positive relationships between teachers and students of different cultures.

5. Recognize the shortage of black educators as a crisis and take steps to slow the decrease.

#### Research

1. This study should be replicated using samples of students from schools and school systems throughout the state with varying racial composition and socio-economic factors.

2. There is a need for an ethnographic study of student, teacher, and community perceptions toward the importance of providing black teachers.

3. There is a need for continued research into the relationship between achievement and race of teacher.

4. There is a need for continued research related to methods for accurately identifying self-concept, particularly for multi-cultural groups.

5. There is a need for continued research for effective

strategies for raising teacher expectations of black students.

6. There is a need for continued research into learning styles and behavior patterns of black males, black females, white males, and white females as they relate to teacher characteristics.

7. There is a need for continued research into the characteristics of educational role models and subsequent student behavior.

8. There is a need for continued research into the interrelationships among achievement, self-concept, behavior, and educational role models.

The factors that exist in educational settings and merge to produce academic achievement are numerous and complex. The interpersonal relationships between students, between teachers, and between students and teachers are even more complex. This study examined those relationships as they related to black students and the black teachers in their schools. Although it was recognized that the effects of specific number of black teachers on the performance of black students would be extremely difficult to identify statistically, the study provided the opportunity to examine some important issues.

The proportion of black students in our public schools is increasing. The importance of providing an educational

setting in which they can achieve cannot be overstated. The significance of providing adequate numbers of black educators remains a viable key to the creation of that setting.



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APPENDIX A  
PARENT PERMISSION LETTER

Dear Parent:

The need to provide an environment in which students can reach their full potential is a concern for many of us. As an outgrowth of this concern I am currently conducting a study to examine the significance of providing more black teachers for our public schools.

You can be an important part of this project by allowing me to include information about your eighth grader. Nothing else will be necessary. I will simply gather scores from school records for recent achievement tests, self-esteem inventories, and the number of black teachers provided since kindergarten. Student information will be used in group form. Your child will not be personally identifiable and all information will be kept confidential.

In order to be included in this study, you will need to sign the permission blank below and return it to school as soon as possible. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Although the school is neither conducting nor sponsoring this project, a final report will be provided to the principal and can be made available upon request.

If you have any questions regarding the study please feel free to call me at 370-8260. You may also call Dr. Edwin Bell at UNC-G at 334-5100.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Patricia B. Spicer

---

I hereby grant permission for Patricia B. Spicer to obtain information from my child's school records as has been stated above. I also understand that no negative consequences will result from my refusal to sign.

---

Parent Signature

---

Date

PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR SCHOOL ADVISOR/ADVISEE TEACHER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Thank You!

APPENDIX B  
COOPERSMITH SEI SAMPLE ITEMS

Subscale	Item
General Self	1. Things usually don't bother me.
	7. It takes me a long time to get used to anything new.
Social Self/Peers	14. Kids usually follow my ideas.
	21. Most people are better liked than I am.
Home/Parents	22. I usually feel as if my parents are pushing me.
	29. My parents and I have a lot of fun together.
School/Academic	42. I like to be called on in class.
	54. My teachers make me feel I'm not good enough.

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## APPENDIX C

## COOPERSMITH SEI DATA

## School A

Group	General	Social/Peers	Home/Parents	School/Academic	Total
1	18.50	6.18	5.36	5.00	70.45
2	16.62	6.30	4.46	3.93	62.75
3	19.35	7.15	5.04	4.42	71.85
4	16.07	6.00	4.93	3.64	61.29
5	18.63	6.67	4.96	5.38	71.42
6	17.17	6.44	4.61	3.78	64.00
7	14.61	6.11	3.56	4.06	56.33
8	16.11	6.00	3.56	3.22	58.89
School Means	17.13	6.36	4.56	4.10	64.62

## School B

Group	General	Social/Peers	Home/Parents	School/Academic	Total
1	17.91	6.14	4.95	3.32	64.64
2	17.59	6.00	4.86	3.68	63.82
3	18.67	6.52	5.00	4.29	68.95
4	16.16	5.79	4.21	3.84	60.00
5	17.05	6.25	5.15	3.55	63.80
6	18.61	6.09	5.48	4.39	69.22
7	15.80	5.80	4.60	3.95	60.00
8	16.91	6.09	4.52	3.43	61.91
9	18.00	6.45	4.95	4.32	67.45
10	18.95	6.65	4.80	4.65	70.10
School Means	17.57	6.18	4.85	3.94	64.99

## Self-Esteem Inventory Data

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## School C

Group	General	Social/Peers	Home/Parents	School/Academic	Total
1	17.32	5.95	4.45	4.09	61.91
2	17.91	5.91	5.23	4.45	67.55
3	16.59	6.45	5.77	4.18	64.00
4	18.96	7.04	4.96	3.70	68.70
5	17.90	6.48	5.05	4.29	67.43
6	19.68	7.27	6.18	4.77	75.18
7	17.64	6.45	4.73	3.59	64.82
8	16.93	6.26	5.26	3.96	64.74
9	17.53	6.26	4.26	2.89	62.21
10	16.06	6.71	3.29	3.53	58.00
School Means	17.65	6.48	4.92	3.95	65.45

## School D

Group	General	Social/Peers	Home/Parents	School/Academic	Total
1	18.77	6.82	5.36	5.55	70.70
2	18.22	6.74	5.26	5.39	71.22
3	19.00	6.00	6.05	5.53	73.37
4	20.11	7.42	6.05	5.47	67.89
5	18.05	6.14	4.38	4.33	65.81
6	17.72	6.00	3.50	4.22	62.89
7	17.90	6.43	5.00	4.62	67.81
8	16.35	6.69	4.35	3.88	62.62
9	17.67	6.04	5.38	4.17	66.50
10	19.13	6.13	5.63	4.21	69.58
School Means	18.32	6.38	5.08	4.79	67.97

## Self-Esteem Data

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## School E

Group	General	Social/Peers	Home/Parents	School/Academic	Total
1	18.48	6.09	5.04	3.78	66.61
2	19.00	5.74	5.68	5.00	69.58
3	19.48	6.24	4.88	4.84	70.88
4	17.88	6.06	5.06	4.76	67.53
5	17.33	6.29	4.33	4.21	64.75
6	16.92	6.08	5.12	4.16	64.56
7	19.91	7.18	5.91	5.27	76.64
8	17.79	6.17	5.92	4.46	68.58
9	17.32	6.05	5.53	5.32	68.42
10	17.62	6.92	4.85	5.00	67.29
11	17.29	6.48	5.19	3.81	65.43
12	17.39	6.33	3.83	4.83	64.11
13	17.35	5.65	5.05	4.55	65.20
School Means	17.98	6.25	5.11	4.61	67.64

## School F

Group	General	Social/Peers	Home/Parents	School/Academic	Total
1	17.00	5.80	4.80	4.80	64.80
2	18.47	6.71	5.53	4.76	70.94
3	18.19	6.13	5.00	5.06	68.75
4	19.18	6.32	5.50	4.23	70.45
5	19.27	6.53	5.47	4.87	72.00
6	17.45	6.35	5.10	4.30	65.20
7	17.85	5.90	5.25	3.90	65.80
8	18.42	6.58	4.32	5.05	69.79
9	15.57	5.83	3.89	3.91	57.57
School Mean	17.93	6.24	4.98	4.54	67.30

