

NON-COGNITIVE CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE AT THE POST-  
SECONDARY LEVEL

By

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SECONDARY LEVEL

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years federal, state, and local monies have been allocated to redress educational inequities for Blacks in institutions of higher education. Despite such financial considerations, educators are still faced with the task of facilitating positive academic outcomes for many Black students. One must consider the possibility that failure to facilitate the academic outcome for Blacks is related to two factors: a lack of knowledge pertaining to the effectiveness of existing educational programs and a lack of understanding of the factors that influence success for Blacks in institutions of higher education. These two factors are intrinsically tied to each other; however, the latter factor is the more potent factor. New information pertaining to the correlates of academic success for Blacks must be forthcoming if educational institutions are to provide programs which contribute to successful outcomes for these students. While substantial information has been generated on the pre-college years and recruitment of Blacks into college, there is little information in the psychological and educational literature describing the relationship of factors influencing academic performance among Black

college students. What information there is tends to focus on intellectual or cognitive factors generally measured by scores on standardized tests.

The problems involving assessment of minorities have been widely documented (Barnes, 1972; Oakland, 1977; Samuda, 1975; Anastasi, 1969). In addition, Boyd (1977) and Booth and Berry (1978) indicate that scores on standardized tests are not always reliable predictors of success for Blacks, either in academics or on the job.

In the literature on academic achievement for Black students, the variables that are frequently discussed are academic self-concept/self-esteem and educational expectations. Less frequently discussed is the behavior of assertiveness and its influence on academic performance.

This writer believes that a relationship between personality and attitudinal variables and academic achievement occurs uniquely for students of ethnic backgrounds. For Blacks, given a history of racism and slavery, this relationship is predicted to be of importance. It seems probable that the behaviors of self-concept, educational aspirations, and academic assertiveness all have a potential influence on academic success. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship among these behaviors as they pertain to Black college students.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Comparative studies dealing with Black-White behavioral differences abound in the literature. When the variables being measured in these studies are considered by society as socially desirable, whites are almost always shown to exhibit the behavior more frequently than are Blacks. The explanations tendered for these between-ethnic group differences range from the innocuous to the highly controversial. Whatever the reasons, inter-group differences exist over many different variables.

Differences on the variable of academic achievement have concerned educators for years. Numerous studies have documented the finding that Black students, on the average, score below white students on most measures of academic achievement (Pettigrew, 1974; Baughman and Dahlstrom, 1968; Coleman et al., 1966). (Note: In a study completed by Green, Hochhaus, Somervill, Price and McCullers [1978], cognitive differences were found among three ethnic groups, two of these being Blacks and whites. When these differences were analyzed utilizing ANOVA's with socioeconomic status indicators as covariates, ethnic differences for the majority of the cognitive variables were nonsignificant.

It is acknowledged by this author that in a similar fashion ethnic differences reported in the literature may be due to SES differences. For purposes of this thesis, the possibility of SES as a determinant will be theoretically acknowledged but not dealt with directly as the study focuses upon intragroup differences.) Whether this difference in academic achievement is due primarily to cognitive factors or to some combination of cognitive, personality, and/or attitudinal variables is yet unknown; much research remains to be done.

Lack of academic success, related to academic deficiencies, is a phenomenon that might be altered by academic remediation. When failure to achieve is not attributable solely to academic deficiencies, solution of such deficiencies is a much more complicated problem. What are some of the non-cognitive correlates of academic achievement among Black students? Studies have yielded results which support the view that self-concept in an academic setting is an important factor relating to academic achievement (Epps, 1979; Smith, 1968; Gurin and Epps, 1975; Brookover, Patterson, and Thomas, 1962; Brookover, Erickson, and Joiner, 1967; Hunt and Hardt, 1969).

#### Self-Concept

In the present study self-concept and self-esteem are presumed to be the same construct and the terms will be used interchangeably. Where a specific term has been used

in the literature, such terminology will be reflected in this discussion. The usage of the terms in this study Rogers (1959) and in part by Myers (1973). Rogers' definition of self-concept implies a conscious sense of definition of self-concept implies a conscious sense of personal identity arrived at by the process of gaining the approval and disapproval of significant others. Myers views self-concept as "a product of social experiences that are organized around social roles, all of which are not equally important for self-esteem maintenance" (p. 246).

Especially during the last two decades, the question of Black self-esteem has received a great deal of attention. Knowledge of the etiology and meaning of self-concept among Blacks is clouded by confusion and contradiction (Wyne, White, and Coop, 1974). Theories and definitions of self-esteem are numerous in the literature. Researchers in this area have been, and to an overwhelming extent remain, members of the majority anglo culture. Their theories have been limited primarily to the dynamics of anglo behavior. Given drastically different historical backgrounds for Blacks and anglos, it seems unlikely that similar overt behaviors are the product of shared experiences and common perceptions. Traditionally, theories on the Black self-concept have had in common a postulated deficit explanation of self-concept formation. The cultural deprivation hypotheses (Ausubel and Ausubel, 1963; Bettelheim, 1964;

McClelland, 1961; Bronfenbrenner, 1967) espouses the belief that Blacks grow up in impoverished cultural environments and therefore have lowered self-esteem. The personality deficit hypotheses (Proshansky and Newton, 1968; Smith, 1968; Hammer, 1953; Mussen, 1953; Karon, 1958) contend that Blacks have lowered self-esteem due to lack of certain personality variables. These are but two examples of the prevailing negativistic tendency of literature dealing with Black self-concept.

In the last decade there has been a radical change in theoretical approaches to explaining Black self-concept. "The fact that the self-image of Black Americans is fundamentally related to a color-caste system justifies exclusive treatment of the topic" (Wyne, White, and Coop, 1974, p. 3). Contemporary research indicates that it is inaccurate to assume that Blacks, as a group, possess lower levels of self-concept than do whites as a group (Meyers, 1973; Baughman, 1971; Wyne, White, Kennard, and Coop, 1974; Bolling, 1974). Thus, behaviors that have historically been explained by pointing to lack of positive self-concept could no longer be handled by such an explanation. One of the major problems with earlier studies (aside from the theoretical issues) is the experimenter's error of assuming, and proceeding according to the assumption, that Blacks use members of the majority culture as their reference group. The judgments and views of referent

groups act as determinants of self-esteem. More contemporary studies have shown that the majority of Blacks use other Blacks when forming their reference groups (Myers, 1973; Baughman, 1971; Wyne et al., 1974). Blacks appear to form self-concepts, as whites do, by selecting reference group members from individuals with whom they have something in common. Self-concept formation begins early in an individual's life; thus, choice of those individuals who compose a reference group is limited. For the Black infant the primary caregiver is almost always Black; as the child matures and forms peer groups, they are usually exclusively or predominately Black. It is thus likely that significant others for most Black students entering college, especially urban Blacks, are predominately Black.

While the judgments and views of referent groups form a determinant of self-esteem, a second determinant comes from the judgments and views of society outside of the individual's referent group; for the Black this means white society. The Black individual interacts with the white society. If the Black child's interactions with whites are negative, there are two psychological paths open to the child. He/she can suffer a loss in self-esteem, or he/she can refuse to accept the relevance of white middle-class standards. It seems improbable that the Black child (or adult) could totally discount the negative interaction. What is more likely is that the situation-specific self-concept of the individual may suffer, but the global

self-concept may not. Consider the application of such logic to the academic setting. If a Black student finds that the school setting provides only negative feedback about his/her ability, his/her self-concept/self-esteem as a student may suffer. The student role is only one of the social roles which that person assumes. Because Black students have fared less well in academic settings than white students, their "academic" self-concept may be less positive. This does not necessarily imply, however, that global self-concept would also be poor. Alternatively, measures of global self-concept may not accurately reflect levels of self-esteem in specific areas such as academics. Global self-concept may not be related to academic self-concept per se for Black students. Thus, the self-concept of Blacks in academic settings may be more accurately reflected by the more specifically defined construct of academic self-concept, the concept of self which is a product of academic experiences organized around the role of student.

Only three studies investigated the relationship of academic self-concept and academic achievement for Black students (Brookover, Erickson, and Joiner, 1967; Epps, 1969; Sedlacek, Brooks, 1970). These studies showed a positive relationship between the variables of academic self-concept (self-concept of ability) and academic achievement. In two of the studies Black high school students served as subjects (Epps, 1969; Brookover, Joiner, and Erickson,

1967); in one study (Sedlacek and Brooks, 1970) Black college students served as subjects. Epps (1969) not only found a significant correlation between self-concept of ability and academic grades for a sample of Black high school students but additionally found sex and regional differences in the relative influence of self-concept upon grades. Self-concept of ability appeared to be most highly correlated with academic achievement for northern Black females and least highly correlated for southern Black males. Epps (1969) contends that self-concept of ability "appears to have considerable value as a non-ability predictor of academic achievement" for Black high school students (p. 69). It seems logical that self-concept of ability might show a similar relationship in Black college students.

With the exception of Epps (1969), no studies examined sex differences among Black students. The literature comparing sex differences in self-esteem as a predictor of academic outcome (Howard, 1976; Katz, 1969; Baughman, 1971; Trachtman and Denmark, 1973; Katz and Benjamin, 1960; Ausubel, 1958; Proshansky and Newton, 1968) has, for the most part, been completed using whites as subjects. There is obviously a need to make such a comparison for Blacks.

#### Assertiveness

Another factor possibly relating to academic achievement is assertiveness. Assertiveness has been defined by

Alberti and Emmons (1974) as behavior which enables a person to act in his/her own best interests, or stand up for him/herself without denying the rights of others. With the appearance of several popular books in the last three or four years the public interest in assertiveness and assertiveness training has increased. Courses in assertiveness training are being offered on college campuses. Literature documenting the impact and effects of assertiveness training and examining the behavior assertiveness is sparse.

On the surface, assertiveness would appear to be related to self-esteem. Some researchers have found that the acquisition of assertiveness skills is related to an increase in self-concept/self-confidence and a decrease in anxiety (Jackson and Huston, 1975; Brockway, 1976; Karoby, 1975; Howard, 1976). Tolor, Kelly, and Stebbins (1976) examined the relationship between self-concept and assertiveness using male and female undergraduates and found a positive relationship for each sex. Studies exploring the relationship between assertiveness and self-concept, with few exceptions, utilized whites as subjects. In one study utilizing Blacks as subjects (Howard, 1976), self-concept was found to be positively related to assertiveness.

Tolor, Kelly, and Stebbins (1976); Donovan (1975), and Hollandsworth and Wall (1977) have indicated that there are differences based on sex for white subjects. There is evidence that males, but not females, tend to enter



institutions of higher education functioning with a more highly developed sense of assertiveness and autonomy and that such behaviors are reinforced by the institution (Donovan, 1975). In comparison it would appear that females in higher education are negatively reinforced for being assertive. Lao (1975) found that females acting in an assertive manner were evaluated by college students as less likeable and less intelligent than were males acting in an assertive manner. Blacks appear to experience some of the same difficulties as do females when exhibiting assertive behavior. Minor (1978) contends that the socialization process for Blacks is sufficiently different from that for anglos to make traditional assertiveness training techniques used with whites inappropriate for Blacks. He believes that, due to exposure to slavery and racism, Blacks have unique coping mechanisms for dealing with threats to self-esteem. Minor views assertive behavior to be much more difficult for Blacks to exhibit. In his opinion it is not that Blacks do not have the behavioral capacity to be assertive. Rather, the problem is twofold: 1) assertive behavior has not typically been a survival-oriented tactic for Blacks in dealing with the environment, and 2) the condition of human equality implied in assertive behavior has not been afforded to Blacks. Additionally, Minor contends that in bi-racial encounters there is likely to be a problem with "message mismatch." Assertive messages may be misconstrued as being hostile and aggressive. Cheek (1976), in

his book subtitled "A Black Perspective on Assertive Behavior," suggests that many Blacks do assert themselves, but differently from whites. There may be differences in gestures, facial expression, and voice volume. Cheek states that the Black who is assertive in bi-racial encounters must modify assertive messages in lieu of the receptive capabilities of the recipient of the behavior.

Limited research has been done on race differences in assertive behavior. Several studies have compared Black and white women. Gump (1975) compared Black and white females using measures of sex-role stereotype and dominance. He found that Black females were more traditional in role stereotyping than white females and while both Black and white females disagreed with the concept of submissiveness, Black women more readily accepted submissive roles with males. Fenelon and Megargle (1971) indicated that white females, generally viewed as highly dominant, took positions of low dominance in bi-racial encounters with Black female subjects.

Only two studies examined Black intra-group differences in assertiveness. Howard (1976) found no significant sex differences for Blacks. Galassi (1975) administered the College Self-Expression Scale to 71 Black females and 47 Black males at two southern universities. The mean assertion scores for the two groups were almost identical. On the basis of only two studies it may be unreasonable to contend that there are no sex differences for Blacks.

The relationship of assertiveness and academic performance has not been clearly documented. A relationship between these variables, however, appears likely. Green et al. (Note 1) postulated such a relationship and its possible relevance to facilitating academic success. Investigation of the relationship between assertiveness and academic achievement may provide an innovative approach to facilitating academic success for students in general.

In postulating assertiveness as a possible correlate of academic self-esteem and academic achievement, some definitional modifications appear essential. Just as measures of global self-concept do not appear to correlate with academic achievement among Blacks, global measures of assertiveness may not correlate with academic self-concept or academic achievement for Blacks. In the current study, academic assertiveness, defined as academic-related behavior which enables a person to act in his/her own best academic interests, will be studied.

To some extent, self-concept depends on how successful an individual has been in having needs met and in producing desired outcomes. When a person feels capable of positively influencing his or her environment, self-esteem increases. As self-esteem increases so does the ability and desire to be assertive. Assertiveness skills can become tools for producing desired outcomes. If a high level

of academic performance is a desired goal, the assertive individual will actively participate in obtaining that end. Reaching that desired goal is reinforcement of academic self-concept.

## CHAPTER III

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Self-concept/self-esteem is a psychological construct defined in this study as personal identity derived from role-defined experiences. For most individuals the importance of roles follows a hierarchially arranged pattern. A measure of total, or global, self-concept/self-esteem may not accurately reflect aspects of self-esteem connected to a single role. Given sexual differences in the role socialization process, it is possible that differences in aspects of self-esteem are sex-related. Similarly, another distance possibility is that differences in aspects of self-esteem occur across ethnic groups.

The present study examines the relationships between global and academic self-esteem and between these behaviors and educational aspirations and academic performance for Black female and male college students.

Many instruments have been utilized to measure self-concept and self-esteem. The Self-Concept of Ability Scale (Brookover et al., 1962), however, was the only one which focused on the academic ability aspect of self-concept. This instrument was developed from a study which investigated the nature of self-concept of ability and its

relation to school grades for 1,050 junior high school students. The correlation between self-concept of ability and grade point average (performance) was .57 for each sex. While this instrument has been used primarily with junior and senior high school students, it appears to be the only measure presently available that assesses the specific variable of academic self-concept. Developmentally, the age period of high school senior through college graduate spans middle adolescence and later adolescence (or youth). Erickson (1963) contends that the central developmental task is to develop a concept of self. It appears likely then that this instrument may also yield an accurate or near accurate assessment for post-secondary students. A second instrument was compiled as an additional measure of academic self-esteem. The Academic Self-Esteem Scale (ASE) was developed by rewording the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) to give it an academic rather than a global focus. The same theoretical assumptions on which the RSE is based were implied for the ASE.

Global self-esteem will be measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) (Rosenberg, 1965). This measure was selected because it was designed as a unidimensional scale based on Guttman scaling, and because of its high reliability and brevity (see Wylie, 1974, for a summary and discussion of self-concept measures in print). Another important factor in its selection is that it has

previously been used with Blacks (Rosenburg and Simmons, 1971; Hunt and Hardt, 1969). Test-retest reliability obtained over a two week period produced a reliability coefficient of .85 for 28 colleges. Efforts to establish construct validity took into consideration three irrelevant response determiners, social desirability, acquiescence response set, and item wording. An attempt to eliminate responses considered socially desirable was made by assurance to subjects of anonymity and confidentiality. Acquiescence response set is controlled by having an equal number of items for which "agree" and "disagree" responses indicate high self-esteem. Items were worded such that degrees of intensity or frequency were built into the stem of individual items. Convergent validity values between the Rosenberg self-esteem and self-esteem measured by three other methods were  $r=.67$ ,  $r=.83$ , and  $r=.56$ .

It is hypothesized that no reliable relationship exists between global self-esteem and academic self-concept or between global self-esteem and educational aspirations or academic performance. It is further hypothesized that a relationship exists between academic self-concept, educational aspirations, and academic performance and that this relationship will differ by sex and grade level.

While there is face validity for postulating a relationship between assertiveness and academic performance,

no clearly documented evidence was found for this assumption. The difficulties discussed above in the use of global measures of self-concept/self-esteem in predicting academic performance might conceivably be found in the use of global assertiveness measures in predicting academic behavior. The proposed study will examine the relationships between global and academic assertiveness and between these behaviors and educational aspirations and academic performance for Black female and male college students.

The Galassi College Self-Expression Scale (CSES) will be used to obtain a measure of global assertive behavior. Items for the scale were derived or modified from work by Lazrus (1971), Wolpe (1969), and Wolpe and Lazarus (1966). The scale was designed to tap the expression of a variety of feelings in a variety of interpersonal contexts. Test-retest reliability coefficients of .89 and .90 were reported (Galassi et al., 1974) for two samples of students over a two week interval. Construct validity was established by correlating scores on the CSES with scores on the Gough Adjective Check List, and concurrent validity consisted of correlations between students' scores on the CSES and ratings of assertiveness made by their supervisors. Another study (Galassi and Galassi, 1974) on the concurrent validity of the CSES further indicated its usefulness as a measure of assertiveness. An important factor in its



selection is that normative data on Black college students is available for this instrument (Galassi et al., 1974).

The CSES was designed to measure assertive behavior by asking subjects to respond to questions about a number of different situations. Only 10 items on the CSES deal explicitly with an academic setting. To create a larger pool of items measuring academic assertiveness, 16 questions focusing on behavior in an academic setting and following the CSES format were added at the end of the instrument.

It is hypothesized that no reliable relationship exists between global assertiveness and academic assertiveness or between global assertiveness, educational aspirations, or academic performance. It is further hypothesized that a relationship exists between academic assertiveness, educational aspirations, and academic performance and that this relationship will differ by sex and grade level.

Additionally, it is hypothesized that a reliable relationship will exist between the two criterion measures, educational aspirations, and academic performance and the sex and grade level of the subject.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODOLOGY

#### Subjects

Subjects in this study were Black male and female undergraduate students enrolled in a predominately Black state university during the spring semester, 1979. All subjects were volunteers who completed release of information forms. (Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the forms.) Confidentiality of responses was assured. Ten males and ten females were randomly selected from the university-provided list for each of the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classes. A total of 80 subjects was secured.

#### Materials

Six instruments were used as dependent measures:

1. The Self-Concept of Ability Scale (BRASE) (Brookover, Paterson, and Thomas, 1962), a 16-item questionnaire with five alternatives for each item and scored one to five. Obtained total scores on this instrument range from 16 to 80, with a high score reflecting a strongly positive self-concept of academic ability. (See Appendix B for a copy of the instrument.)

2. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) (Rosenberg, 1965), a 10-item questionnaire with four alternatives for each item. Five of the 10 items are stated in a negative manner and must be reverse scored. Obtained total scores range from 10 to 40, with a low score reflecting a strongly positive global self-esteem. (See Appendix C for a copy of the RSE.)

3. The Academic Self-Esteem Scale (ASE) was developed for this study by rewording the RSE to provide an academic focus. The 10 items of this scale follow the same format of the RSE and are scored in an identical manner. (See Appendix D for a copy of the instrument.)

4. The College Self-Expression Scale (CSES) (Galassi, DeLo, Galassi, and Bastien, 1974) is a 50-item, self-report scale designed to measure assertiveness in college students. There are five alternatives, ranging in value from 0-4, for each item. Twenty-nine of the 50 items which make up the inventory are stated in a negative manner and must be reversed scored. A total score is obtained by the addition of all responses and can range from 0-200. High scores reflect high levels of assertiveness. (See Appendix E for a copy of the instrument.)

5. The College Self-Expression Scale--Academic Assertiveness (CSES-AA), another instrument constructed for this study, consists of 16 items obtained by rewording original items from the CSES to give them an academic focus. Ten of

these items are reverse scored. The format and scoring procedure is identical to that of the CSES. Obtained total scores range from 0-64. High scores reflect high levels of academic assertiveness. (See Appendix F for a copy of the CSES-AA.)

6. Educational motivation was measured by the Level of Educational Aspirations (LEA) (Sewell, 1964; 1971; Sewell and Shah, 1967; Haller, Otto, Meier, and Ohlendorf, 1974; Woelfel and Haller, 1971). The instrument consists of two questions; one question measures idealistic educational goals or the degree of educational attainment the subject would like to achieve given the necessary abilities, grades, and financial resources. The second question measures realistic educational goals or the level of educational attainment the subject expects to achieve given his/her actual abilities, grades, and financial resources. For scoring purposes the two parts of this instrument were considered separately. The first question was labeled academic aspirations and the second as academic expectations. Scores on each item range from one, indicating a goal of "some" college education, to three, indicating a goal of a graduate degree. (See Appendix G for a copy of the LEA.) Academic performance of the independent variable was measured by cumulative grade point average obtained from university records with the subject's permission.

## Procedure

Subjects were tested in a group in a single session lasting approximately one hour. Response sheets were numbered 1-80 and coded by sex and grade level. In addition, demographic information was collected to assess the homogeneity of the male and female groups with respect to background. (See Appendix H for a copy of the demographic questionnaire.) Subjects were informed that a copy of the completed research would be available through the student association that had provided their names to the investigator.

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS

The results of a multivariate analysis of variance indicated no difference between males and females on the demographic variables ( $F(12,59) = 0.23, p > .05$  by the Hotelling-Lawley trace criterion). Table I summarizes the medians of these variables.

TABLE I  
MEDIAN VALUES OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Demographic Variable	Females	Males
Age	20.5	21.5
Family Income	\$10-14,999	\$10-14,999
Area of Residence (Population)	\$10-25,000	\$10-25,000
Mother's Educational Level	Some High School	Some High School
Father's Educational Level	Some High School	Some High School

The first hypothesis predicted no linear relationship between global self-esteem, as measured by the RSE, and any of the academic variables of self-esteem (ASE and BRASE), aspirations (LEA), or performance (GPA). Although this prediction held for aspirations ( $r(78) = .14, p > .05$ ), it was rejected for academic self-esteem (ASE  $r = .60, p < .001$ ; BRASE  $r = .27, p < .05$ ) and performance ( $r = .38, p < .001$ ). The two measures of academic self-esteem account for 48% and 7%, respectively, of the variability in global self-esteem, while performance accounts for 14%.

As predicted in the second hypothesis, there was a significant relationship between academic self-esteem (ASE) and aspirations ( $r = .25, p < .05$ ). Multiple regression analysis indicated that, as hypothesized, this relationship differed across grade levels ( $F(1,3) = 3.09, p < .05$ ) with values of .40, .28, .18, and .24 for the four grades. No evidence was found for an hypothesized difference as a function of sex or combinations of sex and grade. Academic aspirations were not correlated with academic self-esteem as measured by the BRASE ( $r = .15, p > .05$ ). Again as predicted, academic self-esteem (ASE) and performance (GPA) are linearly related ( $r = .58, p < .01$ ). This relationship changed as a function of grade only ( $F(1,3) = 3.61, p < .05$ ) with values of .80, .65, .54, and .50 for the four grades.

The hypothesis predicting a linear relationship between academic self-esteem (BRASE) and performance (GPA)

was supported ( $r=.48, p<.001$ ). Multiple regression analysis indicated that this relationship did, indeed, differ across grades ( $F(1,3) = 3.30, p<.05$ ) and by combinations of sex and grade ( $F(1,3) = 4.87, p<.01$ ). The linear relationship for males showed values of .80, .82, .74, and .03, while values of .96, .88, .71, and .46 were indicated for females.

It was also predicted that no linear relationship existed between the variable of global assertiveness (CSES) and the academic variables of assertiveness (CSES-AA) aspirations (LEA) or performance (GPA). This prediction was supported for academic aspirations (LEA) only ( $r(78) = .03, p>.05$ ). The hypothesis was rejected for academic assertiveness ( $r(78) = .61, p<.001$ ) and performance ( $r(78) = .26, p<.05$ ). Academic assertiveness accounted for 37% of the variability in global assertiveness while academic performance accounted for less than 7%.

Partial support was found for the prediction of linearity between academic assertiveness (LEA) and performance (GPA). The hypothesis was rejected for academic aspirations ( $r(78) = .08, p>.05$ ). Support for the hypothesized relationship was found between the CSES-AA and performance ( $r(78) = .36, p<.001$ ). A multiple regression analysis indicated no differences in this relationship as a function of either sex or grade or any combinations of sex and grade.



The final hypothesis predicted that a linear relationship would exist between the variables of academic aspirations (LEA) and performance (GPA) and that this relationship would differ as a function of sex and grade. Contrary to the hypothesis, no support was indicated for this prediction ( $r(78) = .13, p > .05$ ). This hypothesis was rejected.

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION

In attempting to define a number of non-cognitive variables related to academic performance for Blacks, this study showed limited but significant results. The overall hypothesis suggested that the situation specific constructs of academic self-concept and academic assertiveness would be positively correlated with academic performance and academic aspirations while global self-concept and global assertiveness would not. It was also hypothesized that the situation specific constructs would show no consistent relationship with their global counterparts. Contrary to the hypothesis though, a significant relationship was found to exist between the global measure of self-concept (RSE) and both measures of academic self-concept (ASE, BRASE). The strength of the relationship, however, is dependent on the instrument utilized to measure academic self-concept. Since the ASE, except for the addition of a specific academic focus, was identical to the RSE it is not surprising that the two instruments were highly correlated. The BRASE was developed independently of the RSE and showed a correlation of smaller magnitude. While the degree of the relationship varied depending on the instrument utilized to

measure academic self-concept, it was demonstrated that the concepts of global and academic self-concept are interrelated constructs.

The three measures of self-concept, global, and academic, were generally shown to be positively related to the variable of academic performance. This finding lent support to the theoretical position concerning self-concept constructed earlier in this paper. The stated position that self-concept is an integral part of all life experiences is not an original or novel hypothesis. This hypothesis was expanded, however, to accommodate a logical extrapolation. If one's life experiences include the experience of student status then self-concept and specifically academic self-concept should be an integral part of academic performance. One of the most comprehensive studies of the relationship between self-concept and academic performance for Black students (Henton and Johnson, 1964) found no relationship between these two variables. Henton and Johnson measured global self-concept and correlated it with academic performance for fourth and sixth grade pupils. The use of measures of both academic and global self-concept with a college population produced results which were at variance with those of Henton and Johnson. Further research is necessary to assess whether the inconsistencies between these two studies were due to the grade level differences of the subjects, the differences in instruments of

measurement, to both, or to some other unspecified factors. Interestingly enough, however, the relationship between academic self-concept as measured by the (ASE) and academic performance seemed to decrease in strength as college grade level increased. In other words, freshman males and females showed a stronger relationship between academic self-concept and academic performance than did any other group. Academic self-esteem (ASE) predicted 64% of the variance for freshman students, compared to 25 percent for seniors. Using the hypothesis about self-concept constructed earlier in this paper, the argument could be made that during the first year of college, the role of student occupies a primary and powerful place in an individual's structure of self-concept. As grade level increases, the student likely adds, deletes, and reorders role identifications and experiences. Perhaps at the senior year a student's academic self-concept becomes less potent as a predictor of academic performance than other factors. At this level maybe something like professional self-concept becomes an important and more primary role experience thus making it a more powerful predictor of academic performance than academic self-concept.

A relationship was also found between academic self-concept as measured by the BRASE and academic performance. This relationship was affected by grade as with the ASE, but, unlike the ASE, the relationship was different for

different sex and grade combinations. The relationship between academic self-concept (BRASE) and academic performance (GPA) was stronger for females than for males at the first two years and about the same for both sexes at year three. Neither group showed any relationship between the BRASE and academic performance at year four. The relationship between the two variables decreased as the grade level increased (for males the relationship remained about the same at the first two years and like the females decreased at the third year). The decrease in the magnitude of the relationship was most dramatic for females. The predictive power of the BRASE was 95% for first year females and only 50% for fourth year females. The predictive power of the BRASE was 64% for first year males and approximately 55% for fourth year males. Analysis of variance procedures showed no significant sex differences for either the BRASE or for academic performance when the two were considered separately. While the ASE had better overall predictability than the BRASE, the BRASE had better predictability for certain sex-grade combinations and might be more useful in specific circumstances.

The relationship of the variables of global self-concept and academic self-concept with academic aspirations varied, depending on the instrument, with reference to significance and the degree of predictability. Global self-concept and academic self-concept as measured by the BRASE

showed no relationship to academic aspirations. Academic self-concept as measured by the ASE did show a statistically significant relationship with academic aspirations, but its value as a predictor of academic aspirations was limited. The variables of global and academic self-concept appear to have value as predictors of future academic goals for these students.

The findings of this study showed global assertiveness (CSES) and academic assertiveness to be related. The CSES accounted for over one-third of the variability on the CSES-AA. While there was an overlap between the two instruments, their lack of perfect or near perfect correlation may indicate that they measure different aspects of a common complex variable. The possibility that they simply measure the same variable but in different ways also exists. However, since the CSES-AA accounted for a much larger proportion of the variability in academic performance than did the CSES, the evidence seems to be weighted in favor of the first explanation. The hypothesized lack of relationship between global assertiveness and academic aspirations was supported. It appears that these students' aspirations for post undergraduate training was not affected by their degree of assertiveness. Neither was academic assertiveness related to academic aspirations. Although both the CSES and the CSES-AA were statistically related to academic performance, neither measurement accounted for a significant amount of the variability in academic performance.

Further research should be undertaken before any reasonably reliable conclusions can be made about the relationship between academic assertiveness and academic performance for Blacks. As was noted earlier, assertiveness skills can be taught and the acquisition of these skills can lead to an increase in the levels of self-esteem. Donovan (1975) maintains that institutions of higher learning positively reinforce the behaviors of assertiveness and autonomy when exhibited by white, male students. This observation suggests that skills and behaviors valued in the academic setting are likely to be influenced by sexism and racism. The impact of this possibility on women and minorities in the educational setting would provide a topic for further investigative research.

While some questions were tentatively answered in this study, new questions were generated. Is this study replicable? Why are academic aspirations not found to be related to academic self-esteem? Is the decrease in the value of academic self-concept as a predictor of academic performance assertiveness as grade level increases indicative of a reordering of role priorities or of other factors? Why do females seem to show a greater decrease in levels of academic self-esteem from the freshman to senior year than do males? These and other questions currently remain unanswered. This study has only started to lay a foundation upon which later studies may be able to build.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

As was explained, this information will be treated with utmost confidentiality. I would like to be able to obtain your calculated grade point average. If this is acceptable, please sign with your name and student identification number here:

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APPENDIX B

BROOKOVER ACADEMIC SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

## BROOKOVER ACADEMIC SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

Circle the letter in front of the statement which best answers each question.

1. How do you rate yourself in school ability compared with your close friends?
  - a. I am the best
  - b. I am above average
  - c. I am average
  - d. I am below average
  - e. I am the poorest
  
2. How do you rate yourself in school ability compared with those in your class at school?
  - a. I am among the best
  - b. I am above average
  - c. I am average
  - d. I am below average
  - e. I am among the poorest
  
3. Where do you think you would rank in your class in high school?
  - a. Among the best
  - b. Above average
  - c. Average
  - d. Below average
  - e. Among the poorest
  
4. Do you think you have the ability to complete college?
  - a. Yes, definitely
  - b. Yes, probably
  - c. No sure either way
  - d. Probably not
  - e. No
  
5. Where do you think you would rank in your class in college?
  - a. Among the best
  - b. Above average
  - c. Average
  - d. Below average
  - e. Among the poorest

6. In order to become a doctor, lawyer, or university professor, work beyond four years of college is necessary. How likely do you think it is that you could complete such advanced work?
  - a. Very likely
  - b. Somewhat likely
  - c. Not sure either way
  - d. Unlikely
  - e. Most unlikely
  
7. Forget for a moment how others grade your work. In your opinion, how good do you think your work is?
  - a. My work is excellent
  - b. My work is good
  - c. My work is average
  - d. My work is below average
  - e. My work is much below average
  
8. What kind of grades do you think you are capable of getting?
  - a. Mostly A's
  - b. Mostly B's
  - c. Mostly C's
  - d. Mostly D's
  
9. How important to you are the grades you get in school?
  - a. Very important
  - b. Important
  - c. Not particularly important
  - d. Grades don't matter to me at all
  
10. How important is it to you to be high in your class in grades?
  - a. Very important
  - b. Important
  - c. Not particularly important
  - d. Doesn't matter to me at all
  
11. How do you feel if you don't do as well in school as you know you can?
  - a. Feel very badly
  - b. Feel badly
  - c. Don't feel particularly badly
  - d. Doesn't bother me at all

12. How important is it to you to do better than others in school?
- Very important
  - Important
  - Not particularly important
  - Doesn't matter to me at all
13. Which statement best describes you?
- I like to get better grades than everyone else
  - I like to get better grades than almost everyone else
  - I like to get about the same grades as everyone else
  - I don't care about any particular grades
14. In your schoolwork do you try to do better than others?
- All of the time
  - Most of the time
  - Occasionally
  - Never
15. How important to you are good grades compared with other aspects of school?
- Good grades are the most important thing in school
  - Good grades are among the important things in school
  - Some other things in school are more important than good grades
  - Good grades don't matter to me at all
16. What kind of grades do you try to get in school?
- Mostly A's
  - Mostly B's
  - Mostly C's
  - Mostly D's
  - Don't try to get any particular grades

APPENDIX C

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

## ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

Describe Yourself

Circle the number that best describes your agreement with the statement. Also, indicate your response on the answer sheet.

1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
  - 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
  
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
  - 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
  
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
  - 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
  
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
  - 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
  
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
  - 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
  
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
  - 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
9. I certainly feel useless at times.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
10. At times I think I am no good at all.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX D

ACADEMIC SELF-ESTEEM SCALE



## ACADEMIC SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

11. In an academic situation, I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
12. I feel that I have a number of good qualities important in an academic setting.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
13. I am inclined to feel that I am a failure in an academic situation.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
14. I am able to do my academic work as well as most other people.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
15. I feel I do not have much to be proud of in my academic performance.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
16. I take a positive attitude toward myself in an academic environment.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree

17. I am satisfied with myself in an academic environment.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
18. I wish I could have more respect for myself in an academic environment.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
19. In an academic setting I certainly feel useless at times.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree
20. In an academic setting at times I think that I am no good at all.
- 1 = Strongly Agree
  - 2 = Agree
  - 3 = Disagree
  - 4 = Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX E

COLLEGE SELF-EXPRESSION SCALE

## COLLEGE SELF-EXPRESSION SCALE

The following inventory is designed to provide information about the way in which you express yourself. Please answer the questions by putting the appropriate number on the line next to the question. Your answer should reflect how you generally express yourself in the situation.

- 0 - Almost Always or Always
- 1 - Usually
- 2 - Sometimes
- 3 - Seldom
- 4 - Rarely or Never

- \_\_\_ 1. Do you ignore it when someone pushes in front of you?
- \_\_\_ 2. When you decide that you no longer wish to date someone do you have marked difficulty telling the person of your decision?
- \_\_\_ 3. Would you exchange a purchase you discover to be faulty? (R)
- \_\_\_ 4. If you decided to change your major to a field which your parents will not approve, would you have difficulty telling them?
- \_\_\_ 5. Are you inclined to be over-apologetic?
- \_\_\_ 6. If you were studying and if your roommate were making too much noise, would you ask him to stop? (R)
- \_\_\_ 7. Is it difficult for you to compliment and praise others?
- \_\_\_ 8. If you are angry at your parents, can you tell them? (R)
- \_\_\_ 9. Do you insist that your roommate does his fair share of the cleaning? (R)
- \_\_\_ 10. If you find yourself becoming fond of someone you are dating, would you have difficulty expressing these feelings to that person?
- \_\_\_ 11. If a friend who has borrowed \$5.00 from you seems to have forgotten about it, would you remind this person? (R)
- \_\_\_ 12. Are you overly careful to avoid hurting other people's feelings?
- \_\_\_ 13. If you have a close friend whom your parents dislike and constantly criticize, would you inform your parents that you disagree with them and tell them of your friend's good points? (R)
- \_\_\_ 14. Do you find it difficult to ask a friend to do a favor for you?

- \_\_\_15. If food which is not to your satisfaction is served in a restaurant, would you complain about it to the waiter? (R)
- \_\_\_16. If your roommate, without your permission, eats food that he knows you have been saving, can you express your displeasure to him? (R)
- \_\_\_17. If a salesman has gone to considerable trouble to show you some merchandise which is not quite what you want, do you have difficulty in saying no?
- \_\_\_18. Do you keep your opinions to yourself?
- \_\_\_19. If friends visit when you want to study, do you ask them to return at a more convenient time? (R)
- \_\_\_20. Are you able to express love and affection to people for whom you care? (R)
- \_\_\_21. If you were in a small seminar and the professor made a statement that you considered untrue, would you question it? (R)
- \_\_\_22. If a person of the opposite sex whom you have been wanting to meet smiles or directs attention to you at a party, would you take the initiative in beginning a conversation? (R)
- \_\_\_23. If someone you respect expresses opinions with which you strongly disagree, would you venture to state your own point of view? (R)
- \_\_\_24. Do you go out of your way to avoid trouble with other people?
- \_\_\_25. If a friend is wearing a new outfit which you like would you tell that person so? (R)
- \_\_\_26. If, after leaving a store, you realize that you have been "short-changed," do you go back and request the correct change? (R)
- \_\_\_27. If a friend makes what you consider to be an unreasonable request, are you able to refuse? (R)
- \_\_\_28. If a close and respected relative was annoying you, would you hide your feelings rather than express your annoyance?
- \_\_\_29. If your parents want you to come home for a weekend but you have made important plans, would you tell them of your preference? (R)
- \_\_\_30. Do you express anger or annoyance toward the opposite sex when it is justified? (R)
- \_\_\_31. If a friend does an errand for you, do you tell that person how much you appreciate it? (R)
- \_\_\_32. When a person is blatantly unfair, do you fail to say something about it to him?
- \_\_\_33. Do you avoid social contacts for fear of doing or saying the wrong thing?
- \_\_\_34. If a friend betrays your confidence, would you hesitate to express annoyance to that person?
- \_\_\_35. When a clerk in a store waits on someone who has come in after you, do you call his attention to the matter? (R)

- \_\_\_ 36. If you are particularly happy about someone's good fortune, can you express this to that person? (R)
- \_\_\_ 37. Would you be hesitant about asking a good friend to lend you a few dollars?
- \_\_\_ 38. If a person teases you to the point that it is no longer fun, do you have difficulty expressing your displeasure?
- \_\_\_ 39. If you arrive late for a meeting, would you rather stand than go to a front seat which could only be secured by being noticed by almost everyone present?
- \_\_\_ 40. If your date calls on Saturday night 15 minutes before you are supposed to meet and says that he/she has to study for an important exam and cannot make it, would you express your annoyance? (R)
- \_\_\_ 41. If someone keeps kicking the back of your chair in a movie, would you ask that person to stop? (R)
- \_\_\_ 42. If someone interrupts you in the middle of an important conversation, do you request that the person wait until you have finished? (R)
- \_\_\_ 43. Do you freely volunteer information or opinions in class discussions? (R)
- \_\_\_ 44. Are you reluctant to speak to an attractive acquaintance of the opposite sex?
- \_\_\_ 45. If, you lived in an apartment and the landlord failed to make certain necessary repairs after promising to do so, would you insist on it? (R)
- \_\_\_ 46. If your parents want you home too early and unreasonable, do you attempt to discuss or negotiate this with them? (R)
- \_\_\_ 47. Do you find it difficult to stand up for your rights?
- \_\_\_ 48. If a friend unjustifiably criticizes you, do you express your resentment there and then? (R)
- \_\_\_ 49. Do you express your feelings to others? (R)
- \_\_\_ 50. Do you avoid asking questions in class for fear of feeling self-conscious?

APPENDIX F

COLLEGE SELF-EXPRESSION SCALE-ACADEMIC  
ASSERTIVENESS

## COLLEGE SELF-EXPRESSION SCALE-ACADEMIC

## ASSERTIVENESS

- \_\_\_ 51. Is it difficult for you to initiate contact with faculty outside the classroom?
- \_\_\_ 52. Do you try to avoid being noticed by a professor in class?
- \_\_\_ 53. Do you avoid speaking out in class for fear of saying the wrong things?
- \_\_\_ 54. Do you feel comfortable in asking faculty for help in planning for your future?
- \_\_\_ 55. If an instructor unjustifiably criticizes you or your work, would you discuss it with her/him?
- \_\_\_ 56. Would you share your views on a subject, open to discussion, if those views were contrary to those of most of your other classmates?
- \_\_\_ 57. Do you feel uncomfortable when you are the only Black in a class?
- \_\_\_ 58. If you received a grade which you felt was unfair, would you talk to the instructor about it?
- \_\_\_ 59. If you have an idea for an unsolicited class presentation, would you talk to the instructor about it?
- \_\_\_ 60. Do you ever initiate additional assignments or projects?
- \_\_\_ 61. Do you take an active interest in departmental or university policy-making?
- \_\_\_ 62. Do you find it difficult to ask an instructor to give you extra time to complete an assignment?
- \_\_\_ 63. If you arrive late for class, would you rather stand than go to a front seat which could only be secured by being noticed by almost every in class?
- \_\_\_ 64. If a stranger-classmate keeps kicking the back of your chair during a lecture, would you ask that person to stop?
- \_\_\_ 65. If someone in a class discussion interrupts you in the middle of an important statement you are making, do you request that the person wait until you are finished?
- \_\_\_ 66. If the dormitory or living group rules demand that you are home by a certain time which you feel is much too early and unreasonable, do you attempt to discuss or negotiate this with the proper authorities?



APPENDIX G

LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

## LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

1. If you had the abilities, grades, money, etc., how far would you really like to go in school?

(Answer one of the following:)

1. Some college
2. College degree
3. Beyond college to graduate degree (master's, law, medicine, etc.)

2. With your abilities, grades, money, etc., how far do you actually expect to go in school?

(Answer one of the following:)

1. Some college
2. College degree
3. Beyond college to graduate degree (master's, law, medicine, etc.)

APPENDIX H

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

## DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate your answer by circling the appropriately numbered response.

1. What is your grade level?
  1. Freshman
  2. Sophomore
  3. Junior
  4. Senior
2. Sex:
  1. Male
  2. Female
3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which of the following best describes the place where you were reared?
  1. Small town, rural area (2,500 people or less)
  2. Small city (2,500-10,000)
  3. City of 10,000-25,000
  4. City of 25,000-100,000
  5. City of over 100,000
5. What was your family's income for 1978?
  1. Less than \$6,000
  2. \$6,000-\$9,000
  3. \$10,000-\$14,999
  4. \$15,000-\$24,999
  5. \$25,000 or over
6. What is your marital status?
  1. Single
  2. Married
  3. Divorced
  4. Separated

7. What is your area of education?

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Agriculture       | 5. Engineering           |
| 2. Arts and Sciences | 6. Home Economics        |
| 3. Business          | 7. Undecided or<br>Other |
| 4. Education         |                          |

IF YOU HAVE HAD MORE THAN ONE FATHER OR ONE MOTHER, PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO FATHER AND MOTHER WITH REGARD TO THE MOTHER OR FATHER YOU SPENT THE MOST TIME WITH AND/OR THE ONE WHO HAD THE MOST INFLUENCE ON YOU.

8. Father's occupation:

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

9. Mother's occupation:

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

10. Father's education:

- \_\_\_ Post graduate degree, professional degree
- \_\_\_ College graduate
- \_\_\_ Some college, business school
- \_\_\_ High school graduate
- \_\_\_ Some high school
- \_\_\_ Grades 7 and 8
- \_\_\_ Grammar school to and including 6th grade

11. Mother's education:

- \_\_\_ Post graduate degree, professional degree
- \_\_\_ College graduate
- \_\_\_ Some college, business school
- \_\_\_ High school graduate
- \_\_\_ Some high school
- \_\_\_ Grades 7 and 8
- \_\_\_ Grammar school to and including 6th grade

VITA

Jacqueline Warrior

Candidate for the Degree of  
Master of Science

Thesis: NON-COGNITIVE CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT THE POST-SECONDARY LEVEL

Major Field: Psychology

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Checotah, Oklahoma, January 23, 1945, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Warrior.

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