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INTERPERSONAL CORRELATES OF SUCCESS IN GIFTED
AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDENTS

BY

TOMMY DAVIS, III

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of
New York.

1997

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

May 1, 1997

Date

Vera S. Paster

Vera S. Paster, Ph.D.

Chair of Examining Committee

May 1, 1997

Date

Kay Deaux

Kay Deaux, Ph.D.

Executive Officer

Diana Diamond, Ph.D.

Anderson J. Franklin, Ph.D.

Cythnia Grace, Ph.D.

James R. Dumpson, Ph.D.

Carol J. Eagle, Ph.D.

Supervisory Committee

ABSTRACT

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by

Tommy Davis, III

Adviser: Professor Vera S. Paster

The present study examined interpersonal correlates of success in a sample of intellectually gifted African American and Latino students attending a special program for achieving youth. A battery of paper and pencil tests was administered to 12 and 13 year old students and their teachers to determine their standing on measures of psychological defensiveness, private self-consciousness, and perspective-taking. According to our hypotheses, these variables are related to the success variables of higher GPAs and teacher ratings. There were significant findings in the expected negative direction between psychological defensiveness and the success variables. None of the other hypotheses were sustained, but significant relationships were determined between perspective-taking, private self-consciousness and student's self-ratings of scholastic

competence. Further, significantly lower defensiveness scores were obtained from the honor and the program completion groups when compared to the program noncompletion group. The findings and their relationship to previous studies and conceptualizations were interpreted utilizing an interpersonal theoretical model with special attention to the work of Harry Stack Sullivan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my mother, Mrs. Rosine Catherine Davis. From the beginning of my life, she strived to give me the tools I would need to be successful. I owe my success to her efforts and love. I express my deepest appreciation and respect for my father, Mr. Tommie Davis, Jr. who taught me important work ethics and who has always been there supporting me. My lovely daughters, Antoinette and Ashley, have been powerful motivators throughout the years of struggle toward this goal. Likewise, I thank their mother, Mrs. Marie H. Davis, for many positive years.

My family is indeed large, and it has extended far beyond my biological family. I express much gratitude to Dr. Vera S. Paster, who has been my mentor as well as my adopted mother. I owe so much of this accomplishment to her belief in me and her steadfast supportive stance. I express sincere gratitude to Dr. Anderson J. Franklin who has been an outstanding role model. Thank you to Dr. Cythnia Grace, who has offered guidance and support with this project. Dr. Carol J. Eagle through her guidance and support has also made a difference in my life. She has been another positive force among my relationships. To my mentor and friend, Dr. James R. Dumpson, I express my deep appreciation for his encouragement and guidance on this project and others. I

thank my brother in Christ and good friend, Mr. J. Donald Dumpson, who has been both inspiring and encouraging.

Finally, I express much gratitude to Mr. Gary Simons, the Executive Director of Prep for Prep for allowing me to conduct this research in his organization. I thank my immediate supervisor and friend, the Deputy Executive Director of Prep for Prep and Director of Prep for Prep 9, Mr. Peter Bordonaro, for his support of this project and for the stimulating conversations he and I have had over the years about the students. I express appreciation to Mr. Rubain Dorancy who aided me in the library research, collection of data, and final proofing of this document. Your assistance has been very valuable. Likewise I thank Ms. Roxanne Coombs, the Assistant Director of Prep for Prep 9, for her assistance with the final proofing. I express gratitude to Mr. Danny Gilford for his assistance with data entry and to Dr. Gregory Tucker for his statistical consultation. To all I say, God has never failed to place in my path those good people whom I have needed in this journey toward the fulfillment of His will.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Bright adolescent achievers represent diverse personality attributes. The personality features which distinguish successful students from unsuccessful or less successful students when intelligence is held constant may reflect areas of psychosocial functioning, such as identification with achievement, self-awareness, aspects of "interpersonal cognition" and level of psychological defensiveness in interpersonal encounters.

Some very intelligent youth seem to experience significant emotional distress and conflict regarding their achievements. While they do achieve and appear to cope, such youth are at risk for social emotional difficulties, rebellion, and even academic underachievement. Despite their acceptance of social norms regarding the importance of educational achievement, they may be unable to sustain their performance except at great emotional cost. This is especially true of some African American and Latino adolescents who must concurrently resist negative social stereotypes (Gibbs, 1989; Inclán & Herron, 1990; Stevenson, Chen, & Uttal, 1990).

The emotional turmoil that some young people experience

may stem from their failure to form a positive identification with their achieving selves. Instead, that aspect of themselves which is invested in academic achievement elicits interpersonal anxiety which they cannot fully own. That anxiety provoking self remains an external representation of parents or the rejecting larger society. In Sullivanian terms, it partly becomes an aspect of the "bad me" personification(Sullivan, 1953).

Singer(1973) explained that learning disabilities in some children reflect the impact of the child's sensitivity to parents, school and societal hypocrisy regarding learning as well as the child's integration of a hysteric-like response style to these inconsistencies into his or her personality. Based upon Sullivan's theory of hysteria, Singer reasoned that these learning difficulties stem from the child's experience of being treated like a plaything or decoration, not fully respected or appreciated as a real person(Singer, 1973). Accordingly, one can reason that the failure to form a positive identity and the essence of a negative identification with achievement are the child's perceptions of negative and/or unauthentic and disingenuous, interpersonal interactions concerning his or her achievement.

Although these youth may enjoy the positive attention gained from their achievements, their self-esteem suffers because the achievement which brings them praise on one hand

precipitates anxiety on the other hand, although they may be unaware of the link between their anxiety and their achievement. The results may be impaired judgment in managing their academic functioning and defensive coping measures that lead to self-defeating behaviors.

This group of youngsters may also see themselves as victims of circumstances beyond their control, and they may demonstrate more imitative behaviors in a wider range of situations because of their basic uncertainty about themselves. Their interactions possess an egocentric as well as a defensive quality which interferes with personal connections with others. In this way anxiety levels are maintained, and self-esteem enhancing interpersonal experiences are blocked.

The positive identification with the achieving self seems further complicated in minority students, since they must navigate currents of conflicting societal expectations. In some communities, achievement is often associated with the rejecting majority population, and some adolescents and/or their peers may experience this achievement as antithetical to their racial self-identification. Stereotypes present them as non-academic(Steinberg, 1996). These beliefs become accepted by those youth so characterized, as well as become associated with the bad other. These concerns exert emotional pressure on groups of African American and Latino students who have accepted

the broader social norm which encourages academic achievement(Fordham & Ogbu,1986;Spencer & Markstrom-Adams,1990; Slaughter-Defoe, Nakagawa, Takanishi, & Johnson,1990; Takei & Dubas, 1993).

Despite conflicting messages from others, those youth who have managed to integrate their achieving selves into their basic identity are more secure about their performances. Thus, their achievements do not conflict with their self-image. While these youngsters may be more independent, they are yet flexible enough to use others as role models in uncertain situations, but they are also prone to rely on their own decision-making ability in more familiar situations. Likewise these youth are less defensive or guarded, a characteristic which serves to enhance their adjustment and achievement during stressful periods. Through their better developed interpersonal skills, these students are more able to form connections with both adults and achieving peers, especially in the academic setting. They utilize support resources from adults who are perceived as more benign, and they gain support from like-minded peers with whom they have built good relationships.

A perspective of gifted youth, found mostly among laymen, is that these youth are more at risk for emotional problems than non-gifted youth and that emotional turmoil becomes the price these gifted youth must pay for their high

intelligence. Olszewski-Kubilius, Kulieke, Krasney(1988), in their review of personality dimensions of gifted adolescents, found that most studies indicate that these youth probably enjoy more positive mental health and better coping skills than non-gifted youth. However, the same advantage may not exist for those gifted youth at the very top end of the intellectual scale.

On the other hand, Kaiser and Berndt(1985) found that high ability, high achieving students tended to report slightly more symptoms of depression, stress, loneliness and anger, though not significantly more than non-gifted adolescents. Altogether, the incidence of dysphoric states among gifted youth appear to be no greater than that within the general population.

When intellectually gifted minority youth underachieve or fail, they represent a considerable loss to this society. The growing need in education, science, industry as well as government places a significant demand on available human resources. Hence the loss of a society's brightest minds to mediocrity is detrimental to its standing in the world community, a view held by a number of scholars including the authors of A Nation At Risk(1983).

While this is true for majority youth, it is especially true for African Americans and Latinos in the United States since these groups tend to occupy the bottom range of the economic ladder. For example, the median income of Black

families is only 57 percent of that of White families, and unemployment for African Americans is twice as high as that for White Americans(Gibbs, 1989; Hacker, 1995). Effective achievement by the brightest youth may help others to overcome the many barriers to access to educational and economic advancement placed before inner city minority groups.

With regard to school performance a half million children drop out of school in the United States each year, and poor teenagers, of whom African American and Latino youth are overrepresented, are three times more likely to drop out. Thirty percent of all ninth graders fail to complete high school. Slightly more than 40 percent of African Americans over 25 years of age have not completed high school(Gibbs, 1989). Fifty-two percent of adults of Puerto Rican background have not completed high school compared to 26 percent of the total US population(Inclan & Herron, 1989). Hence school failure among minorities should be of national concern(State of Black America, 1992) in a society where it is predicted that by the year 2001 the majority of the work force will be comprised of people of color.

It is difficult to ascertain what percentage of those cited in the national drop out rate are discouraged and disaffected intellectually gifted youth. However, it has been estimated that nearly half of the more able students

may not be achieving near their potential(Bachtold,1969).

Even those youth who underachieve according to their ability, yet maintain a passable level of performance by most standards, may have quality of life issues. There have been conflicting data over the prevalence of social emotional difficulties among the intellectually gifted(Olszewki-Kubilius, Kulieki, Krasney, 1988). However, on the whole, there seems to exist a disparity among gifted individuals with some exhibiting superior academic, vocational and social adaptation while others exhibit social and emotional difficulties which interfere with their academic achievement. A question that remains is to what degree do internal as opposed to social and environmental sources account for these difficulties.

This study will explore the internalized attitudes and defenses that exceedingly bright minority youth develop and the concomitant impact on their successful coping with an academic program geared to their intellectual potential.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Interpersonal Concepts:

Anxiety:

Since this thesis explores academic performance from an interpersonal theoretical perspective, it is important to review some basic tenets of Sullivan's(1953) Interpersonal Theory of which the concept of anxiety is central.

According to Sullivan(1948,1949,1953), the origin of anxiety is solely interpersonal. Anxiety is the byproduct of the empathic connection between the infant and the mothering one. The mothering one who, during the course of a day, may become anxious over any number of matters relates this anxiety to the infant during feeding and other mothering activities with the child. Hence the infant first experiences anxiety as a mysterious phenomenon over which he or she has little control, that is, it originates outside in the mothering one whose daily experiences are largely beyond the infant's influence. Sullivan points out that this mysterious quality of anxiety marks its longstanding characteristic, becoming an enduring element of the individual's experience of such internal states.

Sullivan(1953) states:

"The tension of anxiety and its congeries... does

not ensue in energy transformations directed to its relief by the removal of the situational factors obviously concerned in its provocation. Actions towards avoiding or minimizing anxiety certainly occur, but anxiety combines with other tensions only in opposition. In vector terms the tension of anxiety is always at 180° to any other tension with which it coincides. Moreover, other tensions cannot suppress or defer activity resulting from anxiety" (p.96).

The experience of anxiety disrupts the infant's equilibrium and receptivity to the mothering one which in turn may increase the anxiety in the mothering one, perpetuating a cycle of mounting anxiety. Such interactions become the basis for lifelong interpersonal struggles.

Anxiety generally inhibits effective communication and the fulfillment of needs, and it disrupts emotional and cognitive problem solving ability. Chrzanowski(1977), interpreting Sullivan's view of anxiety, states: "Disruptive and destructive in every respect, anxiety interferes with meaningful communication, precludes intimacy, hinders creative thought processes, and leads to profound human malintegrations"(p.138).

A number of neoSullivanians have disagreed that anxiety is totally interpersonal in origin or totally destructive in nature. Chrzanowski(1977) states that legitimate guilt,

questions of conscience, morality, loyalty, and related reality problems may induce varying degrees of distress but that they should not be included in the category of anxiety. He argues that anxiety should be reserved for those interpersonal experiences that have irrationally lowered self-esteem.

Fiscalini(1991) questions the premise that anxiety is solely interpersonal, and he states that Sullivan's interpersonal concept of anxiety reflects a cultural or personal bias. In Fiscalini's examination of anxiety, he notes the contributions of a number of neoSullivanians who sought to develop other processes which are implicit or explicit in Sullivan's conceptualizations. Fiscalini(1991) then expands Sullivan's theory of self-threat to include the anxiety of apprehension and the anxiety of dread. Apprehension refers to the need for personal orientation, structure and the fear of uncertainty, novelty, or chaos; it is a reflection of what Fiscalini calls the personalized or representational self. Dread refers to the need for personal fulfillment and the fear of psychic unaliveness or self-constriction, and it is a reflection of the personal or authentic self or the self as an agent.

Security Operations:

The threatened individual responds with the formation of security operations which are aimed at abolishing

anxiety, the same being the establishment of emotional comfort. These operations may manifest themselves through either overt or covert processes. In overt processes, the individual may exhibit a variety of behaviors which are aimed at protecting self-esteem but which may exacerbate interpersonal problems and diminish self-esteem. Such strategies may include self-defeating behaviors. In covert processes the individual may engage in a number of mental activities which may be accessible to awareness or dissociated from awareness and which may also enhance or diminish self-esteem(Sullivan, 1953).

Chapman(1976) explains that security operations may be healthy or unhealthy. Healthy security operations achieve the goals of diminishing anxiety and increasing security without interfering with the individual's interpersonal competence or causing any kind of emotional distress. On the other hand, unhealthy security operations reduce anxiety and increase security usually at a significant cost to the individual. They may limit the person's interpersonal capacities, creating a variety of interpersonal, emotional, and behavioral maladjustments.

Selective inattention has been described as often functioning as a healthy security operation(Chapman, 1976). According to Chapman, selective inattention reflects the individual's failure to observe those aspects of his or her environment which may provoke anxiety. Fromm-Reichmann(1950)

states that selective inattention is often necessary for the mastery of psychobiological existence. However, she also acknowledges: "It is the surplus of painful and anxiety-arousing emotional experience that creates psychopathological problems when barred from awareness"(p.82).

Mullahy(1948) describes the development of selective inattention as a function of the child's learning to pay close attention to those behaviors which are approved and disapproved by significant others, all those who are instrumental in forming the individual's self-concept. As the child's attention becomes focused on those behaviors, his attention to other events in his environment are attenuated because he is more concerned with the issue of his security. Mullahy(1948) and Fromm-Reichmann(1950) are more careful than Chapman(1976) in their use of selective inattention by reserving the term dissociative processes for those experiences where anxiety cannot be acknowledged by the self.

Singer(1973) utilized the concept of selective inattention by examining its implied reverse operation of selective attention in his explanation of particular types of learning difficulties. He explored the hypotheses that given a particular type of early and ongoing interpersonal experience that youth who develop nonorganic learning difficulties may exhibit "... [in learning situations] a

heightened, though not necessarily conscious, sensitivity to what is unreal, to what is unauthentic, to what is pretended, and to what is feigned around them" (p.264). He explored the extent to which the aforementioned ability in these learning disabled youth differed from their capacity to perceive that which happens to be genuine, authentic, and meaningful.

In the evolution of Sullivan's concept of the self, he concluded with a self-system which consists of his earlier "personal self" and the protective mechanisms of security operations (Grey, 1988). The outer manifestations of one's self-system in interaction with another's self-system define personality, to which we will now turn our attention.

Personality:

It is necessary to address the concept of personality from an interpersonal, and particularly a Sullivanian perspective, before presenting an interpersonal model of academic achievement. Sullivan (1953) defines personality as "... the relatively enduring pattern of recurrent interpersonal situations which characterize a human life" (p. 111). Hence personality develops as a function of an individual's interpersonal relationships, particularly with significant others during his or her lifetime. In such a view, the study of personality is built upon events which are directly observable within the context of interpersonal

relationships.

This focus on observable events does not mean that Sullivan's theory is confined to the external and void of insights into internal processes (Grey, 1988; Zucker, 1989). Personality is an open system in which there is "...a continuous interchange with permeating boundaries between the subjective "inner" and behavior "outer" (Grey, 1988, p. 556). Zucker (1989) further points out that Sullivan describes the content of internal assumptions as a result of learning and the categories of subjective organization primarily in terms of processes.

The relationship between external events and internal processes can be seen in Sullivan's formulation of "self-personifications". A self-personification is the interpersonal equivalent of an identity or self-image; however, the path to its formation differentiates it from such concepts in traditional psychological theory. Antonovsky (1987) in her comparison of object relations and interpersonal theories describes Sullivan's personifications "... as the resultants of experience and of the role anxiety played in it. They are anxiety-adjusted images" (p. 541).

Hence, anxiety plays a central role in Sullivan's theory. It is the potter, molding personality. The pervasive role of anxiety in personality formation may partly reflect the very broad manner in which Sullivan

defined anxiety. Anxiety refers not only to feelings of tension but to "...virtually all basic types of emotional suffering: thus anxiousness, guilt, shame, dread, feelings of personal worthlessness, eerie loathing, and other less definable painful feelings"(Chapman, 1976, p. 79).

The experience of anxiety determines to a great extent the person's self-image or self-personification which is comprised of the "good me" , "bad me", and "not me"(Sullivan, 1953). In the first instance of the "good me", the individual experiences little anxiety, feels positive about aspects of the self, experiences the self as acceptable, worthy and in high regard. "The 'good me' is an organization of experiences of approval, tenderness, and general good feelings... Hence, 'I' shall tend to regard 'my' self as essentially the 'good me'--at least unless my life experience has been extraordinarily unfortunate" (Mullahy,1948,p.294). The "bad me" is the organization of those aspects of the individual's experiences which are associated with increasing anxiety. "The processes labeled 'not me' belong to the most poorly grasped aspects of living and refer to 'uncanny' experiences like horror, dread, loathing, awe"(p.294).

These self-personifications are significant in every interpersonal interaction, including the academic setting. The child's interpersonal encounters, particularly early ones in the learning situation, greatly influence his or her

attitude toward learning. These learning situations extend back to the child's first learning experiences in the presence of his or her parents and family, and attitudes toward learning continue to develop with subsequent experiences. Transitions from one developmental stage to another, for example infancy to childhood or childhood to early adolescence, represent junctions at which experiences are most influential (Sullivan, 1953). If the child has been able to leave these experiences with a sense of competence, the individual organizes experiences into a "good me" personification regarding the learning situation.

However, the formation of the "good me" personification is not totally dependent upon environmental responses to an individual's behaviors or an effort to achieve security. Although Sullivan left his concept of self-fulfillment undeveloped, it exists in implicit and at times explicit form, about which he most clearly refers as the "power motive" (Sullivan, 1940).

Power Motive:

Sullivan (1940, 1953) refers to the tendency toward positive mental health and "end states", a ... "vast development of actions, thought, foresight" (1940, p.14). Zucker (1989) states: "...An end state rests not only on a specific disposition but also on a complex of motivations and states. They do not necessarily have the aim of establishing security. A child, for instance, building a

tower of blocks, may do it neither for power nor security, but because it seems a wondrous thing to do. In the process, he or she may indeed develop self-affirming skills"(p.403). Mullahy(1948) describes the "power motive" as the impulse to obtain and maintain a feeling of ability without which the individual may feel powerless and helpless.

Consensual Validation:

Consensual validation refers to the process by which experience becomes discriminant fact and communicable knowledge. This occurs through the comparison of one's past experience with others and their confirmation of the meaning the individual has assigned to his or her experience. Another element in consensual validation is the "illusory critic" which the individual "calls in" to help judge the adequacy of the self-assigned meaning to his or her experience(Sullivan, 1953).

Bromberg(1980) points out three key elements in Sullivan's description of consensual validation:

"(a.) the need for interpersonal adjustive success requires a human being to make his mental experience more communicable; (b.) the effort to improve interpersonal communication, to clarify what one means, moves the person's mental organizational and conceptual representation of

reality to a higher developmental level [from parataxic to syntactic]; and (c.) this process is mediated by the interpersonal field in which it occurs through the opportunity for comparison and verification, but also by the inherent fact that autistic meaning has to undergo representational change in order to become interpersonally adequate"(p.242).

Bromberg further states that the interpersonal field is the medium through which growth occurs but that the actual location of the growth is in the developmental evolution of the interpersonal representational world, that is, the "illusory me-you personifications".

Sullivan(1953) posits that sanctions, their violation, and operations which will avoid anxiety are allowed into awareness if they can be consensually validated. He states: "... effective manifestations of awareness are sternly shepherded by anxiety to be more or less in the syntactic mode--the mode of experience which offers some possibility of predicting the novel, and some possibility of real interpersonal communication"(p. 233).

It should also be noted that the access of consensually validated material into awareness and the operations of the self-system to screen out other information have implications for both private self-consciousness and psychological defensiveness as well as the

learning process in general. Figurski(1987) states "...if we can not consider the experience of the other, then we can never be objective toward ourselves"(p.200). The capacity and tendency to evaluate ourselves realistically develop out of the internalization of others and then the employment of our mental images of others in the evaluation of the self. The process of consensual validation including the "illusory critic" seems fundamental to the development of self-awareness and the realistic evaluation of one's capacity to achieve.

Personality Dimensions, Giftedness, & Achievement:

Empirical Studies:

In a review of studies on personality dimensions of gifted adolescents, Olszewski-Kubilius, Kulieke, and Krasney(1988) report a number of general trends with differences associated with age, gender, and socioeconomic variables. Among kindergartens, 5 year old gifted children demonstrate more productive capacity, motivation, and interest and less reliance on adults for approval, less rigidity of absolute goodness, and more reliance on their own sense of self than nongifted kindergartners. High IQ elementary students show lower levels of anxiety and more positive self-concept than their normal IQ counterparts.

Among fourth through eighth graders, Milgram and

Milgram(1976) found that their high IQ students had greater feelings of personal adequacy in the family, were less guarded and defensive and gave fewer indications of psychological disturbance than same age nongifted students. A gender difference was noted with gifted boys showing somewhat lower self-satisfaction than nongifted boys. Likewise, Kaiser and Berndt(1985) also found that high ability, high achieving students tended to report slightly-- though nonsignificant-- more symptoms of depression, stress, loneliness and anger than their nongifted counterparts.

Ringness(1967) examined differences among gifted students who were high achievers, average achievers, or low achievers; using the California Psychological Inventory(CPI). He found that high achievers were more independent than the other groups and that high achievers and average achievers were higher on achievement motivation and lower on affiliation motivation than the lowest achieving gifted students. Davids(1966) found that high ability, high achieving boys were higher on dominance, endurance, order, and introspection and low achieving boys were higher on need for nurturing and heterosexuality. Bachtold(1969) concluded that high ability, high achieving males were emotionally stable, serious, and sensitive while high ability, high achieving girls were self-confident and self-controlled. Interpersonal maturity (responsibility, socialization, and self-control) and sensitivity also

distinguished gifted youth from nongifted or gifted underachievers in Bachtold's study.

Internality constitutes a motivational influence upon achievement performance and predicted behavior on tasks where motivational factors account for a relatively large portion of the variance over and above ability or acquired knowledge in Crandall, Katkowsky & Crandall(1965) sample of third, fourth, fifth and ninth grade students. Internality better predicts actual report card grades than it predicts performance on achievement tests. Among ninth graders, however, their responsibility for successes was a better predicator of achievement test scores for boys, but not for girls.

In contrast to the above study, Johnson, Kanoy and Kanoy(1980) found no sex difference in the prediction of grades of fourth graders, using the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire(IAR) positive scores. However, they found that IAR total and IAR negative scores were significantly related to the performances of high achievers but not to that of the low achievers. They concluded that both achievers and underachievers were able to accept responsibility for the outcome of positive achievement experiences, but that the achievers were also better able to accept responsibility for negative achievement experiences.

In more recent years, self-regulated learning has emerged as a significant area of

exploration(Zimmerman,1989). Although there are a number of theoretical perspectives of self-regulated learning, self-regulated learning theory in general focuses attention on how students personally initiate, alter, and sustain their learning practices(Zimmerman,1989). The self-regulated learner has been described as one who plans, organizes, self-instructs, self-monitors, and self-evaluates at various stages during the learning process(Zimmerman, 1989). Further, they are aware of the relationships between their thought patterns and actions and social and environmental outcomes.

A number of studies indicated the important role that self-regulated learning strategies play in students' academic achievement(see reviews by Pressley et. al., 1987; Simon & Beukhof, 1987; Weinstein & Mayer, 1986; Zimmerman, 1989). Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons(1986) found, in a comparison of students in advanced and lower tracks, that advanced track students' reported a significantly greater use of self-regulated strategies. In fact, a student's achievement track could be predicted with 93% accuracy using their weighted strategy totals across learning contexts. These findings were further supported by a subsequent study in which teachers rated students' self-regulated learning(Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988).

Sedlacek and Brooks(1976), White and Sedlacek(1986) and Tracey and Sedlacek(1984,1987) explored a number of

personality factors which seem to predict the success of black students who attend predominately white universities. In fact the authors reported that often these factors were better predictors of performance than the Scholastic Achievement Test(SAT).

Sedlacek and Brooks(1976) proposed the following seven noncognitive factors that were related to academic success of minority students: (1.) positive self-concept, (2.) realistic self-appraisal, (3.) understanding of and ability to deal with racism, (4.) preference for long term goals over short-term immediate needs, (5.) availability of a strong support person(s), (6.) successful leadership experience, and (7.) demonstrated community service. These factors were explored individually and found to predict GPA and satisfaction with college among black students.

These noncognitive factors were later compiled into a single measure containing 23 items, the Non-cognitive Questionnaire(NCQ), and administered to black and white students attending predominately white universities. The NCQ had good predictive validity for both black and white students. However some differences in predictability were noted between white and black students. The NCQ was more predictive for Whites than Blacks when predicting GPA for the first semester of enrollment. Self-concept and realistic self-appraisal were predictive for both races, while community involvement, leadership and preference for

long range goals were predictive of first semester grades for whites only.

With regard to prediction of more long-term performance, positive self-concept and realistic self-appraisal were highly related to cumulative GPA at the end of the third semester for both races. However, a strong relationship was found between the noncognitive measures and college enrollment beyond three months for the Black students, but not for the white students. While only realistic self-appraisal was predictive of college persistence for White students, realistic self-appraisal, positive self-concept, support, and community involvement were significantly related to continued enrollment for Black students(Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984). Likewise, Tracey and Sedlacek(1987) found that the NCQ predicted graduation of black students whereas the SATs did not.

The above studies are very promising in demonstrating the significance of noncognitive factors in predicting academic success, and they stimulate a number of questions. What are the derivatives of realistic self-appraisal and positive self-concept? Why do some students elicit, accept, and give support while others do not? What aspects of support enhance academic performance and perseverance? What behaviors, thoughts, or feelings related to community involvement lead to success?

Responses to these questions may be found by appealing

to the concepts of defensiveness, self-awareness and empathy. There has been a recent wave of research into the role of empathy in academic achievements(Davis,1983). While Wise and Cramer(1988) found no significant relationship between empathy and cognitive style, they did find that reading achievement was a significant predictor of scores on the Hogan Empathy Scale, a measure associated with cognitive or role-taking aspects of empathy. Other aspects of empathy such as the tendency to feel personal unease in reaction to others' emotions were significantly associated with feelings of vulnerability, fearfulness, lower self-esteem and poor interpersonal functioning.

While aspects of empathy measured in Wise and Cramer's(1988) study were present as early as seventh grade, the high level perspective-taking was not present in this group. The authors concluded that perspective-taking may not be so highly differentiated from other empathic traits among early adolescents(Wise and Cramer, 1988). They also felt that perspective-taking follows a developmental course in which it becomes more pronounced in the normal population slightly later. Davis & Franzoi(1991) found such a developmental trend in perspective-taking.

Another trait related to empathy is the role of guardedness or psychological defensiveness. A relationship among self-disclosure, private self-consciousness and psychological defensiveness was explored by

Davis & Franzoi(1986). Those individuals who exhibit higher self-consciousness were more willing to self reflect, confronting less desirable aspects of themselves(Davis & Franzoi, 1986). Likewise, by virtue of exhibiting more self-disclosure, one is less defensive. Miller, Berg, and Archer(1983), Davis & Connell(1985), Davis & Franzoi(1986) found that high perspective-taking scores were significantly associated with being the recipient of intimate self-disclosure. They postulated that given the norm of reciprocity in self- disclosure, it was expected that there would be an association between perspective-taking and self-disclosure. If this were the case, one could see the relations between the perspective-taking aspect of empathy and levels of psychological defensiveness as inferred from the tendency to self-disclose. However, a nonsignificant, although positive, relationship between perspective-taking and intimate self-disclosure was found by Davis(1986). He explained that the failure to obtain a significant relationship may have reflected a breakdown somewhere in the inferential chain.

Hill and Sarason(1966) found a significantly negative correlation between defensiveness, IQ and academic achievement and problem solving ability. Wapner and Connor(1986) found that high defensiveness was related to cognitive impulsivity in boys but not in girls. The authors speculated that the sex differentiation in their sample of

low socioeconomic children may have been due to slowness of response being more threatening to boys than for girls. Defensiveness also appeared to mask underlying anxiety.

In fact, Ruebush(1960) and Ruebush and Waite(1961) found evidence that extreme defensiveness against negative affect in children seemed indicative of a strong predisposition to anxiety. Further, this predisposition in defensive children and openly anxious children appeared to mask similar emotional conflicts. According to the authors these conflicts originated in early learning experiences in the family and then generalized to evaluative adult-child interactions outside the home, such as at school.

Ruebush, Byrum and Farnham(1963) also found that relatively stable behavioral processes associated with defensiveness interfered with the qualitative performance (e.g., lifting pencil while threading the maze, touching, or crossing lines) but not the quantitative performance of defensive children on the Porteus Maze Test. Quantitative performance (e.g., the number of mazes completed and the number of trials required to complete each maze) was largely a function of environmental cues such as those learned in interactions with parents and generalized to other adult evaluators. Anxiety also appeared related to the familiarity of highly defensive boys with environmental situations.

Bybee, Kramer, and Zigler(1997) explored the role of

repression and sensitization in socioemotional and academic functioning. As a measure of repression, the authors used the Modified Byrne Repression-Sensitization Scale, and as measures of socioemotional and academic functioning, they used the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children, the Harter Teacher's Rating Scale, and the Teacher-Child Rating Scale. Three groups were formed based on scores of the repression scale: "sensitizers", intermediates", and "repressors". Bybee et al found that the repressor group showed better socioemotional adjustment and academic performance than either the intermediate or sensitizer group. It was concluded that the repressors were able to prevent distracting and disturbing thoughts from interfering with the performance of academic tasks and to block self-doubt and undesirable impulses, hence allowing them to present themselves in a more socially favorable manner.

Finally, identification patterns also seem to hold insights into academic performance(Ringness, 1967). High achievers seem to identify more with parents and family while low achievers tend to identify more with peers. Emotional security appears to be the common thread in determining the person(s) with whom a youth identifies. The parents of high achievers are generally supportive, less authoritarian, and more permissive than the families of low achievers. Presumably this parenting style of the high achievers' parents encourages children's independence and

striving and a positive, less anxious identification with the parent or with other authority figures.

Issues in Development: African American and Latino Adolescents

African American and Latino adolescents confront challenges associated with socioeconomic factors and cultural pressures in addition to the usual adolescent developmental issues.

Let us first review issues of African American youth since they represent the largest minority group and then explore issues of Latino youth. Gibbs(1989) lists the following four major historical and social factors affecting Black youth: slavery, segregation and discrimination, poverty, and urbanization. Unconventional family structure and feelings of racial victimization often contribute to the stresses that minority adolescents confront(Franklin, 1989; Grier and Cobbs,1969; Mayo, 1974). Likewise society's response to these individuals often lead to lowered self-esteem. Davis(in press) targets the experience of loss and abandonment as a significant source of emotional suffering for many urban African American males.

High levels of anxiety are not an unusual response to environmental stressors such as the violence, chaos and intimidation with which students in large urban areas cope. Emotional distress may be exacerbated by culturally

acceptable child-rearing patterns which encourage the externalization of anxiety and, likewise the pattern of masking true feelings from whites and authority figures, which may at times be adaptive, but may also enhance emotional distress.(Jenkins, 1982; Pinderhughes,1973; Ridley,1984). Consequently, hyperactivity, acting out and aggression, delinquent activity, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, and masked depression may characterize the interpersonal lives of some less resilient African American youth(Franklin,1989; Gibbs,1982).

"In response to environmental realities, some Black youth develop a sense of social isolation and hopelessness about their life chances, which increases their vulnerability to involvement in self-destructive activities..."(Gibbs,1989, p.99). Peer groups may serve, in the absence of a father and/or appropriate community resources, the function of providing a social identity and mutual protection(Mancini, 1980 & Taylor,1989), but may also reflect subculture's values that contrast those values of the larger society. Empathic distortions and hostile integrations become the coping mechanisms used by some African American males who have been most injured by the American socialization process(Davis,1995; Davis, in press). Nonetheless, the majority of African American youth transcend a peer culture that may be anti-intellectual in which college is not a realistic option and academic

achievement is discouraged(Hare,1988; Stevenson, Chen, Uttal, 1990).

Inclán and Herron(1989) state that Puerto Rican youth must cope with cultural, generational, socioeconomic, and developmental clashes. Puerto Rican youth experience a sense of discontinuity and isolation as they attempt to adapt to a culture which often requires them to reject deeply ingrained habits of their own culture. The disparity between their culture and American culture becomes ever so salient as they struggle with parents who may be first generational migrants who construct "barrios" aimed at re-creating and preserving the old culture in the new environment. Language difficulties and values intensify the struggles between the adolescent generation, who are moving toward assimilation and parents who wish to at least preserve some aspects of their own culture.

As 42 percent of Puerto Rican families live below the poverty line(U.S. Bureau of the Census,1985), Inclán and Herron(1989) concur with Lewis'(1965) concept of a "culture of poverty" in describing the socioeconomic existence of Puerto Ricans in America. According to Inclan and Herron, Lewis' " 'culture of poverty' includes a primary orientation to the present time mode, failure to postpone gratification, a tendency toward action and impulsivity, a sense of fate as predetermined and unchangeable, resentment of authority, a sense of being blamed, a feeling of

aloneness and an inability to trust others, an underemphasis on rigor, discipline, and perseverance, and a tendency toward dependency"(Inclán and Herron, 1989, p. 260).

The cultural clash, which has its roots in the political relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, contributes to the ongoing dilemma of political identity which renders self-definition a difficult process for Puerto Ricans(Inclán and Herron, 1989). "The separation/integration conflict on the political level indirectly influences the conflicting cultural pulls on adolescents"(p. 259).

The African American and Latino adolescent must be bicultural in order to achieve mainstream success. He or she must counter the strong inclination toward peers who devalue academic pursuits as a waste of time in an oppressive society and who preach hopelessness. As I heard one psychologist state regarding Black youth, the adolescent must learn to reject the rejection(Delware Valley Association of Black Psychologists, 1997). Patterns of externalization and emotional facades must be replaced with self-awareness, more openness and greater trust of authority figures. Intergeneralization conflicts must be managed and the concepts and beliefs associated with the "culture of poverty' must be resisted in order to assure economic and social survival.

Implications of Interpersonal Concepts to Academic Achievement:

Sullivan's(1940;1953) "power motive" encompasses academic self-concept, competence and self-regulation, all of which have been associated with academic success (see review paper,Olszewski-Kubilius, Kulieke, Krasney,1988). The essence of the "power motive" is the belief in one's ability to affect interpersonal change and the belief in one's general competence. "When one achieves power or ability in interpersonal relations, one respects oneself and therefore others"(Mullahy, 1948, p.285). The personal attitude of internality emerges as a reflection of the attitude of others toward the child, and the child's subsequent attitude toward others reflects his attitude toward himself(1948).

A positive academic self-concept is an aspect of the "good me" personification, reflecting the organization of esteem enhancing experiences within learning situations. Hence in these situations, there have been, in Sullivan's terms, overt or covert energy transformations (actions or mental activity) which have led frequently enough to experiences of satisfaction or the reduction of tensions both interpersonal and intrapersonal. One would expect high ability students to demonstrate a more positive academic self-concept than students of lower ability because the

former have a greater probability of encountering esteem enhancing experiences in learning situations. This is exactly the findings of a number of researchers(Davis & Connell,1985; Ross & Parker, 1980; Wylie, 1974). Likewise, those individuals with positive academic self-concept appear more internally controlled than those with negative academic self-concept(Johnson, Kanoy & Kanoy, 1980;Jacobs,1971; Milgram & Milgram, 1976; Davis & Connell, 1985). It follows that the experience of "power" and ability in interpersonal situations involving learning leads to a sense of self-agency.

McCombs(1986) in exploring self-agency describes the role of the self-system in self-regulated learning as that of creating and maintaining positive self-evaluations before, during, and after learning activities. The positive self-evaluations, in turn, contribute to the motivation to employ necessary self-regulated learning processes. As in Sullivan's self-system, McCombs describes both the qualities of self-personifications and security operations. Tesser and Campbell(1982) elucidating the role of security operations or defenses found that people with high self-esteem maintain positive evaluations of themselves primarily through cognitive perceptual behaviors such as perceiving the world in a self-serving way. In other words, such individuals are also selectively inattentive to environmental and/or internal stimuli which would be

damaging to self-esteem. Likewise, students with low self-esteem, whose problems have an early developmental or experiential basis, have not developed the ability to organize incoming information in a way which enhances or preserves self-esteem. Self-selectively processed information also allows for the development of a stable self-concept, and stability in one's self-concept is a necessary condition for self-regulation(McCombs,1986). While I agree that selective inattention to esteem damaging experiences helps maintain a positive self-image, it is the degree to which one screens out potentially negative feedback and the demands of environmental pressures to adjust one's behaviors, attitudes or beliefs that determine the adaptability of such defensive strategies.

Defensive strategies may lead to self-defeating behaviors which may be largely responsible for academic failures and underachievement among gifted youth. Such behavioral patterns usually disguise significant anxiety(Ruebush,1960). Consequently, any interpersonal experiences which draw attention to significant levels of anxiety may disrupt cognitive and academic functioning and may be avoided(Davis,1980; Ruebush,1960).

In addition to psychological defensiveness, Sullivanian theory also has implications for self-awareness and perspective-taking, an aspect of empathy. Those attributes seem mediated by the process of consensual validation, in

particular, and in general, the various modes of experience: prototaxic, parataxic, and syntaxic. Bernstein and Davis(1982) found that the accuracy of perspective-taking increases with the length of experience with another individual, and Davis and Franzoi(1986) found that private self-consciousness increases with self-disclosure which they posited provides the discloser with confirmation or disconfirmation of his or her views, that is, consensually validates one's view.

Empathy, one avenue to knowing others, has been the subject of many theoretical and empirical papers(Davis,1980). In Sullivan's(1953) description, empathy begins the acculturalization process. Bromberg(1980) identifies empathy as a key agent of change in Sullivan's process of consensual validation which Bromberg posits encompasses both cognitive and emotional components.

In more recent years, there has been an increased interest in the integration of the two components of empathy, cognitive and emotional(Deutsch and Madle, 1975; Feshback, 1975; Hoffman, 1977). Davis(1980, 1983) has developed a multidimensional measure of empathy which focuses on four domains, those being (1.) Perspective Taking, (2.) Fantasy, (3.) Empathic Concern, and (4.) Personal Distress. This measure will be described in detail in the Procedures section of this paper.

Interpersonal theory places the learning process within the domain of the interpersonal arena. Learning within the classroom or even apparently solitary learning emerges from an interpersonal context or memories of an interpersonal context. Hence, if we seek to understand those variables which are related to academic success, it is important to understand the significance of present and past relationships as motivators and sources of the emotions which create both more successful and less successful learners.

The new wave of research on self-regulated learners presents models which place emphasis on the role of the self-system in the learning process. Showers and Cantor(1986), for example, state that the students with low self-esteem manifest difficulties which have their roots in early developmental arrests and/or negative experiences. As a consequence, they are less able to develop the complex cognitive functioning required to organize information in ways which enhance or preserve self-esteem.

Sullivan(1953) concepts of the "good me, bad me, and not me" emphasize the organization of life's experiences. This organization has been built upon empathy, which Sullivan states begins acculturation, and the processing of cognition. Empathy and cognitive processing, according to Sullivan(1953), emerge out of the recurrent interpersonal interactions of an individual which characterize his or her

relationships, that becomes the personality. According to Sullivan, anxiety and mechanisms aimed at its relief undergird personality development and mediate the learning process. The role of private self-consciousness and perspective-taking, with regard to the students' perceptions of scholastic competence, indicates that anxiety and security measures significantly influence the development of self-regulated learning.

The point is that these concepts of psychological defensiveness, self-awareness, and perspective-taking comprise important aspects of the interpersonal matrix about which we referred to as the personality. Hence private self-consciousness, perspective-taking and psychological defensiveness seem intimately connected with students' self-perceptions. These variables reflect constituents of the interpersonal self-system. Their configuration in just the right proportions creates success and promotes psychological resilience. On the other hand, when warped, they may undergird failure (Davis, 1997). Moreover, if one reconsiders Sullivan's (1953) assertion that empathy begins the acculturation process, the ability to see the world from the other's perspective takes a central position to understanding learning successes. Empathic distortions, at least in terms of perspective-taking, may be an underlying process in failures of many kinds.

In summary, the present study explores the relationship

between several personality variables and achievement among intellectually gifted Black and Latino youth and interprets the findings in accordance with Sullivan's theoretical position. The particular personality variables and processes are perspective-taking, private self-consciousness(self-awareness), and levels of psychological defensiveness.

DEFINITIONS:

Perspective-Taking -- the tendency to take another's point of view

Private Self-Consciousness -- the tendency to be aware of and concerned with one's own feelings and thoughts

Psychological Defensiveness -- lack of openness to the full range of one's own feelings

HYPOTHESES:

This study will explore the following hypotheses:

I. Bright minority youth who cope successfully (higher GPAs and more positive teacher ratings) in a specialized program for the gifted will be better able to take the perspective of others. This will be measured by the Perspective-Taking Scale of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index.

II. Bright minority students who succeed in a specialized program for the gifted will demonstrate more self-awareness of their feelings. This will be measured by their performance on the Private Self-Consciousness Subscale of the Public and Private Self-Consciousness Scale.

III. Bright minority youth who successfully cope in a specialized program for the gifted will demonstrate less psychological defensiveness. This will be measured by the Defensiveness Scale for Children.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY:

SUBJECTS:

The subjects for this study were 107 intellectually gifted African American and Latino 8th grade students, ages 12 and 13. These students had been selected to participate in a specialized program for the gifted which aims to prepare such students for competitive boarding schools with the objective of admission into elite "Ivy League" colleges and their ultimately taking leadership roles in mainstream society.

These students were first nominated by their public schools as bright, achieving students. Many were in gifted programs, and all were in advanced and college preparatory tracks. Upon nomination by their schools, the students were administered the Educational Records Bureau Comprehensive Testing Program II-Aptitude/Achievement Test, an academic achievement test which is normed to the vocabulary, reading recognition, reading comprehension, math computation and math reasoning of youngsters who attend independent(private) schools. Those whose overall achievement fell at approximately the 50th percentile or above continued to the next level of screening which included the administration of individual intelligence tests, either the WISC-III or the Stanford Binet -Revised. Testing was conducted by

psychology graduate students from local universities and was supervised by a licensed psychologist. Those candidates whose overall performances fell within the Superior range or above were then interviewed both alone and with their parents to assess further the family's support and the child's capabilities and motivation to success in the program. Sixty students were finally selected from an original pool of approximately 800 students.

Participants for this study came from the entering class for two successive years. Of the 125 students admitted into the program over the two year period, 107 students agreed to participate in the study. The study participants were considered highly likely to cope successfully with this demanding academic program based on their ability, achievement levels, motivation, family support and personal stability.

A frequency distribution of gender, ethnicity and parent income levels is shown in tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1

Distribution of Gender and Ethnicity

GENDER/ETHNICITY	# OF SUBJECTS	% OF TOTAL
MALE	55	51.4%
FEMALE	52	48.6%
AFRICAN AMERICAN	60	56%
LATINO	44	41.1%
OTHER(ASIAN)	3	2.8%

TABLE 2

Distribution of Parents' Annual Income

PARENT'S ANNUAL INCOME		
INCOME LEVEL	# OF FAMILIES	% OF FAMILIES
\$15,000 or less	26	24.3%
\$15,001 to \$25,000	17	15.9%
\$25,001 to \$35,000	25	23.4%
\$35,001 to \$45,000	18	16.8%
Over \$45,000	21	19.6

Parental and student informed consents were secured. They were informed that the measures were aimed at helping the examiner and program planners understand better, on a long range basis, how to enhance students' chances of success both in the program and in boarding school. Further they were informed that their participation in the study would not affect their standing in the program in any way. (See appendix)

Teachers:

Six teachers were asked to complete the Harter Teacher Rating Scale. Of the six teachers, five of them completed the questionnaire. Since classes were departmentalized, each teacher did not teach every student. However, each of the teachers taught some of the students in the sample.

Table 3 shows a description of each student based on gender, ethnicity, parent income, and teacher(s) who rated the student. The parent income of each student is described by the following values: 1, \$15,000 or less; 2, \$15,001 to \$25,000; 3, \$25,001 to \$35,000; 4, \$35,001 to 45,000; 5, Over \$45,000. Table 4 shows the number of students each teacher rated in total and on each of the three subscales of the Harter used in this study.

TABLE 3

Distribution of Demographic Information and Teacher Ratings

SUBJECTS	GENDER	ETHNICITY	FAMILY INCOME	RATED BY TEACHER
01	M	L	4	1,2,3
02	F	AA	1	1,2,3
03	M	AA	1	1,2,3
04	M	AA	5	1,2,3
05	F	AA	5	1,2,3
06	F	A	4	1,2,3
07	M	AA	3	1,2,3
08	M	AA	4	1,2,3
09	F	L	3	1,2,3
010	F	AA	4	1,2,3
011	F	AA	3	1,2,3

Gender - M=Male; F=Female

Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other

Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=35,001 to \$45,000

2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over

3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

TABLE 3, continued

SUBJECTS	GENDER	ETHNICITY	FAMILY INCOME	RATED BY TEACHER
012	M	AA	1	--
013	M	AA	3	1,2,3
014	M	L	2	2,3
015	F	AA	2	1,2,3
016	M	L	1	2
017	F	AA	1	2
018	M	AA	5	2
019	F	L	3	2
020	F	AA	5	2
021	M	L	1	2
022	M	L	3	2
023	F	AA	2	--
024	F	AA	2	2

Gender - M=Male; F=Female

Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other

Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=\$35,001 to \$45,000
 2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over
 3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

TABLE 3, continued

SUBJECTS	GENDER	ETHNICITY	FAMILY INCOME	RATED BY TEACHER
025	M	L	1	2
026	F	AA	2	2
027	M	L	5	2
028	F	L	3	--
029	M	L	3	2
030	F	L	3	3
031	M	L	4	3
032	F	AA	3	--
033	M	AA	4	--
034	F	L	4	3
035	M	AA	1	3
036	F	AA	3	3
037	M	A	3	--

Gender - M=Male; F=Female
Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other
Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=35,001 to \$45,000
 2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over
 3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

Gender - M=Male; F=Female
 Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other
 Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=35,001 to \$45,000
 2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over
 3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

TABLE 3, continued

SUBJECTS	GENDER	ETHNICITY	FAMILY INCOME	RATED BY TEACHER
051	F	L	1	1,4
052	F	L	1	1,4
053	F	AA	5	--
054	M	AA	5	1,4
055	M	AA	1	1,4
056	M	L	5	1,4
057	F	L	4	1,4
058	M	AA	4	1,4
059	F	AA	4	3,5
060	M	L	1	3,5
061	M	L	5	3,5
062	F	L	2	3,5
063	F	AA	5	3,5

Gender - M=Male; F=Female

Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other

Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=35,001 to \$45,000
 2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over
 3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

TABLE 3 continued

SUBJECTS	GENDER	ETHNICITY	FAMILY INCOME	RATED BY TEACHER
064	M	AA	4	3,5
065	F	L	2	3,5
066	F	AA	3	5
067	M	L	1	3,5
068	M	AA	4	3,5
069	M	L	3	3,5
070	F	L	1	3,5
071	M	L	2	5
072	F	L	4	2,5
073	M	L	3	2,5
074	F	AA	2	2,5
075	F	L	1	2,5
076	F	L	4	2,5

Gender - M=Male; F=Female

Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other

Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=\$35,001 to \$45,000
 2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over
 3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

TABLE 3, continued

SUBJECTS	GENDER	ETHNICITY	FAMILY INCOME	RATED BY TEACHER
077	M	L	2	2,5
078	M	AA	1	2,5
079	M	L	2	2,5
080	M	L	2	2,5
081	M	AA	1	2,5
082	M	AA	5	2,5
083	M	A	3	2,5
084	F	AA	4	2,3
085	F	AA	5	2,3
086	M	AA	2	2,3
087	M	AA	5	2,3
088	F	AA	5	2
089	M	AA	3	2,3

Gender - M=Male; F=Female

Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other

Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=\$35,001 to \$45,000
 2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over
 3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

TABLE 3, continued

SUBJECTS	GENDER	ETHNICITY	FAMILY INCOME	RATED BY TEACHER
103	F	AA	2	3,4
104	F	AA	3	3,4
105	F	AA	3	3,4
106	M	L	3	3,4
107	M	AA	4	4

Gender - M=Male; F=Female
Ethnicity - AA=African American; L=Latino; A=Other
Family Income - 1= \$15, 000 or less 4=35,001 to \$45,000
 2= \$15,001 to \$25,000 5= \$45,001 & Over
 3= \$25,001 to \$35,000

DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUMENTS:

INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX(IRI)

The IRI, a 28-item self report questionnaire developed by Davis(1983), consists of four 7-item subscales, each of which assesses a specific aspect of empathy. The Perspective-Taking(PT) Scale measures the tendency to adopt the point of view of other people in every day life. The Fantasy(FS) Scale measures the tendency to transpose oneself into the feelings and actions of fictitious characters in books, movies, and plays. Included in the seven FS items are the three items constituting the Fantasy-Empathy(F-E) Scale of Stotland et al.(1978). The Empathic Concern(EC) Scale measures the tendency to experience feelings of warmth, compassion, and concern for other people. The Personal Distress(PD) Scale also assesses typical emotional reactions, but rather than other-oriented feelings of concern, it taps one's own feelings of personal unease and discomfort in reaction to the emotions of others. Some examples of items from this measure are "I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective", "I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me", and "Being in a tense emotional situation scares me".

An exploration of these four domains has yielded a number of significant relationships with social competence/interpersonal functioning, self-esteem,

emotionality, sensitivity to others and intelligence(Davis, 1983). For example, perspective-taking has been found to be negatively correlated with social dysfunction and positively correlated with extraversion(Davis, 1983). Further, high perspective-takers have been found to possess higher self-esteem than do low perspective-takers. The sensitivity to others that is characteristic of high perspective-takers seems to be mediated by a selfless concern for others' feelings and reactions instead of a concern for how the self is perceived by others(Davis, 1983). High levels of personal distress among empathizers are strongly associated with lower self-esteem and poor interpersonal functioning, particularly shyness and social anxiety. Likewise, high personal distress appears strongly associated with emotional vulnerability, uncertainty, and fearfulness(Davis, 1983).

Davis(1980) has reported the psychometric properties of the measure. All four scales have satisfactory internal and test-retest reliability. Internal reliability range from .71 to .77; test-retest reliability from .62 to .71. As with all other empathy measures, significant sex differences exist for each scale, with females scoring higher than males on each of the four scales.

PRIVATE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE:

The Private Self-Consciousness Scale is one subscale of Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss(1975) Public and Private Self-Consciousness Scale which assesses public and private self consciousness and social anxiety. The entire scale consists of 23 items with the Private Self-Consciousness Subscale consisting of 10 items. It assesses the degree to which an individual is concerned with his or her own inner thoughts and feelings. Each item is rated on a scale of 0 (extremely uncharacteristic) to 4 (extremely characteristic). An example of an item on this scale is "I'm constantly examining my motives".

Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss(1975) report separate subscale means and standard deviations for men and women. Test-retest reliability for private self-consciousness is .79, public self-consciousness is .84, and social anxiety is .73. Davis(1991) reports that this scale can be appropriately used with early adolescents.

Validity studies have been conducted by Fenigstein(1974), Duval & Wicklund(1972,1973), Carver(1974), Carver & Glass(1976), Bernstein & Davis(1982). In these studies scores on the Private Self-Consciousness Subscale have been significantly correlated with responsivity to transient affective states, attributes of causality, actual social behavior, thoughtfulness and mental imagery, aggression, and accuracy of perception of feelings in

others.

DEFENSIVENESS SCALE FOR CHILDREN(DSC):

The DSC is a measure of defensiveness, consisting of 11 Lie scale items, 3 items designed to pick up negative responses, and 24 items designed to measure the tendency to deny the experience of negative feelings such as anxiety, guilt, hostility, and inadequacy. Examples of the items are "Has anybody ever been able to scare you?", "Do you feel cross and grouchy sometimes?" "Are you sorry for some of the things that you have done?", "Do you like to play in the snow?"

Studies have examined the validity of DSC. Ruebush(1960), when comparing High Defensive (HD) and Low Defensive (LD) groups, predicted and found a significant difference($p < .05$) on the WISC Verbal IQ with the LD group scoring at higher Verbal IQ levels. Further, a significant difference ($p < .01$) between the HD and LD group performance on the highly structured task (Arithmetic Computation) and a relatively unstructured task (Arithmetic Reasoning) with HD subjects performing higher on Arithmetic Computation and LD subjects performing higher on Arithmetic Reasoning. Ruebush(1960) also found that the behaviors of HD male subjects was characterized by more signs of conflict about the expression of aggression than LD subjects on the Holtsman Inkblot Test and that the aggression of the HD

subjects was expressed through indirect ways. The same study also predicted and found a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the two groups on a factor related to the perception of and response to emotionally laden stimuli (Color Inkblot Responses). HD subjects presented a higher number of responses which were voided of color content. Ruebush and Waite(1961) found a significant positive correlation between defensiveness and the inability to express dependency.

With regard to reliability studies, Ruebush and Waite(1961) reported an internal consistency coefficient of .82. Lighthall(1963) also reported test-retest reliability over 2 weeks ranging from .77 to .83 in three of four groups. In the fourth group, a coefficient of .50 was found. Davidson and Sarason(1961) also reported evidence which support the reliability and validity of the DSC.

HARTER SELF PERCEPTION PROFILE(SPP):

This measure consists of the following six domains:
(1.) Scholastic Competence, reflecting school and academic performance; (2.) Social Acceptance, emphasizing peer popularity; (3.) Athletic Competence, reflecting ability at sports and outdoor games; (4.) Physical Appearance, assessing satisfaction with one's own appearance; (5.) Conduct/Behavior, emphasizing behaving in accordance with rules for conduct; and (6.) Self-Worth, assessing feelings of self-esteem independent of any particular skill domain.

Each of the domains are measured by six items, and each item has a "structured alternative response format"(Harter, 1979). For example, the individual is presented with the item "Some kids often forget what they learn, BUT, other kids can remember things easily", and is first asked to decide which kind of kid is most like him or her, then asked whether this is only sort of true or really true for him or her. Each item is scored on a scale from 1 to 4 where a score of 1 indicates low perceived competence or adequacy and a score of 4 reflects high perceived competence or adequacy.

Harter(1983) reports the internal reliability coefficients for scholastic competence, social acceptance , athletic competence, physical appearance, and conduct/behavior subscales. They are .80, .81, .82, .77,. and .83, respectively. Windel et al.(1986) found theoretically predicted correlations in an adolescent sample among the four Self-Perception Profile attributes they studied, and temperament scores as well as scores on a standardized measure of depression.

HARTER'S TEACHER BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE(TBRS):

The TBRS was developed by Harter to correspond to the SPP Scale. It is a measure of the teacher's appraisal of the student in the following five areas: (a.) the student's scholastic or academic competence; (b.) social acceptance in

terms of peer popularity; (c.) athletic competence stressing ability in sports and indoor games; (d.) physical appearance, and (e.) conduct and behavior.

This measure contains 15 items, three for each of five domains. Each item has a "structured alternative" response format, and each item is scored on a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 indicates low perceived competence and a score of 4 indicates high perceived competence. An example of these items is "This child is really good at his/her school work, or this child can't do the school work assigned."

Talwar, Schwab, and Lerner(1989) report that internal consistency reliability for teacher's ratings of the student's scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, and conduct and behavior exceed .90 for each attribute at each time of measurement.

PROCEDURES:

Students were tested in groups of approximately 10 to 15 students within the first week of the first summer term. Each student was given two packets. The first packet included the Self-Consciousness Scale which was administered first to avoid response contamination.

Research(Osberg,1985) has indicated higher scores on the Self-Consciousness Scale when it follows the administration of other personality measures. After the students had completed that measure, they were given a packet containing

the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, Defensiveness Scale for Children, and the Harter Self-Perception Profile. They were directed to answer all questions with honesty, and they were reminded that their performance on the measures would be kept confidential. The students were also informed that the examiner was available to define any vocabulary on the measures which they did not know. Given the high intellectual and achievement levels of the students, relatively few requests for assistance were made.

Each teacher was given the Harter Teacher Rating Scale at the end of the seven week summer term and asked to complete the measure on the indicated students he or she had taught. The teachers were told that the study had been designed to help identify students who would be successful in the program and that the task was a part of a dissertation project. Teachers were instructed to answer genuinely and thoughtfully.

TABLE 4

Teacher by the number of students they rated on each measure.

TEACHER	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS RATED	RATED ON SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	RATED ON SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	RATED ON CONDUCT BEHAVIOR
1	29	29	29	28
2	53	53	53	53
3	66	66	66	65
4	28	28	27	27
5	30	30	29	29

The number of students rated by each teacher varied because teachers taught unequal numbers of students and occasionally a teacher failed to rate a student whom he or she taught. The teachers at times expressed a reluctance to rate some students on social acceptance and conduct behavior because they felt they possessed insufficient information upon which to base such ratings. This occurred when a student had been dismissed or left the program before the teacher had the opportunity to attend more carefully to the student's social behaviors.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS:

Statistical analysis proceeded in four steps. First, a frequency distribution was developed. Second, a Pearson Product Moment correlation was utilized to explore the relationship between the independent variables (e.g. scores on the Perspective-Taking, Defensiveness Scale for Children and Private Self-Consciousness Scales) and the dependent variables (e.g. grade point average and teacher ratings). Third, t-tests were conducted to compare the effects of group membership on perspective-taking, psychological defensiveness, and self-awareness. The following three groups were formed: Honors group, students who earned at least a 3.0 average each of the four terms during the fourteen month program; Program Completion group, all students who graduated from the fourteen month program; and Program noncompletion group, students who did not complete the fourteen month program because they were unable or unwilling to meet the motivational and/or academic standards of the program. Fourth, an analysis of variance was conducted to examine differences on the independent variables based on gender, ethnicity(Black, Latino, and Asian) and parent income.

RESULTS OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:

Using the Pearson r , the mean scores on the Perspective-Taking Scale, Private Self-Consciousness Scale and the Defensiveness Scale for Children were correlated with the grade point averages and scores on the Teacher Rating Scale. Means scores on the independent variables were also compared based on group membership and identified demographic variables.

Hypothesis I. Hypothesis I stated that bright minority youth who cope more successfully (higher GPAs and more positive teacher ratings) in a specialized program for the gifted will be better able to take the perspective of others, achieving higher scores on the Perspective Taking (PT) Scale of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index. The results obtained from the Pearson correlation indicated that there was no significant correlation between the PT scores and GPA ($r = -.0436$) or among the PT scores and teacher ratings for the five teachers, r ranging from $-.1571$ to $.3727$. While both the honors and the program completion groups obtained higher mean scores on perspective-taking than did the group which did not complete the program, the results obtained from t -test analysis indicated that there were no significant differences between

the program completion and program noncompletion groups($t(101)=.65$) or between the honors and the program noncompletion groups($t(35)=.93$). Thus, this hypothesis was not sustained.

Hypothesis II. Hypothesis II stated that bright minority students who are more successful in a specialized program for the gifted will demonstrate more self-awareness of their feelings as measured by the Private Self-Consciousness Scale(PSC). The results obtained from the Pearson correlation indicated that there was no significant correlation between PSC and GPA($r = -.0798$). Of the three teacher rating subtests(scholastic competence, social acceptance, and conduct behavior) used from the Harter Scale, there were no significant correlations with private self-consciousness for any of the subtests for all teachers (Pearson r ranging from $-.3200$ to $.1169$) except for teacher 5.

When group comparisons were made, results indicated, contradictory to our hypothesis, that a significant difference was found between the groups($t(100)=2.00, p<.05$) with the program noncompletion group obtaining higher scores on the Private Self-Consciousness Scale than the program completion group. There was no significant difference found between the honors and the program noncompletion groups($t(33)=.41$). Thus, this hypothesis was

not sustained.

Hypothesis III. Hypothesis III stated that grade point average and teacher ratings of the students would be negatively correlated with psychological defensiveness as measured by scores on the Defensiveness Scale for Children(DCS). The results obtained from the Pearson correlation indicated that there was a significant correlation in the expected direction between scores on our measure of psychological defensiveness and GPA($r = -.2828, p < .05$), DSC scores and Scholastic Competence for teacher 2($r = -.4592, p < .01$), and Conduct Behavior for teacher 5($r = -.5839, p < .05$). The results of the correlational analysis was further supported by findings that the program completion group exhibited significantly lower scores on the psychological defensiveness scale than did the program noncompletion group($t(69) = 1.50, p < .05$). Likewise, the honors group also exhibited significantly lower scores on psychological defensiveness than the program noncompletion group($t(27) = 2.33, p < .05$). This hypothesis was sustained.

Other findings. Several significant correlations were found between the independent variables (PD, PSC, PT) and the students' self-ratings on the Harter Self-Perception Profile (HSPP). Scores on the Defensiveness Scale for Children were positively correlated with both students' self-ratings on conduct and behavior ($r = .2577, p < .05$) and the students' self-ratings on social acceptance ($r = .2475, p < .05$). Private Self-Consciousness scores were positively correlated with the students' self-ratings on school competence ($r = .2541, p < .01$). Perspective-Taking scores were positively correlated with the students' self-ratings on both school competence ($r = .2768, p < .01$) and social acceptance ($r = .3200, p < .01$). There was a negative correlation between the students' self-ratings on social acceptance and GPA ($r = -.2156, p < .05$).

Teacher ratings indicated several other significant correlations. Although each teacher did not teach each student, there was a significant positive correlation between the teachers' ratings on school competence at the end of the seven week, first summer term and the final GPA of students at the end of the fourteen month period of the program for teachers 1, 2, 3 & 5 ($r = .7890, .6427, .5998$ & $.5916$, respectively, each reflecting $p < .01$). Teacher 4 rating on school competence was nonsignificant ($r = .2477$) but in the positive direction. Teacher 5 ratings for social acceptance was negatively correlated with GPA at a significant level ($r =$

-.4383, $p < .05$). Teacher ratings for conduct behavior were positively correlated with GPA for teachers 1 & 3 ($r = .4906$, $.2697$, respectively, each at $p < .05$) and for teachers 2, 4, & 5 ($r = .5227$, $.6533$, $.5276$, respectively, each at $p < .01$).

When groups were formed based on ethnicity, gender and parent income, no significant differences were found. However, of those variables, the difference between groups based on ethnicity approached significance for levels of private self-consciousness. While the mean scores for the African American and Latino students were quite similar, the category "other", which consisted of Asian students, revealed higher mean scores on private self-consciousness. However, given that the number of cases for the "other" group was only 3, little meaning can be attributed to these findings.

See Tables 5 through 11 for results of statistical analysis.

TABLE 5

Correlations between Perspective-Taking, Grade Point Average
and Teacher Ratings

SUCCESS VARIABLES	PERSPECTIVE TAKING(PT)
GPA	-.0436
TEACHER 1	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.1478
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.3693
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.2350
TEACHER 2	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	-.1571
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0006
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.0021
TEACHER 3	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	-.0605
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0129
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.1121
TEACHER 4	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.1161
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.2618
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.0717
TEACHER 5	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.3148
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.3727
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	-.0503

TABLE 6
Correlations between Private Self-Consciousness, Grade Point Average, and Teacher Ratings

SUCCESS VARIABLES	PRIVATE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS
GPA	-.0798
TEACHER 1	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	-.0609
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.1169
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	-.1011
TEACHER 2	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.0996
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0777
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	-.0789
TEACHER 3	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.0523
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0851
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.2427
TEACHER 4	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	-.2118
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0876
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	-.3200
TEACHER 5	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	-.2772
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	-.4383*
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.1651

* Significant level $p < .05$

TABLE 7
Correlations between Psychological Defensiveness, Grade
Point Average, and Teacher Ratings

SUCCESS VARIABLES	PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFENSIVENESS
GPA	-.2828*
TEACHER 1	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.4035
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	-.0885
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.1652
TEACHER 2	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	-.4592**
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0680
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	-.2990
TEACHER 3	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.0589
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0330
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	-.0504
TEACHER 4	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.3307
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	-.2893
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.4414
TEACHER 5	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	-.2466
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0662
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	-.5839*

* Significant level $p < .05$

** Significant level $p < .01$

TABLE 8

Correlations between Perspective-Taking, Psychological
Defensiveness, Private Self-Consciousness and Students'
Self-Ratings

	MEASURES OF	INTERPERSONAL	INTERACTIONS
STUDENT'S	PERSPECTIVE	PSYCHOLOGICAL	PRIVATE SELF
SELF-RATINGS	TAKING (PT)	DEFENSIVENESS	CONSCIOUSNESS
		(PD)	(PSC)
SCHOLASTIC	.2768**	.1435	.2541**
COMPETENCE			
SOCIAL	.3200**	.2475*	-.0640
ACCEPTANCE			
CONDUCT	.1673	.2577*	.0195
BEHAVIOR			

* Significant level $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

** Significant level $p < .01$ (2-tailed)

Table 9
Correlations between Grade Point Average and Teacher Ratings

TEACHER RATINGS	GPA
TEACHER 1	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.7890**
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	-.1479
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.4906*
TEACHER 2	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.6427**
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.1394
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.5227**
TEACHER 3	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.5998**
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.0049
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.2697*
TEACHER 4	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.2477
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.1167
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.6533**
TEACHER 5	
SCHOLASTIC COMPETENCE	.5916**
SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE	.3565
CONDUCT BEHAVIOR	.5276**
* Significance level $p < .05$ (2-tailed)	
** Significance level $p < .01$ (2-tailed)	

TABLE 10

Outcome: Means, Standard Deviations, Test of Statistical Significant for Group Membership(Honors, Program Completion, and Program Noncompletion)

MEASURES	HONORS GROUP	PROGRAM NON-COM PLETION GROUP	T-VALUE	STATISTI -CAL SIGNIFI- CANCE	
				df	p
PT	$\bar{X}=17.7$ SD=5.0 N=10	$\bar{X}=15.8$ SD=5.5 N=25	.93	35	--
PSC	$\bar{X}=24$ SD=4.29 N=10	$\bar{X}=23$ SD=4.29 N=25	.41	33	--
PD	$\bar{X}=7.7$ SD=2.16 N=9	$\bar{X}=11.5$ SD=4.6 N=20	-2.33	27	p< .05

PT-Perspective Taking

PSC-Private Self-Consciousness;

PD- Psychological Defensiveness

TABLE 11

Outcome: Means, Standard Deviations, Tests of Statistical Significance for Program Completion and Program Noncompletion Groups

MEASURES	PROGRAM COMPLETI ON	PROGRAM NON-COM PLETION	T-VALUE	STATISTI CAL SIGNIFIC ANCE	
				df	p
PT	$\bar{X}=16.6$ SD=4.9 N=78	$\bar{X}=15.84$ SD=5.55 N=25	.65	101	--
PSC	$\bar{X}=21.1$ SD=4.7 N=77	$\bar{X}=23.28$ SD=4.8 N=25	2.00	100	p<.05
PD	$\bar{X}=9.9$ SD=3.97 N=51	$\bar{X}=11.5$ SD=4.6 N=20	1.50	69	p<.05

PT-Perspective Taking

PSC-Private Self-Consciousness

PD-Psychological Defensiveness

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of the study supported one of the three main hypotheses.

Hypothesis I: Bright minority youth who cope more successfully (i.e. obtaining relatively higher GPAs and teacher ratings) in a specialized program for the gifted will be better able to take the perspective of others. This was measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity index.

The expected relationship between the tendency to take the perspective of others, which is an aspect of empathy, and the success variables of GPAs and teacher ratings was not found. Likewise, scores on perspective-taking failed to distinguish membership in the honor, program completion, and program noncompletion groups; however, results were in the expected direction. That is, the honor and program completion group on an average had higher scores on perspective-taking than the program noncompletion group, though in both instances the difference failed to reach statistical significance.

These results suggest that the tendency toward perspective-taking is not related to success as herein defined, that the measures utilized were not sensitive enough to detect the relationships that exist among the variables or perhaps that the sample selected for this study was too homogenous. It seems reasonable to doubt the

conclusion that no significant relationship exist among perspective taking and the success variables in light of theoretical considerations, contradictory suggestions in the literature, and other results of this study.

Based on interpersonal theory, it was expected that the ability to take others' perspectives, particularly the perspective of one's teachers, would enhance the student's probability of success. In extremely demanding and stressful situations, high perspective-takers are expected to exhibit better interpersonal functioning because they possess a better understanding of others' expectations and reactions. This would contribute to their interacting with teachers and peers so that they receive positive support.

The fact that higher perspective-taking was associated with students' higher self-ratings of their scholastic competence seems consistent with Hypothesis I since other studies have found positive correlations between academic self-concept and actual school performance. For example, Fleming and Courtney(1984) found and reviewed a number of studies which concluded that higher academic self-concept was related to better actual school performance.

A puzzling finding in our study, however, was the failure to find a similar significant relationship between students' self-ratings of scholastic competence and their actual GPAs and teacher ratings of their academic competence. However, there are several plausible

explanations for such results. First, in general, these successful students tended to give themselves high ratings on scholastic competence. Perhaps, in a homogenous group of youth who all have a history of high achievement, there simply may not have been sufficient difference among students on an academic self-esteem measure to make a distinction of any kind. If average or low achieving students had been included in the sample, the outcome may have been different.

Second, an explanation offered by Stevenson, Chen, & Uttal(1990) and Steinberg(1996) was that Black and Latino students often overestimate their achievement levels, an explanation which is not convincing with regard to our sample. All of the students in this study were selected into a specialized program for gifted and highly motivated students not only because of their high achievement in their mostly public schools but also because of their performances on achievement tests which were based on independent school norms. Hence their high achievements in their public schools seemed substantiated by achievement test results.

Third, the students completed the questionnaires in this study during the first week or two of the program and had received to that date limited feedback in terms of grades. Hence their assessments of their school competence had to have been based primarily on their past academic performances. They had not had the opportunity to

incorporate fully any feedback given them regarding their performances in the program from which we determined their success ratings.

Although a positive correlation between students' self-perception of their scholastic competence and their actual performance was not found in this study, given the explanations above, the conclusion regarding the relationship between perspective-taking and academic self-concept remains plausible. Hence, these findings are still supportive of Hypothesis I. Students who exhibited a tendency to take the perspective of others may be more flexible and socially mature in their interactions with teachers and peers. Consequently, these students may have had many more successful experiences in both their interactions and academic performances in school. Since the scholastic competence scale reflects a perception of self and a component of a more global self-esteem(Harter, 1985), we might also conclude as noted by Davis(1983) that high perspective-takers possess higher self-esteem. One can reason that in a population of high achieving, early adolescents for whom academic achievement has been an important source of self-worth, academic achievement would still remain closely aligned to self-esteem.

The significant positive correlation between perspective-taking and self-ratings of social acceptance may be directly related to the adolescent's self-worth.

Harter(1985,1990), drawing from the Cooley's(1909) social construction theory of self and consistent with Sullivan(1953) theory of adolescence, points out that early adolescents are greatly influenced by their social reference or social support groups. Hence, the results that those who are high perspective-takers also perceive themselves as more popular with peers seem related to the use of peers in the adolescent's construction of a positive self-esteem. Those students who are able to take the perspective of others are better able to create positive relationships with peers. In turn, positive peer experiences lead to their feeling and being more socially accepted.

Hypothesis II: Bright minority students who cope more successfully in a specialized program for the gifted will demonstrate better self-awareness of their feelings. This was measured by their performances on the Private Self-Consciousness Scale.

Private self-consciousness, which is defined as the tendency to be aware of and concerned with one's own feelings and thoughts, was not significantly correlated with GPA or teacher ratings of students' scholastic competence. However, there was a significant positive correlation between private self-consciousness and the students' self-ratings of scholastic competence. The failure to obtain a significant positive correlation between self-awareness and GPA and teacher ratings on scholastic competence may reflect the complicated nature of the relationship among self-

awareness, as measured by the Private Self-Consciousness Scale, and GPA and teacher ratings. This complex relationship seems further indicated by the contradictory findings that the program noncompletion group scored significantly higher on the measure of self-awareness than the program completion group.

Kuhl's(1983) formulation of action-oriented as opposed to state-oriented forms of self-awareness offer some insight into these results. In action-oriented self-awareness, the student is more able to screen out competing thoughts and remain focused on current intentions whereas in state-oriented self-awareness the individual becomes preoccupied with emotional states which, in turn, interfere with goal achievement. In other words, the tendency to be concerned with one's own thoughts and feelings may distract the individual from the task at hand or from taking action. In this way goal accomplishment is hindered. On the other hand, self-awareness may also promote goal accomplishment by providing the individual with the interpersonal information needed to make appropriate adjustments to environmental challenges.

Paradoxically results indicate that higher levels of private self-consciousness were associated with lower teacher ratings of students' social acceptance by peers. Hence those particular students who exhibited a tendency to examine their thoughts and feelings viewed themselves as

functioning better in school than indicated by their grades or by the teachers who rated them.

Hypothesis III: Bright minority youth who cope more successfully in a specialized program for the gifted will demonstrate less psychological defensiveness. This was measured by the Defensiveness Scale for Children.

As predicted, there was a significant negative correlation found between psychological defensiveness and the success variables. Likewise, the program completion and honor groups scored significantly lower on psychological defensiveness than did the program noncompletion group.

Despite the paucity of studies in the literature examining the relationship between psychological defensiveness and success variables, empirical and theoretical tradition holds that psychological defensiveness is often maladaptive (Bonanno & Singer, 1990; Byrne, 1961; Davis, & Schwartz, 1987; Weinberger et al, 1979). Accordingly, it is believed that psychological defensiveness may limit self-awareness, interfere with effective interpersonal relationships, and create a reluctance to seek social support. These are the factors which are believed to be important for achieving success.

However, a recent study by Bybee, Kramer, and Zigler (1997) contradicts that view. These authors found that a group of adolescents who scored higher on repression showed better socioemotional adjustment and academic

performance than groups of adolescents who scored lower on repression. Several possibilities regarding the contradiction between the Bybee et al findings and the results of the present study seem likely. First, the present study used actual school performance in addition to teachers' ratings while Bybee et al used only teacher ratings. The present study found inconsistent correlations between teacher ratings of academic competence and defensiveness. Second, as Bybee et al pointed out, the characteristics of their comparison group were unclear. Their comparison group of "sensitizers" could have been in more acute distress than the "repressors" group. Third, the samples of the Bybee et al study may have differed from subjects in this study in regard to ethnicity. We only know that Bybee et al's subjects came from an upper-middle-class suburb of a large northeastern city. Another important factor may also have been that the intensity of the academic demands placed on the subjects of the two studies differed.

Consistent with our study's findings, several authors(Hill & Sarason,1966; Ruebush, 1960; Ruebush, Byrum & Farnham,1963) found that psychological defensiveness seemed to hinder cognitive functioning, particularly in the presence of low environmental cues to correct performances. Likewise, Milgram & Milgram(1976) found less emotional guardedness among gifted students, and Johnson, Kanoy & Kanoy(1980) found that high achievers were more willing to

acknowledge and take responsibility for negative learning experiences than were low achieving students.

However, gender differences in levels of psychological defensiveness as noted by Wapner and Connor(1986) were not supported by this study. Wapner and Connor found that high defensiveness in boys, but not in girls, was significantly correlated with cognitive impulsivity in their sample of children of low socioeconomic status. Perhaps, the failure to find a gender difference in our study is related to the high achieving level of the students in this sample. Although there was variability in parent income, all students had been selected because of a history of above average intellectual functioning and academic achievement in their public schools. Apparently their cognitive capability was of greater influence than gender differences. This explanation is supported by several studies exploring the characteristics of intellectually gifted and high achieving girls and boys which found higher levels of sensitivity, introspection, and willingness to accept responsibility for negative outcomes to their behaviors(Bachtold, 1969; Johnson, Kanoy & Kanoy,1980; Olszewski-Kubilius, Kulieke, & Krasney, 1988; Milgram, 1976).

Students who scored higher on psychological defensiveness were more likely to deny inappropriate behaviors or difficulties in social relations. Tesser and Campbell(1982) and Markus and Wurf(1987) stated that

individuals screen out stimuli that contradict their efforts to maintain positive self-evaluations. This might have particular relevance for groups of minority students who confront the subtle and/or not so subtle aspects of racism.

SULLIVANIAN CONCEPTUALIZATION OF FINDINGS:

Sullivan's(1953) concepts of anxiety, consensual validation, syntactic thinking, and the "illusory critic" may be employed to interpret further the findings of this study. Because of the widespread use of the concept of anxiety in psychology, anxiety needs no further definition other than to reiterate Sullivan's(1953) position that anxiety is a primary force which shapes the personality. However, the other concepts require a brief review. Consensual validation, as indicated earlier, refers to the process by which the meaning of experiences is validated. This validation process occurs through interpersonal relationships in which the individual finds that others attribute a meaning similar to the meaning which he or she has attributed to an experience(Sullivan, 1953; Bromberg, 1980). For example, when a student feels disrespected or "dissed" by a teacher and in the course of conveying the experience to a parent, the parent behaves in ways which confirm the child's perception, the child learns that the meaning assigned to the experience has validity. The

"illusory critic" may be understood as the "ghosts of past interactions", influencing the meaning that is assigned to present situations. Syntactic processes represent logical thinking. Chapman(1976) describes it as the "phase of realistic appraisals"(p.169). Consensual validation is the basic process of syntactic thinking(Chapman, 1976).

The higher levels of psychological defensiveness found among some students in this study may be interpreted as masking anxiety, a conclusion supported by the work of Ruebush, Byrum, Farnham(1963). This anxiety may reflect a reaction to nonacademic environmental pressures such as reactions to the stresses of poverty, negative societal expectations, family discord, emotional losses, peer conflict, racism or any number of esteem damaging interactions. Another source of anxiety may be more closely linked to the academic demand itself. In such cases, the anxiety may have been precipitated by actual academic performance which itself stimulates old feelings similar to that characteristic of past, negative relationships. For example, the parent, after having been shown a C or a B grade by the child, asks, with a disapproving expression and sharply critical tone, "Where is that A?". The affected child sees in the parent disappointment, and therefore, experiences him or herself as one who disappoints significant others. In other instances, the interpersonal context, specifically, out of which the academic performance

takes place may evoke insecurity. This insecurity, which stems from past unpleasant interactions with adults or peers, hinders present cognitive and academic functioning. For example, the student remembers that challenging an adult or a peer's interpretation of events previously has led to painful disapproval, and hence the student falls into a passive role in relation to his or her academic duties. Whatever the path leading to anxious states, the "illusory critic" is the intermediary, interpreting the present circumstance.

The "illusory critic" precipitates what I refer to as "shifting self-esteemes". In other words, the student's feelings of well-being are dynamic and may demonstrate subtle shifts any number of times during an interpersonal encounter. I prefer to speak of "shifting self-esteemes" instead of a phrase like diminishing self-esteem because the former seems to connote both a more fluid and deeply felt phenomenon of negative changes in self-esteem. Just as Sullivan states in The Psychiatric Interview(1954), that the psychiatrist must keep his finger on the pulse of the patient's anxiety, I assert that those involved in education must keep their fingers on the pulse of students' shifting self-esteemes. It is important to note that the magnitude of such shifts in self-esteem are likely restricted to parameters established by the individual's past evaluations of the more global self. Nevertheless, these shifts which

occur in particular interactions, I believe, may greatly influence specific performances.

The theoretical assertion here is that these shifts in self-esteem may have influenced the academic performances of our more defensive students. That is, the undercurrent of anxiety with its consequent shifts in self-esteem makes it difficult for such students to ask for or accept help when it is needed. The anxiety blocks interpersonal responses demonstrating some level of willingness to be emotionally vulnerable at least to the degree that the student asks for or accepts help. Consequently the student does not obtain the guidance or assistance needed to overcome obstacles. When such students are queried concerning their failure to seek help, they might express feeling too embarrassed or just too uncomfortable talking with others about their concerns.

At this juncture, this study's conclusion is consistent with one of the conclusions arrived at by Bybee et al(1997), namely, that repression may be maladaptive in those situations where more intimate relationships are required. In high stress or highly demanding situations, a more intimate type relationship may be required. The student must be able to form such emotionally intimate relationships as with a mentor or some other helping person. These relationships may provide the student with information about coping strategies and/or emotional support as well as other

forms of consensual validation.

With regard to the relations between high perspective-taking and high academic self-concept as well as the correlation between high perspective-taking and the self-perception of being popular with one's peers, these results may reflect a less egocentric world view of the students. These students have better peer relationships because they are able to determine how to respond to the interpersonal needs of and requests from others. Likewise their high academic self-concept may reflect their ability to understand better the demands of the classroom, the teacher's expectations, ways of motivating others to help them, and consequently their history of academic success.

Another challenge presented in the study's results is the need to explain why higher perspective-taking and higher psychological defensiveness are both associated with self-perceptions of higher peer popularity. The relationship between defensiveness and peer popularity was explained as, among other things, reflecting masked anxiety. If the concept of masked anxiety, illusory critic and shifting self-esteem are useful to account for the relationship between defensiveness and peer popularity, it seems that in accordance to the rules of theoretical parsimony, these Sullivanian concepts should have applicability to the relationship between perspective-taking and peer popularity. That is, one can not conclude that peer popularity in the

more defensive students mask anxiety while concurrently concluding that peer popularity in the high perspective-taking students stems from more healthy functioning. The inadequacy of such conclusions, without considerable qualification, seems overbearing. Nonetheless, there may be a theoretical difference in the underpinnings of peer popularity for these two groups which offers the needed qualification.

The high perspective-takers' relationships with their peers may be characterized by less anxiety, more openness and willingness to have more intimate interactions than the relationships of the more defensive students. Consequently the high perspective-takers may, as a result of their openness to the experiences of others, create more opportunities to interact with others in more intimate ways. They may also have more opportunity to have the meanings they have assigned to life's experiences confirmed by others. The consensual validation of their experiences serves to promote esteem enhancing interpersonal interactions at levels where they can feel accepted for themselves.

Conversely, in the more psychologically defensive students, the peer popularity may come at a cost or at a minimum may provide fewer benefits in terms of correcting misperceptions in the "illusory me-you" dyad. That is to say, the more defensive students' popularity with peers may

fortify the gulf of anxiety that exist between them and others. While these more defensive youth may enjoy a measure of popularity because of their ability to present themselves in a positive light(Bybee et al, 1997), their peer relationships may be of limited value as a support during periods of high stress.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

Limitations of study:

One of the more challenging aspects of the study was finding measures which possessed adequate reliability and construct validity and sensitive enough to the nuances in personality which this study demanded. The current measures could be improved in this regard. While a considerable amount of research using the Private Self-Consciousness Scale has appeared in the literature since its construction, the ability of the instrument to distinguish a healthy level of self-reflection from anxiety driven rumination, hypersensitivity, or a lack of attention to external reality needs to be further explored. Self-awareness as measured by the Private Self-Consciousness Scale in our sample of early adolescents may have been confounded with a tendency to ruminate over one's thoughts and feelings. This would account for the failure to detect a positive correlation between self-awareness, GPAs and teacher ratings of academic performance.

The failure to have teachers who taught all of the students represent a second limitation of the study. The study might have been stronger if the teacher ratings of the children had come from one or two teachers, each of whom had interacted with all students. Such a procedure would have added to the consistency of the teacher ratings.

A third limitation of the study was the failure to collect a second set of data utilizing the same measures. Such data collection would have made it statistically appropriate to conduct a multiple regression and to use the findings for prediction purposes. Presently, it can only be stated that a specific type of relationship exists between the examined variables. The possibility of confounding variables related to the time that elapsed between the collection of data from the students and the acquiring of GPAs and teacher ratings preclude prediction from the data of the present study.

Suggestions For Future Research:

It is recommended that future research include measures of life stress and perceived stress as it is believed that the significance of psychological defensiveness, self-awareness, and perspective-taking may be mediated by the levels of stress in the student's life. For example, the student's ability and/or tendency toward self-awareness and perspective-taking, as well as low psychological defensiveness(emotional openness) become more important in high stress situations where asking for and accepting help from others may make the difference between success and failure.

Finally, more significant results might have also been found if the sample pool had been less homogenous. It would

be useful to study the impact of giftedness by including a comparative sample of demographically similar but average and low achieving students who attend regular public junior high school. Likewise, clinical interviews for assessment of self-awareness and the capacity to take the perspective of the other could have added useful qualitative information.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

The present study examined interpersonal correlates of success in a sample of intellectually gifted African American and Latino students attending a special program for achieving youth. A battery of paper and pencil tests were administered to 12 and 13 year old students to determine their standing on measures of psychological defensiveness, private self-consciousness (self-awareness), and perspective-taking. Teachers rated these students on scholastic competence, social acceptance (peer popularity), and conduct/behavior.

According to our hypotheses, defensiveness, self-consciousness or self-awareness, and the ability to take the perspective of others are related to academic success. There were significant findings in the expected negative direction between psychological defensiveness and the academic success variables. None of the other hypotheses were sustained, but significant relationships were determined between perspective-taking, private self-consciousness and students' perceptions of scholastic competence. Further, significantly lower defensiveness scores were obtained from the honors and the program completion groups of students when compared to the students who did not complete the program. It was concluded that (1.) lower levels of psychological defensiveness was related to higher levels of scholastic success as measured by GPAs

and the increased likelihood of being judged as successful by teachers, (2.) those students who exhibit a tendency to take the perspective of others and to attend more to internal thoughts and feelings also have a more positive self-image of their scholastic competence than warranted by their actual performances, and (3) Efforts to predict success in youth should focus on the student's general level of psychological defensiveness in interpersonal encounters.

DAVIS QUESTIONNAIRE

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter on the answer sheet next to the item number. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

A	B	C	D	E
DOES NOT DESCRIBE ME WELL				DESCRIBES ME VERY WELL

1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity about things that might happen to me.
2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.
3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.
4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.
5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.
6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease.
7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.
8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.
10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation.
11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me.

13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm.
14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.
15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.
16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.
17. Being in tense emotional situation scares me.
18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.
19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.
20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.
21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.
23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.
24. I tend to lose control during emergencies.
25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.
26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.
27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces.
28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.

FENIGSTEIN QUESTIONNAIRE

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate number on the scale at the top of the page: 0,1,2,3, or 4. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the number next to the item. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

0	1	2	3	4
EXTREMELY UNCHARACTERISTIC				EXTREMELY CHARACTERISTIC

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. I'm always trying to figure myself out. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 2. Generally, I'm not very aware of myself. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 3. I reflect about myself alot. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 4. I'm often the subject of my own fantasies. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 5. I never scrutinize myself. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 6. I'm generally attentive to my inner feelings. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 7. I'm constantly examining my motives. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 8. I sometimes have the feeling that I'm off
somewhere watching myself. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 9. I'm alert to changes in my mood. | 0 1 2 3 4 |
| 10. I'm aware of the way my mind works when I
work through a problem. | 0 1 2 3 4 |

RUEBUSH QUESTIONNAIRE

I'm going to ask you some questions about how you think and feel. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Read each question carefully and put a circle around either "yes" or "no" after deciding how you think and feel.

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Do you ever worry about knowing your lessons? | yes | no |
| 2. Do you sometimes dream about things you don't like to talk about? | yes | no |
| 3. Are you sometimes afraid of getting into arguments? | yes | no |
| 4. When someone scolds you does it make you feel badly? | yes | no |
| 5. Do you ever worry about what people think of you? | yes | no |
| 6. When you get mad do you ever tell anyone else about it? | yes | no |
| 7. Do you sometimes feel like hurting someone? | yes | no |
| 8. Do you ever worry that you won't be able to do something that you want to do? | yes | no |
| 9. Do you like to play in the snow? | yes | no |
| 10. Are you sorry for some of the things you have done? | yes | no |
| 11. When one of your friends won't play with you, do you feel badly? | yes | no |
| 12. When you were younger, were you ever scared of anything? | yes | no |
| 13. When someone makes you mad, do you ever tell them about it? | yes | no |
| 14. Do you feel cross and grouchy sometimes? | yes | no |
| 15. Are there some people that you don't like? | yes | no |
| 16. Have you ever been afraid of getting hurt? | yes | no |
| 17. Since you started school, have you ever felt like crying? | yes | no |
| 18. Do you feel it's important to think about how you can get people to like you? | yes | no |

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 19. Do you like to go to the beach in the summertime? | yes | no |
| 20. Do you ever worry about something bad happening to someone you know? | yes | no |
| 21. Sometimes when you get mad, do you smash something? | yes | no |
| 22. When you hurt somebody's feelings, does it make you feel badly? | yes | no |
| 23. Do you wish your teacher paid more attention to you? | yes | no |
| 24. Do you ever worry about what is going to happen? | yes | no |
| 25. Do you sometimes have arguments with your mother and father? | yes | no |
| 26. Are you ever unhappy? | yes | no |
| 27. Are there somethings you just don't like to talk about? | yes | no |
| 28. If you think someone doesn't like you, does it bother you? | yes | no |
| 29. Do you like to go on trips with you mother and father? | yes | no |
| 30. Has anyone ever been able to scare you? | yes | no |
| 31. Do you feel terrible if you break something which belongs to somebody else? | yes | no |
| 32. Do you lose your temper sometimes? | yes | no |
| 33. Have you ever had a scary dream? | yes | no |
| 34. When you are worried about something, do you like to talk about it? | yes | no |
| 35. Does it bother you if the teacher chooses someone else instead of you to do something for her(or him)? | yes | no |
| 36. Do you ever worry? | yes | no |
| 37. When you've done something wrong, is it hard for you to say you're sorry? | yes | no |
| 38. Is it hard for you to tell someone you're scared? | yes | no |

What I Am Like

Name _____ Age _____ Birthday _____
Month Day Group _____

Boy or Girl (circle which)

SAMPLE SENTENCE

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
(a)	☐	☐	Some kids would rather play outdoors in their spare time	BUT	Other kids would rather watch T.V.	☐
1.	☐	☐	Some kids feel that they are very <i>good</i> at their school work	BUT	Other kids <i>worry</i> about whether they can do the school work assigned to them.	☐
2.	☐	☐	Some kids find it <i>hard</i> to make friends	BUT	Other kids find it's pretty <i>easy</i> to make friends.	☐
3.	☐	☐	Some kids do very <i>well</i> at all kinds of sports	BUT	Other kids <i>don't</i> feel that they are very good when it comes to sports.	☐
4.	☐	☐	Some kids are <i>happy</i> with the way they look	BUT	Other kids are <i>not</i> happy with the way they look.	☐
5.	☐	☐	Some kids often do <i>not</i> like the way they <i>behave</i>	BUT	Other kids usually <i>like</i> the way they behave.	☐
6.	☐	☐	Some kids are often <i>unhappy</i> with themselves	BUT	Other kids are pretty <i>pleased</i> with themselves.	☐
7.	☐	☐	Some kids feel like they are <i>just as smart</i> as as other kids their age	BUT	Other kids aren't so sure and <i>wonder</i> if they are as smart.	☐
8.	☐	☐	Some kids have <i>a lot</i> of friends	BUT	Other kids <i>don't</i> have very many friends.	☐

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
9.	☐	☐	Some kids wish they could be alot better at sports	BUT	Other kids feel they are good enough at sports.	☐	☐
10.	☐	☐	Some kids are <i>happy</i> with their height and weight	BUT	Other kids wish their height or weight were <i>different</i> .	☐	☐
11.	☐	☐	Some kids usually do the <i>right</i> thing	BUT	Other kids often <i>don't</i> do the right thing.	☐	☐
12.	☐	☐	Some kids <i>don't</i> like the way they are leading their life	BUT	Other kids <i>do</i> like the way they are leading their life.	☐	☐
13.	☐	☐	Some kids are pretty <i>slow</i> in finishing their school work	BUT	Other kids can do their school work <i>quickly</i> .	☐	☐
14.	☐	☐	Some kids would like to have alot more friends	BUT	Other kids have as many friends as they want.	☐	☐
15.	☐	☐	Some kids think they could do well at just about any new sports activity they haven't tried before	BUT	Other kids are afraid they might <i>not</i> do well at sports they haven't ever tried.	☐	☐
16.	☐	☐	Some kids wish their body was <i>different</i>	BUT	Other kids <i>like</i> their body the way it is.	☐	☐
17.	☐	☐	Some kids usually <i>act</i> the way they know they are <i>supposed</i> to	BUT	Other kids often <i>don't</i> act the way they are supposed to.	☐	☐
18.	☐	☐	Some kids are <i>happy</i> with themselves as a person	BUT	Other kids are often <i>not</i> happy with themselves.	☐	☐
19.	☐	☐	Some kids often <i>forget</i> what they learn	BUT	Other kids can remember things <i>easily</i> .	☐	☐
20.	☐	☐	Some kids are always doing things with <i>alot</i> of kids	BUT	Other kids usually do things <i>by themselves</i> .	☐	☐

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
21.	☐	☐	Some kids feel that they are <i>better</i> than others their age at sports	BUT	Other kids <i>don't</i> feel they can play as well.	☐	☐
22.	☐	☐	Some kids wish their physical appearance (how they look) was <i>different</i>	BUT	Other kids <i>like</i> their physical appearance the way it is.	☐	☐
23.	☐	☐	Some kids usually get in <i>trouble</i> because of things they do	BUT	Other kids usually <i>don't</i> do things that get them in trouble.	☐	☐
24.	☐	☐	Some kids <i>like</i> the kind of <i>person</i> they are	BUT	Other kids often wish they were someone else.	☐	☐
25.	☐	☐	Some kids do <i>very well</i> at their classwork	BUT	Other kids <i>don't</i> do very well at their classwork.	☐	☐
26.	☐	☐	Some kids wish that more people their age liked them	BUT	Other kids feel that most people their age <i>do</i> like them.	☐	☐
27.	☐	☐	In games and sports some kids usually <i>watch</i> instead of play	BUT	Other kids usually <i>play</i> rather than just watch.	☐	☐
28.	☐	☐	Some kids wish something about their face or hair looked <i>different</i>	BUT	Other kids <i>like</i> their face and hair the way they are.	☐	☐
29.	☐	☐	Some kids do things they know they <i>shouldn't</i> do	BUT	Other kids <i>hardly ever</i> do things they know they shouldn't do.	☐	☐
30.	☐	☐	Some kids are very <i>happy</i> being the way they are	BUT	Other kids wish they were <i>different</i> .	☐	☐
31.	☐	☐	Some kids have <i>trouble</i> figuring out the answers in school	BUT	Other kids almost <i>always</i> can figure out the answers.	☐	☐
32.	☐	☐	Some kids are <i>popular</i> with others their age	BUT	Other kids are <i>not</i> very popular.	☐	☐

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	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
33.	☐	☐	Some kids <i>don't</i> do well at new outdoor games	BUT	Other kids are <i>good</i> at new games right away.	☐
34.	☐	☐	Some kids think that they are good looking	BUT	Other kids think that they are not very good looking.	☐
35.	☐	☐	Some kids behave themselves very well	BUT	Other kids often find it hard to behave themselves.	☐
36.	☐	☐	Some kids <i>are</i> not very happy with the way they do alot of things	BUT	Other kids think the way they do things is <i>fine</i> .	☐

Susan Harter, Ph.D., University of Denver, 1985

TEACHER'S RATING SCALE OF CHILD'S ACTUAL BEHAVIOR

(Parallels the self-perception profile for children)

Child's name _____ Class/grade/group _____ Rater _____

For each child, please indicate what you feel to be his/her actual competence on each question, in your opinion. First decide what kind of child he or she is like, the one described on the left or right, and then indicate whether this is just sort of true or really true for that individual. Thus, for each item, check one of four boxes.

	Really True	Sort of True			Sort of True	Really True
1.	☐	☐	This child is really good at his/her school work	OR	This child can't do the school work assigned.	☐
2.	☐	☐	This child finds it hard to make friends	OR	For this child it's pretty easy.	☐
3.	☐	☐	This child does really well at all kinds of sports	OR	This child isn't very good when it comes to sports.	☐
4.	☐	☐	This child is good-looking	OR	This child is not very good-looking.	☐
5.	☐	☐	This child is usually well-behaved	OR	This child is often not well-behaved.	☐
6.	☐	☐	This child often forgets what s/he learns	OR	This child can remember things easily.	☐
7.	☐	☐	This child has alot of friends	OR	This child doesn't have many friends.	☐
8.	☐	☐	This child is better than others his/her age at sports	OR	This child can't play as well	☐
9.	☐	☐	This child has a nice physical appearance	OR	This child doesn't have such a nice physical appearance	☐
10.	☐	☐	This child usually acts appropriately	OR	This child would be better if s/he acted differently.	☐
11.	☐	☐	This child has trouble figuring out the answers in school	OR	This child almost always can figure out the answers.	☐
12.	☐	☐	This child is popular with others his/her age	OR	This child is not very popular.	☐
13.	☐	☐	This child doesn't do well at new outdoor games	OR	This child is good at new games right away.	☐
14.	☐	☐	This child isn't very good looking	OR	This child is pretty good-looking.	☐
15.	☐	☐	This child often gets in trouble because of things he/she does	OR	This child usually doesn't do things that get him/her in trouble	☐

Dear Parents:

We are conducting a study aimed at gaining further insight into those characteristics that contribute to success in Prep for Prep and boarding school. Your child's participation in this study will make it more possible for us to help students achieve a happy academic and social adjustment.

Your child will be asked to respond to several questionnaires about attitudes and abilities in social and learning areas. All of this information will be confidential. Only group findings will be reported. Whether or not your child participation will have no effect on any aspect of their rating here at Prep for Prep or elsewhere. This information may use as part of a doctoral dissertation.

We would certainly appreciate your cooperation. You may indicate your willingness to allow your child to participate in the study by checking the appropriate box and signing below.

Thank you,

Tommy Davis, III, M.S.
City University of
New York
Prep for Prep

I give permission for my child, _____,
to participate in the above described study.

I need more information about the study.

Parent Signature

Please Print Name(Parent)

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