CONVERGENCE OF VIEWS: SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AND WHITE KINDERGARTNERS

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As the second in a series of studies concerning the development of kindergartners’ self-perceptions, this study examined the effects of the kindergarten experience on self-perceptions of African American and White students as they progressed through their kindergarten year. Using a countywide sample of 209 children in 31 classrooms, the study incorporated in vivo observations of teachers’ verbal behavior and self-perception data from the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children. Results indicate that the kindergarten experience had an equalizing effect on the self-perceptions of African American and White children, although self-perceptions of cognitive competence were initially lower for African American children than for their White counterparts. Teachers’ verbal interactions with children were not affected by the child’s race, at least when different achievement levels were taken into account. © 1999 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

One’s initial experience with formal education has the potential to have long lasting effects on attitudes toward school, achievement/performance levels and perhaps even more global views of self. Given possible differences in cultural background and preschool experiences between African American and White children, African American kindergartners might be particularly vulnerable to early school experiences that would inappropriately weaken children’s views of their own competence. Several studies of school-aged children in the 1950’s and 1960’s fueled the concern that the self-perceptions of African American students were lower than those of Whites (Porter & Washington, 1979). However, the question remains unsettled because later studies have tended to find that self-perceptions of African American children are either equivalent to, or higher than, those of White children (Crain & Bracken, 1992: Stephan & Rosenfield, 1979). Additionally, few of these studies have focused specifically on kindergarten children.

This study is the second in a series of studies concerning the development of kindergartners’ self-perceptions. The first study (Simonson & Strein, 1997) focused on the effects of teachers’ use of praise and criticism on the developing self-perceptions of kindergarten children. This study, using additional but overlapping data with the first, examined possible differential effects of the kindergarten experience on self-perceptions of African American and White children as they progressed through their kindergarten year. Specifically, the project explored (a) initial differences in the self-perceptions of the African American and White children as they began kindergarten, (b) differential changes that might occur for African American and White students in their self-perceptions as they progressed through their kindergarten experience, and (c) possible differences between teachers’ verbal behavior directed toward African American and White children. Because gender may interact with self-perceptions (Cramer & Skidd, 1992), especially in certain domains (Crain & Bracken, 1992), and feedback from teachers may differ by gender (Merrett & Wheldall, 1992), analyses also included the child’s gender as a variable, although gender was not a main focus of this study. A brief summary of previous research on these areas follows.

Definitional issues have long plagued research in the area of self-perceptions (Crain & Bracken, 1994). Traditionally, self-concept has been defined as descriptive perceptions of the self, while...
self-esteem has been described as having a more evaluative component. However, in a review of measurement and conceptual issues Byrne (1996) reported that in many studies these terms are used interchangeably, along with a profusion of other “self” terms. Because young children may not be developmentally able capable of making judgments about self-worth or forming a global perception of self, Harter and Pike (1984) strongly urge that their scale be seen as measuring “perceptions of competence”. Given that the Harter and Pike scale was the major data collection instrument in this study, we consistently use the terms “self-perceptions”, and “self-perceptions of academic competence” throughout this article.

**Racial Differences in Young Children’s Self-Perceptions**

During the 1950s and 1960s, research conducted on racial differences in self-perceptions focused on studies of differences in self-perceptions and racial group acceptance between African Americans and Whites. Generally, these studies found African American children to have lower self-perceptions than White children (see Zirkel, 1971, for a review of these early studies). Subsequent studies reported African American children’s self-perceptions to be roughly equivalent to White children’s (Corkery, 1984; Greene, 1973; Moses, 1971; Moses, Zirkel, & Smith, 1988; Zirkel &). A recent study (Crain & Bracken, 1994) found that the global self-perceptions of African American children, grades 5 through 12, were significantly higher than for either Whites or Hispanics, but that racial differences in perceptions of academic competence were not significant.

There are fewer studies examining racial differences in self-perceptions of academic competence, but those that exist are conflicting. Douglas (1970) used the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory to examine racial differences in domain-specific self-perceptions and found African Americans to be higher than Whites in perceptions of academic competence. More recently, Hare (1986) examined race and SES differences in self-perceptions using the Rosenberg and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories and found that White children and high SES children had higher scholastic self-perceptions than African American or low SES children. Both of these studies researched middle-school children. Finally, other studies determined that differences between African Americans’ and Whites’ perceptions of academic competence were either nonsignificant or trivial (Corkery, 1984; Crain & Bracken, 1994), including one study (Trent, 1986) of racial differences in kindergartners’ perceptions of their academic competence. Thus, the literature affords no conclusive evidence regarding racial differences in self-perceptions of academic competence. In addition, most studies have been of older children and adolescents. This study adds to this literature by being one of the few studies assessing the self-perceptions of African American and White kindergartners using an instrument especially designed for assessing the self-perceptions of young children (Harter & Pike, 1984), and by using a sample (n = 209) considerably larger than ones used by most of the other studies.

Considering the definitional and conceptual issues that plague research on self-perceptions and therefore the assessment instruments used, it is not always certain which aspects of self-perceptions have been examined in the previous studies cited. This study examined self-perceptions in the areas of peer acceptance and physical competence in addition to cognitive competence To assess possible changes in domain-specific self-perceptions that might logically be affected by the social and academic experience of being in kindergarten.

**Differential Developmental Changes in Elementary Children’s Self-Perceptions**

A large body of literature addresses developmental changes in children’s self-perceptions (see, for example, Stipek & MacIver, 1989; Vaughn, Haager, Hogan, & Kouzekanani, 1992). In general, research indicates that (a) young children’s self-perceptions of competence are typically very high, perhaps unrealistically so and (b) self-perceptions of intellectual competence decline through the elementary school years, probably beginning after kindergarten (Simonson & Strein, 1997).
Very few studies have investigated the impact of race on developmental changes in self-perceptions. Using the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CESI) administered to students from 133 classrooms in all grade levels, Trowbridge (1972) examined differences in self-perceptions by race, SES, age, and sex. Self-perceptions in all areas decreased with age, consistent with previous research. However, Trowbridge did not statistically examine possible differential developmental changes by race, nor did she examine CESI subscale scores by race. Because African American students in the Trowbridge study were concentrated in the lower SES group, SES and race may have been somewhat confounded, although the statistical test for a race × SES interaction was non-significant. African American students showed significantly \( p < .01 \) more positive self-perceptions on the total CESI scores than did Whites.

A similar study by Carpenter and Busse (1969) examined differences in general self-perceptions by race and sex in low SES first and fifth graders. Again, first graders had higher self-perceptions than fifth graders, but there were no significant differences in self-perceptions by race. The interaction between race and age was also not significant, though the pattern suggested that White children’s self-perceptions decreased slightly more than did African American children’s. These two studies suggest that there may be no substantive racial differences in the development of self-perceptions. However, both of these studies are over twenty years old and neither speak definitively regarding self-perceptions of academic competence. This study addresses this weakness by using an instrument that taps domain-specific self-perceptions, including academic competence, rather than relying on a global assessment of self-perception.

**Differential Effects of Teachers’ Verbal Feedback**

Research indicates that feedback from teachers, especially daily feedback (Stipek & Daniels, 1988), affects the development of students’ self-perceptions (Page & Rosenthal, 1990; Wittrock, 1986), although the relationship is complex and may differ depending on the student’s age (Barker & Graham, 1987). Teacher–student verbal interactions may vary by teacher race, student race, or the interaction between teacher and student race. Simpson and Erickson (1983) observed White and African American first grade teachers during reading instruction. Although there were no main effects for teacher race, there were interactions between teacher and student race. African American students received more verbal and nonverbal praise than White students, regardless of teacher race. However, this effect decreased when controlling for SES. Importantly, White teachers reacted more negatively towards African American males than towards any other group, even when SES was held constant.

In contrast to the Simpson and Erickson (1983) study, Brown, Payne, Lankewich, and Cornell (1970) reported that teachers interacting with students of a different race communicated more praise and less criticism than teachers interacting with students of the same race. In addition to the 13-year difference in the age of these studies, which spans substantial social change, the Brown et al. study observed upper elementary school teachers while Simpson and Erickson examined only first grade teachers. The disagreement between these two studies illustrates the lack of consensus as to precisely how teacher–student interactions vary by race. In this study, direct observation of African American and White teachers interacting with kindergarten children of each race adds to this literature and extends it to a younger population.

**Methodology**

Thirty-one of the 33 kindergarten teachers in a county wide school system agreed to participate in this study. For 23 of these teachers, permission slips were sent home to seven randomly selected students. When a parent returned a permission slip denying permission, an additional student was randomly selected up to a maximum of 10 permissions sought per class. The actual number of
students participating from each class ranged from two to eight, with more than 90% of the classes having four or more participants.

Because the study initially sought to assess possible differential effects of race of teacher by race of student, all students’ parents in either the morning or afternoon classes of the four participating African American teachers received permission forms. Similarly all of the students’ parents received permission forms in either the morning or afternoon class of a White kindergarten teacher in the same, or geographically neighboring, school building as the African American teacher. This question was later dropped when it became clear that there was an inadequate number of African American teachers to address this question in a meaningful way. As a result of both methods of participant recruitment a total of 227 students participated in the project. All analyses are reported here are for the 209 students with complete data. Of this sample, 51 (24.4%) were African American and 158 (75.6%) were White.

Measures

Maryland Observational Screening Checklist for Kindergarten (MOSCK). The MOSCK, which provided information on kindergarten-related skills, is a 25-item checklist of typical developmental competencies such as “copies first name or a simple word” or “follows a verbal direction containing three associated steps”. The scale, which was mandated for use in all Maryland kindergarten classrooms, requires teachers to rate each item on a simple “yes” basis. Total scores across all 25 items were used in this study.

Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children (PSPCSA). The PSPCSA (Harter & Pike, 1984) served as the measure of each student’s self-perceptions for both testings. Participants point to pictures designed to elicit preschoolers’ self-perceptions of cognitive competence, peer acceptance, physical competence, and maternal acceptance. Each item is scored on a 4-point scale, producing scores for each of the four subscales. The maternal acceptance subscale was not used in this study because this study focused on the effects of the kindergarten experience rather than on familial factors. The scale also includes a parallel form for teacher ratings on the dimensions of cognitive competence, peer acceptance and physical competence.

The scale authors (Harter & Pike, 1984) present reliability coefficients ranging from .67 to .83 for the four subscales. Validity evidence for the scale included a variety of methods of assessing convergent, discriminant and predictive validity, and through correlations with teacher rating on analogous dimensions (Harter & Pike, 1984). Researchers have questioned the validity, especially the factor structure, of the PSPCSA with low-income and/or ethnic minority children (Fantuzzo, McDermott, Manz, Hampton, & Burdick, 1996). However, in a more detailed analysis of the measurement data from the sample used in this study, Strein and Simonson (in press) concluded that the internal consistency and structural validity of the PSPCSA were similar for African American and White kindergartners.

In this study, internal consistency estimates (coefficient $\alpha$s) for the three PSPCSA scales were: Cognitive .56, Physical .56, Peer .71, these values being close to those found by Harter and Pike. Coefficient $\alpha$s for the two competence scales were higher for African American than for White students (Cognitive: .61 vs. .52; Physical: .62 vs. .53), whereas the reverse was true for the peer acceptance scale (.56 vs. .74).

Potential validity data available for the specific sample used in this study includes correlations between student self-ratings and teacher ratings, and correlations between students’ self-ratings of cognitive competence and their scores on the MOSCK. However, one must be careful in interpreting correlations between teacher and student ratings, or between student ratings and some “objective” measure of competence as measures of validity in the traditional sense. One’s perceptions of oneself are exactly that, and are not necessarily less “valid” because they do not agree with percep-
tions of others or some external criterion. Thus, these correlations may be better interpreted as “degree of agreement” or “accuracy”, rather than a measure of validity, per se. For a more detailed study of these measurement data focusing on confirmatory factor analyses comparing differing theoretical models, please see Strein and Simonson, in press.

Correlations were as follows for teacher versus students’ self-ratings: Cognitive, African American .42, White .35; Physical, African American .38, White .17; and Peer, African American .25, White .02. The correlation between teachers’ ratings of cognitive competence and students’ MOSCK scores, the correlations were African American .33, White .45. None of the correlations were significantly different for African American versus White students. In general, these correlations are similar to those found by Harter and Pike (1984) in their original study.

Structured Observations. Classroom observations focused on tallies of teacher verbal behavior in two categories (praise, criticism) derived from the Brophy–Good Dyadic Interaction System (Brophy & Good, 1969). To be categorized as “praise” or “criticism”, teachers’ verbalizations had to include an evaluative reaction that went beyond mere feedback about the correctness or incorrectness of the student’s behavior or response. Before beginning actual data collection, observers practiced coding of written statements and performed live in-vivo observations with all results compared to a standard “expert” rater. By the end of the training period, agreement with the “expert” rater varied from .93 to 1.0 as measured by Cohen’s $\kappa$. To control for possible observer drift, observers participated in both paper and in-vivo practice sessions before each observation series, with all inter-rater agreements falling above the .85 level.

Procedures

Project staff (one faculty member and three doctoral students in school psychology) individually administered the PSPCSA to each child during October and again in the following February or March. In early October teachers completed an analogous scale (PSPCSA-T) rating each child on the dimensions of competence and acceptance. As an established part of the school’s assessment procedures teachers used the MOSCK to rate each child’s basic competencies during the Fall semester. In between the first and second administrations of the PSPCSA, project staff formally observed each child’s classroom on three separate occasions for one hour each. Observations occurred at about one month intervals.

Statistical Analyses

Prior to performing the main analyses of interest, analyses of variance were used to compare data on all relevant dependent variables for the White children in the four “matched” classrooms with their White counterparts in the 27 “unmatched” classrooms. The differences were trivially small, and in no case even approached significance. Accordingly, the remaining analyses used data from all of the participants without regard to the original sampling plan. Two-way analyses of variance (child’s race × gender) tested the questions regarding initial differences in self-perceptions. To test for changes in self-perceptions analyses of variance with repeated measures served as the primary analytic tool. This procedure focuses on the question of whether there are differential gains by race, and allows for analysis of changes over time within both groups (Schafer, 1992a).

Results and Discussion

Initial Self-Perceptions and Developmental Changes

African American children had significantly ($p = .043$), lower self-perceptions of cognitive competence on the October PSPCSA testing ($M = 3.38$ vs. $M = 3.52$), but the relationship was weak ($\eta$ coefficient = .14). No differences by race were found on self-perceptions of peer acceptance or
physical competence. These findings are consistent with research (Corkery, 1984; Crain & Bracken, 1994; Trent, 1986) showing little or no racial differences in children’s self-perceptions. In fact the association ($\eta = .14$) between race and perceptions of cognitive competence was almost identical to that found in Trent’s study of kindergarten children (.15). The $2 \times 2$ (race $\times$ gender) analyses of variance of pretest PSPCSA scores produced no significant main effects for gender or for any interaction term. (See Table 1 for descriptive data, Table 2 for ANOVA results).

Changes that may have occurred between the Fall and Spring of the children’s kindergarten year were of most interest to this study. Repeated measures analyses of variance (time $\times$ race $\times$ gender) and post-hoc follow up using the Tukey procedure provided the methods for analyzing these changes and any differential effects that might be present. Table 3 displays the results of these analyses. Differential changes occurred for self-perceptions of cognitive competence. African American children made significant gains, $q_{(4, 205)} = 7.03; p < .01$, in self-perceptions of cognitive competence while White students’ self-perceptions in this area did not change significantly, $q_{(4, 205)} = 2.04; p > .05$. In addition to a convergence in the mean cognitive competence perception scores, variability also converged. In the Fall testing, African American children had a greater variance in perceptions of

Table 1  
Means and Standard Deviations of Fall and Spring PSPCSA Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>$M$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Acceptance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2  
Analyses of Variance for Fall Self-Perception Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>$df$</th>
<th>$F$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.163*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race $\times$ Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-group error</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>(.183)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors.  
$p < .05$.  
$p < .01$.  
$p > .05$.
cognitive competence, \( F_{(50, 157)} = 1.63; p < .05 \), than did Whites, but by Spring the standard deviations for these two groups were identical. There were no differential changes by gender, or for race by gender interaction, on any of the self-perception measures.

Self-perceptions of physical competence did not change significantly during kindergarten for either African American or White children, although the small positive change for the group taken as a whole approached significance. Clearly, there were no differential effects by race on the physical competence variable.

Analysis of self-perceptions of peer acceptance produced an ambiguous situation that was suggestive of differential change. While the time \( \times \) race interaction term was significant, \( p = .023 \), post hoc tests failed to document significant changes from Fall to Spring for either White \( q_{(4, 205)} = 2.34; p > .05 \), or African American, \( q_{(4, 205)} = 2.13; p > .05 \) students. Given the ambiguity of this situation a regression analysis was performed to check for homogeneity of regression of the grouping variable (race) over the Fall scores, as a precursor to checking for “regions of significance” (Schafer, 1992b). A nonsignificant race \( \times \) pretest product term in the final regression equation supported the assumption of homogeneity of regression. Accordingly, the ambiguity of the ANOVA results can not be explained by heterogeneity of regression. The most reasonable conclusion is that the design had sufficient power to detect a small interaction effect, but that the power was insufficient to detect the small changes of each group across time. However, this conclusion must be regarded as speculative given the nonsignificant within-group changes.

The differential changes in self-perceptions of cognitive competence suggest that the kindergarten experience strengthened the confidence of African American children but did not significantly so for the White children. However, inspection of the respective means (see Table 1) indicates

### Table 3
**Repeated Measures Analyses of Variance for Changes in Self-Perception Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>( df )</th>
<th>Cognitive Competence</th>
<th>Physical Competence</th>
<th>Peer Acceptance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall vs. Spring (Time)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19.87***</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race ( \times ) Time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.49*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>5.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender ( \times ) Time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race ( \times ) Gender ( \times ) Time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-group error</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>(.09)</td>
<td>(.14)</td>
<td>(.17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. *\( p < .05 \). ***\( p < .001 \).

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Table 4
**Means and Standard Deviations of Teachers’ Verbalizations Directed to African American and White Children (Totals Over 3 Hours)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Praise</th>
<th>Criticism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( M )</td>
<td>( SD )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>6.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>6.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8.19</td>
<td>6.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8.34</td>
<td>6.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that the two groups converged on a common view of their cognitive competence by the Spring. African American students started in the Fall with lower self-perceptions than did their White counterparts. School was an equalizing experience for these children. This is consistent with the research (Corkery, 1984; Trent, 1986) showing no racial differences in elementary students’ self-perceptions of competence. In addition, convergence of the variance of the PSPCSA cognitive scores resulting from a substantial reduction in variance of the African American students’ scores from Fall to Spring suggests that kindergarten participation may have worked to decrease pre-existing differences within the African American group, as well as decreasing differences between the two racial groups.

Teachers’ Verbal Behavior

In general, teacher verbal behavior was similar regardless of the race or gender, at least when children’s achievement (as measured by the MOSCK) was taken into account (see Table 4). Analyses of variance produced no significant main effects for race, gender, or race × gender interaction for amount of praise received. Critical comments also did not vary by gender. However, African American children received significantly, $F_{(1, 157)} = 7.81; p = .006$ more criticism than did White children, averaging 1.85 critical comments for the three hours of observation versus .84 for Whites. It is important to note that both African American and White children received much more praise than criticism (see Table 4). Because other research from this project (Simonson & Strein, 1997) found that lower achieving children received more criticism and because race and achievement (MOSCK) in this sample were significantly related ($r = .32; p < .01$; lower mean scores for African Americans) the data were reanalyzed using an analysis of covariance controlling for MOSCK scores. When achievement was controlled there were no differences, $F_{(1, 156)} = 7.128; p = .132$, in amount of criticism received by African American and White children. These results stand in contrast to Simpson and Erickson’s (1983) study of first-grade students, in which the African American children received more verbal and nonverbal praise than did Whites, although the effect decreased when statistical controls for SES were used. This study suggests that differential verbal interactions are not present as early as kindergarten when achievement levels are factored in. The child’s level of skills, not race per se, may be the most important factor in determining the amount of criticism that a child receives.

Summary

In most domains, African American and White children held similar self-perceptions. The collective results of this study, taken together with other recent research (Crain & Bracken, 1994; Corkery, 1984; Trent, 1986) indicate that racial differences in young children’s self-perceptions are minimal, at most. On another positive note teachers dispensed praise without regard to children’s race, and, although African American children received more teacher criticism, this was related to the children’s achievement level and not race, per se.

The most striking finding of this study is that the African American children showed a positive, “equalizing” gain in perceptions of cognitive competence as they progressed through their kindergarten year. This is especially surprising given that teachers did not give more praise to African American students, and, in fact, showed some tendency to criticize these students more frequently than Whites. Because achievement data were not collected throughout the year, it is not possible to assess whether the differential changes in self-perceptions of cognitive competence, favoring African American students, may have reflected parallel differential changes in actual levels of competence. Whether or not African American children made differential gains in achievement, the kindergarten year promoted positive growth in the self-perceptions of these students.

One major limitation of this study deserves comment. To protect student confidentiality the school system did not allow the collection of SES data. Accordingly, SES and race may have been confounded in this study, as it has been in several of the studies reported in the literature (e.g., Trow-
bridge, 1972). Although it is well-known that SES and self-perceptions are related, the relationship is complex and may be mediated by the interaction between the child’s SES and achievement level (Trusty, Peck & Mathews, 1994). The absence of SES data on the individual children in this study raises the possibility that the study’s findings with regard to racial differences may be at least in part due to differences in SES.

REFERENCES


