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AUTHOR Stabler, John R.; Johnson, Edward E.
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ABSTRACT

The study involved two stages: first, the evaluation of various stimuli as positive or negative; and second, the determination of whether or not positive stimuli were associated with the color white, and negative stimuli with black. The stimuli were statements related to self perception. From four integrated preschools were randomly selected 15 white males, 15 white females, 15 black males, and 15 black females. All were from middle to upper middle income families, with an average age of five years, nine months. The testing procedure involved first establishing the evaluation of each self statement by having the child point to either a painted smiling or frowning face; and second, broadcasting each statement to the child such that the sound originated with equal intensity from each of two recorder speakers, one painted white and the other black. The basic prediction (that children would "hear" the positive self statements coming from the white box and the negative self statements coming from the black box) was supported by the data, the data for white subjects more clearly supportive than that for black subjects, and more for males than females. (JM)

THE MEASUREMENT OF CHILDREN'S SELF-CONCEPTS AS RELATED TO RACIAL MEMBERSHIP*

John R. Stabler, Georgia State University

Edward E. Johnson, Southern University

Previous research (Ammons, 1950; Goodman, 1952; Horowitz, 1931; Morland, 1962; Radke, Trager & Davis, 1941; Stevenson and Stewart, 1958) has domonstrated that racial awareness, including differential preference, is pervasive and that it develops very early in life. In order to assess racial attitudes in white preschool children, Williams and Roberson (1967) combined story telling with pictures of white and black animals or persons, and asked children such questions as, "Which horse is bad?", "Which is the pretty girl?", etc. Black figures were evaluated as "bad", "ugly", "dirty", "naughty", "stupid", and "mean". White figures, on the other hand, were evaluated as "good", "happy", "nice", and "clean". This study and two others by Williams (Renninger and Williams, 1966; Williams, 1966) demonstrated that the colors black and white, by themselves, have connotative meanings which are substantially similar to the meanings commonly associated with racial membership. It is assumed by Williams, and by the present authors, that children generalize white to Caucasian and black to Negro, and that attitudes toward race are indicated by attitudes toward the colors white and black. This assumption is supported by spontaneous comments which the children have made while being tested and by the experimental demonstration (Edwards and Williams, 1968) of a functional link between attitudes toward white and black and racial attitudes. The color-meaning factor may act as either a contributing or a reinforcing factor for prejudice.

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The present experiment was similar in many respects to a previous one reported by Stabler, Johnson and Baker (1969). They found that objects rated by preschool children as high in value were associated with a white box and objects rated as low in value were associated with a black box. The present experiment used statements reflecting self-concepts as stimuli and white and black tape recorder speakers. The major change was that in the present instance, statements related to self-perception were used rather than objects. As in the 1969 experiment, the present study involved two stages: first, a stage in which various stimuli were evaluated as positive or negative; and second, a stage to see whether or not positive stimuli were associated with white and negative stimuli were associated with black. The second part of the investigation is believed to be related to children's introjections of racial stereotypes and is pertinent to the development of positive or negative self-concepts of White and Black children.

METHOD

Sixty children were randomly selected from four integrated preschools: 15 White males, 15 White females, 15 Black males, and 15 Black females. The children were generally from middle to upper-middle income families. The average age of the children was 5 years 9 months (SD=4.32 mo.).

The testing procedure involved first, establishing the evaluation of each self-statement (see Table 1) by having the child point to either a painted smiling face or a painted frowning face (Both of these were painted in blue and red.); and second, broadcasting each statement to the child such that the sound originated with equal intensity from each

of two tape recorder speakers, one painted white and one painted black. Each speaker was 15"wide x 25" high x 11" deep and had short strips of red masking tape to suggest facial features. The child was asked to indicate from which of the two boxes he thought the statement came. The child was informed that the sound came from only one speaker, but, in actuality, it came in equal intensity from both. This procedure was designed to provide a structured and disguised measure of the children's attitudes toward themselves as associated with their racial membership.

The tape recording had three neutral statements and thirty-two critical statements. Two of the neutral statements were played first, and on each of these two occasions, the sound did, actually, come from either the white or black speaker. This was counter-balanced, as was the location of the two painted faces and the location of the two speakers.

The statements were originally recorded by a White male and a White female. Each child was in the second grade. The child in the experiment heard a recorded tape of a child of his (or her) own sex. An independent evaluation made of the identificability of the race and sex of the two children who recorded the statements resulted in non-significant X^2's.

The children were tested individually. Each child was escorted by E (a White female) to the testing room (located in the child's school). The directions were as follows for the first part of the experiment: "Hi. How are you? . . .Good. This is a game you can win prizes for. Do you like prizes? . . . Good. You choose the prize you like best. (Four inexpensive toys were shown to the child.) OK. I'll put it over here. (The E placed it between the two tape recorder speakers used in the second part of the experiment.) You can have it when you finish the game. Now sit over here by me (indicating chair). He (the second

E, a White male) is going to play a tape. It's like a record. It will say things. Tell me which of the faces (indicating the two pictures, one of a smiling face and one of a frowning face) goes with what you hear. You can point at the face with this (a short pointer)."

The tape recorder then played one statement at a time from the self-statement scale, and each time the child indicated whether he evaluated the statement as positive or negative. The first E instructed the child in the correct response if he made a misclassification.(Few errors were made during this stage.) The female E said either, "OK", "Right", "Yes", or "Good" following each correct response.

After the statements had been played, the female E said, "You did that part of the game very well. Now for the other part of the game, sit over here (in a chair equa-distant, 6', from the two speakers). This is a little different. This time one of the boxes will say things. You have to listen very carefully so that you can point to the box that said it. It will come from either that box or that box (E's pointing was counter-balanced). Listen very carefully. Are you ready, (name of child)?" After each response E would say either "OK" or "Um-hmm". Following this stage, E gave the pre-selected toy to the child, told him he had "done fine", thanked him, and asked him not to tell the other children about the proceedings.

Thirty-seven children were presented the self-statement scale twice, the second time in reverse order, in order to check for reliability. After all of the children who were to be tested at a particular school had been tested, forty-six children were again brought back individually

and seated before the two boxes. Along with some neutral questions about brothers, sisters, pet animals, and so forth, E asked, "Which box do you like the most?", and "Which box is most like you?"

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The thirty-two self-statement items and the per cent of each of the four groups guessing that the origin of the sound of the statement was from the white box is presented in Table 1. The data was analyzed by means of a 2x2x2 analysis of variance mixed design, with race and sex as "between" and statement value as "within" treatments. The basic score involved was the number of statements "guessed" as originating from the white box by each S. Group Means and Standard Deviations are presented in Table 2. There was a reliable sex difference ($F=5.16$, $df = 1$ & 56, $p < .05$): male children guessed more often than female children that the statements came from the white box ($X_M = 8.15$ and $X_F = 7.65$). Since both positive and negative statements were included in this comparison, it is not particularly meaningful. It could be interpreted, though, as indicating that males are apt to associate more activity, or verbalization, with white than with black, than females do. Of more interest is the reliable effect found for value of statement ($F=5.22$, $df=1$ & 56, $p < .05$). Positive statements were more often than negative statements guessed as originating from the white box ($X_+=9.60$, $X_-=6.20$). Finally, a significant interaction was obtained between Race and Statement Value ($F=8.09$, $df=1$ & 56, $p < .01$). A Multiple Range Test to clarify the nature of this interaction indicated that there was a significantly greater tendency for White S's to guess that positive statements originated from the white box ($X_{W+}=11.57$) than to guess that the negative statements originated from the white box ($X_{W-}=3.93$). Such a difference was not found for Black children ($X_{B+}=7.63$, $X_{B-}=8.47$). The MRT also showed a reliable difference between White and Black S's in the number of negative statements

guessed as originating from the white box (X_{W-}=3.93, X_{B-}=8.47). That is, White children heard fewer negative statements originating from the white box than did Black children.

Chi Square analyses of the frequency data showed that, when all 60 subjects were included, the following statements were significantly associated with the white box: "I am good", "I like myself", and "I am glad I'm here"; and the following statements were significantly related to the black box: "I am stupid" and "I am the loser". These data and data for other groupings of S's are summarized in Table 3.

The X^2 analyses indicated White male and female children, particularly the male children, have strong associations between positive self-statements and white and between negative self-statements and black. White females, apparently, have only a strong association between negative self-statements and black and date for these Ss fits only one half of our prediction. When males of both races were grouped together, the X^2 analysis again indicated the presence of an association of positive self-statements with white and negative self-statements with black. Only one exception to the predicted type of association was obtained: White and Black females associated the statement, "I am happy", with the black box. In order to rule out the possibility of this being a chance event this finding would appear to need replication in another investigation.

The reliability measures for the four groups were as follows: White Male, .53 (n=10); White Female, .70 (n=9); Black Male, .62 (n=9); and Black Female, .69 (n=9). Among the White males, two low negative reliability coeficients were obtained.

Twenty-one Whites and 25 Blacks were interviewed on the post-interview. Two White S's and four Black S's "misidentified" themselves as to color. Seventeen out of the 21 White children indicated they liked white best (81%), whereas only 13 out of the 25 Black children indicated they liked black best (52%). The percentages of children in each of the

four groups who answered the same color to the two questions, "Which do you like the most?", and "Which is most like you?" were as follows: White Male, 81.8%; White Female, 70.0%; Black Male, 50.0%; and Black Female, 72.7%.

The basic prediction - that children would "hear" the positive self-statements coming from the white box and the negative self-statements coming from the black box - was supported by the data. The data for White S's, however, was clearly more in agreement with theoretical predictions than were the data for Black S's. It also appeared to be more so for males than females. It appears that the value system of attributing good to white and bad to black, with whatever implications for racial attitudes such a value system may have, has been incorporated by White preschool children; and by White males more than by White females. Such a system of attitudes toward color may complicate the development of realistic self-concepts and may exert an unrealistic influence on White children's perception of Black children.

FOOTNOTE

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TABLE 2

Number of Statements Guesses as Coming from the White Box*

Race:	White				Black			
Sex:	Male		Female		Male		Female	
State-ment:	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.	Pos.	Neg.
	$\bar{X}$ SD	$\bar{X}$ SD	$\bar{X}$ SD	$\bar{X}$ SD	$\bar{X}$ SD	$\bar{X}$ SD	$\bar{X}$ SD	$\bar{X}$ SD
	12.3 3.9	3.5 4.4	10.9 6.3	4.4 5.9	9.7 5.8	7.2 6.8	5.6 6.4	9.7 6.5

* There were 16 positive statements and 16 negative statements.

TABLE 1

Per Cent of Statements Guessed as Coming from the White Box

	Statement*	White Male	White Female	Black Male	Black Female
1.	I am happy (+)	60	27	60	33
2.	I am dirty (-)	40	33	40	67
3.	I am ugly (-)	27	27	33	67
4.	I am sad (-)	13	27	53	47
5.	I am good (+)	100	73	53	33
6.	I am clean (+)	73	73	67	33
7.	I am good-looking (+)	87	73	60	33
8.	I am bad (-)	7	33	47	67
9.	I am stupid (-)	7	27	40	60
10.	I am brave (+)	80	60	47	60
11.	I am strong (+)	67	73	60	33
12.	I am scared (-)	27	40	40	67
13.	I am smart (+)	67	73	60	40
14.	I have lots of fun (+)	87	73	53	33
15.	I am weak (-)	40	27	47	60
16.	I am mean (-)	13	27	40	67

16.	I am mean (-)	13	27	40	67
17.	I laugh alot (+)	80	73	67	33
18.	I don't have any fun (-)	13	20	47	67
19.	I am the winner (+)	73	73	47	33
20.	I hate people (-)	27	20	53	67
21.	I wish I were somewhere else (-)	13	20	47	67
22.	I cry alot (-)	27	40	40	40
23.	I like myself (+)	60	67	87	47
24.	I tell lots of lies (-)	27	27	47	60
25.	I hate myself (-)	20	20	47	60
26.	I am the loser (-)	13	20	47	53
27.	I like people (+)	87	67	67	33
28.	I will do it (+)	60	73	53	27
29.	I tell the truth (+)	73	73	67	27
30.	I won't do it (-)	33	33	53	73
31.	I am nice (+)	73	73	60	33
32.	I am glad I'm here (+)	100	73	53	40

*The three neutral statements are not included.

TABLE 3

Significant X^2's for Differential Guessing as to Origin of Statement for Various Groupings of Subjects

Statement*	All	White Male and Female	Black Male and Female	White and Black Males	White and Black Females	White Male	White Female	Black Male	Black Female
1. I am happy (+)					B***				
2. I am dirty (-)									
3. I am ugly (-)		B		B					
4. I am sad (-)		B				B			
5. I am good (+)	W**	W		W		W			
6. I am clean (+)		W		W					
7. I am good-looking (+)		W		W		W			
8. I am bad (-)		B		B		B			
9. I am stupid (-)	B	B		B		B			
10. I am brave (+)		W				W			
11. I am strong (+)									
12. I am scared (-)									
13. I am smart (+)		W							
14. I have lots of fun (+)		W		W		W			

4. I have lots of fun (+)		W		W		W				
5. I am weak (-)										
6. I am mean (-)		B		B		B				
7. I laugh alot(+)		W		W		W				
8. I don't have any fun (-)		B		B		B		B		
9. I am the winner (+)		W								
0. I hate people(-)		B						B		
1. I wish I were somewhere else(-)		B				B		B		
2. I cry alot (-)										
3. I like myself(+)	W			W						W
4. I tell lots of lies (-)		B								
5. I hate myself(-)		B				B		B		
6. I am the loser(-)	B	B		B		B		B		
7. I like people(+)		W		W		W				
8. I will do it(+)										
9. I tell the truth(+)		W		W						
0. I won't do it(-)										
1. I am nice (+)		W								
2. I am glad I'm here(+)	W	W		W		W				