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ABSTRACT

In an effort to investigate a broad variety of influences on academic achievement a sample was drawn of seventh-grade students in Uganda. The sample of 2,293 students represented an average of 10.7 percent of the schools, and 13.1 percent of the grade-seven children. A questionnaire administered to these children included five personal statements that were attempts to discover how a child might feel about himself regarding two parallel concepts: ego-control, and self-confidence. Among industrial societies it is common to find measures of socioeconomic status, attitudes towards oneself, and performance on various tests all correlated with each other. Among Uganda primary school children this is not the case. Their attitudes are consistently stronger correlations of performance measures; furthermore, there is no relationship between those attitudes and placement along the socioeconomic status spectrum. Unlike our own society, socioeconomic status makes little or no difference to how a child might be expected to perform on tests of academic achievement, yet we have in common the fact that how a child feels about himself does affect his performance. (Author/MLF)

Social Mobility and Relationships between a Ugandan Pupil's Feelings About Himself, Socio-Economic Status, and Academic Achievement

A Paper Presented to the Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society Meeting, San Francisco, March, 1975

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Sons of the great
and sons of the unknown
were all once children
just like your own.

Jacques Brel

SUMMARY

Among industrial societies it is common to find measures of socio-economic status, attitudes towards oneself, and performance on various tests all correlated with each other. Among Ugandan primary school children this is not the case. Their attitudes are consistently stronger correlates of performance measures; furthermore, there is no relationship between those attitudes and placement along the socio-economic status spectrum. In other words, in this non-industrial society where modern socio-economic stratification is very recent, the children of the priveleged do not seem to feel any differently about themselves than do the children of the less fortunate. Unlike our own society, socio-economic status makes little or no difference to how a child might be expected to perform on tests of academic achievement, yet we have in common the fact that how a child feels about himself does indeed affect his performance. Lastly, though this East African society is replete with hierarchies of economic strata, the lack of attitudinal differentiation between their offspring is one indication that these strata do not (yet) constitute social classes. The argument concludes with a caveat not to arbitrarily mix the concepts of socio-economic status and social class, especially in non-industrial societies.

In efforts to understand why some pupils academically out-perform others, it has been relevant to examine a child's personal attitudes, and a variety of scales have correlated positively with performance. For example, higher academic achievement has been associated with a child's perception of his teacher's opinion of him (Davidson and Lang, 1960), achievement motivation (Epps, 1969; Miller and O'Conner, 1969), level of aspiration (Chaplin, 1968), self-perception of academic ability (Brookover and Thomas, 1963), and lastly, his self-esteem and self-concept (Bledsoe and Garrison, [n.d.]; Borislow, 1962; Reeder, 1955; Morse, 1963; Epps, 1969; and Chaplin, 1968).

In non-industrial societies observers have linked academic performance with modernity attitudes. For example, DuBey (1972), reporting from Northern Nigeria, finds that students who demonstrate the best performance on school tasks are also the more "modern." Cunningham (1972), reporting from Puerto Rico, finds correlations of .270 between 11th grader "modern" attitudes and .338 between 12th grader "modern" attitudes and their grade point averages.

Due to the pressure of measuring a large variety of variables, broad surveys of educational achievement have been constrained in the number of attitudinal measures they could include. For example, the Equality of Educational Opportunity Study (hereafter referred to as the EEOR) (Coleman, et al., 1966) used two measures of personal attitudes: self-concept, and efficacy or "control of the environment." Both were found to be highly correlated with each other and with academic achievement. In fact,

the report stated that these two scales yielded higher effects on test performance than any other single factor. "Of all the variables measured in the survey,"

> including all measures of family background and all school variables, these attitudes showed the strongest relation to achievement at all three grade levels. The zero-order correlations of these attitudes with achievement were higher than those of any other variable...taken along, these attitude variables account for more of the variation in achievement than any other set of variables (all family background variables taken together or all school variables taken together). When added to any other set of variables, they increase the accounted for variation more than does any other set of variables.[1]

A Child's Feelings About Himself In A Ugandan Context

In an effort to investigate a broad variety of influences on academic achievement,[2] a sample was chosen of five districts (North and South Karamoja, West Buganda, Bugisu, and Toro), and all three of the country's urban areas (Kampala, Mbale and Jinja). Within each of these a list of schools with a primary grade seven was obtained,[3] and a minimum of ten percent of these schools was randomly selected for study. The final sample represented an average of 10.7 percent of the schools, and 13.1 percent of the grade seven children. I visited each of the 67 schools and administered a questionnaire to each of the 2,293 grade seven children. Included on this questionnaire were five personal statements to which the child was asked to give a reaction. These statements were attempts to discover how a child might feel about himself regarding two parallel concepts: ego-control, and self-confidence.

Ego-Control

Ego-control is characterized as an individual acting to maintain a psychological balance after his normal experience is challenged or altered; it includes his ability to maintain a "healthy" and "balanced" reality under pressure. For example, a child who lacks ego-control and who trips and breaks a leg, or whose house is burned by fire, might be expected to panic in the face of calamity, and later, spend energy assigning blame for what could have been accidental. In the context of a person's feelings about himself, a measure of ego-control should consider whether or not an individual believes he is in balance in times of stress or to what extent he feels he would act irrationally. In the extreme, a lack of ego-control in an African child could imply a personality maladjustment. This lack of belief in his own control could result in transference or blame for day-to-day insecurities. Rotter, Seeman, and Liverant say that

> Although the concept of ego-control is not always defined similarly it seems likely that individuals at the extreme are essentially unrealistic.... We do have indications that the people (at the extreme) may be maladjusted by most definitions to the extent that ego-control is another type of definition of maladjustment.[4]

Self-Confidence

Commonly integrated within the multiplicity of self-perception theories in the U.S. are measures of self-confidence (or "esteem") (Rosenberg, 1963; Miyamoto and Dornbush, 1956). A measure of self-confidence is an attempt to tap the feelings of generalized success or failure that an individual possesses about himself; whether a person is satisfied in general

with his own behavior or performance, or whether he feels inadequate and inferior. This concept is also relevant in a Ugandan context.

Each Ugandan child was asked to react to two attitudinal statements touching upon ego-control, two upon self-confidence, and one touching upon both. As in other attitude instruments (McLosky and Schaar, 1965), each statement was phrased negatively and scattered at random through the questionnaire. To demonstrate a higher conception of himself a child would have to circle a "NO" response. Exact wording and frequencies are noted in Table 1 before the responses were summed into a general attitude scale ranging from 0 to 5.

TABLE 1

RESPONSES FROM FIVE STATEMENTS TO ELICIT A MEASURE OF A UGANDAN CHILD'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIMSELF

(N = 2,293)

		Percent Answering	
		No[a]	Yes
(1)	No matter what I do I always seem to fail.	72.1	27.6
(2)	I rarely succeed in the things I try and do.	53.7	45.2
(3)	My enemies are trying to get me.	82.9	17.0
(4)	If I found a goat's head outside my door, I would run away and hide.	74.3	25.6
(5)	Bad luck often comes to me.	67.0	32.7

[a]"NO" is an indication of a "positive" feeling about oneself.

Validity of the Five Statements

It was expected that some Ugandan children, in an effort to please the investigator, would answer all questions "YES." But this "acquiescent set" problem, as described by Kennisto.. (1960) and Kahl (1968), may not be serious. Other questions involving positive/negative responses (such as "does your father earn a salary") closely correspond to expected frequencies. And if children did wish to please the investigator on these attitude statements by responding "YES," only nine individuals or .4% (Table 2) did so on all five statements. Perhaps it was uncertainty which led 34 individuals (1.5%) to leave a statement response blank, but what

TABLE 2

RESPONSES TO FIVE SELF-CONCEPTION STATEMENTS[a]
PERCENT ANSWERING "NO" TO:

	(N = 2,293)
0 Questions	.4
1 Question	4.1
2 Questions	14.7
3 Questions	25.7
4 Questions	36.4
5 Questions	20.6
No Questions	1.5

[a]"NO" is an indication of "positive" feelings about oneself.

ever the reason, these latter were eliminated from the analysis regard'... of their responses on the attitude questions they did complete.

Measurement validity can be evaluated by a number of criteria. One is simply its face validity i.e.: do the scale items appear to express an individual's state of mind concerning himself (McLosky and Schaar, 1965:23). In this regard, the first statement from Table 1 (concerning failure) and statement two (concerning a "lack of success") are very similar. Each elicits a response representing a feeling of general discouragement or disenchantment. Phrased within the first person ("I" or "me"), a "YES" response would indicate that the child was not simply depressed with reference to his social group or with mankind, but was pessimistic, disheartened, dispirited, or cynical about himself personally.

Item three (concerning undefined "enemies") is an indication of paranoia. Though "enemies" could describe something physical, or institutional, as well as something human, a "YES" response indicates a willingness to assign blame for a feeling of dejection or frustration. Frustration is as real as it is universal; yet what statement three suggests is not only frustration, but the transference of blame for those feelings, and therefore a lack of ego-control.

Statement four is of special significance among Ugandan children. The act of placing the head of an animal at someone's door is used as a means of enforcing social mores. But the source of the animal's head is not the issue. Discovering a head of a goat on one's doorstep is used to represent a sudden change in reality, a shocking surprise. It is parallel to a southern American in a rural area who has had a cross burned in front of his home, perhaps for not regularly attending church. To be sure, it would give any of us a pause, some of us concern, and in some cases, even fear.

The point of statement four is not whether one expresses a fear about finding a goat's head; it is not an attempt to measure "modernity." The statement concerns a very specific, and very extreme reaction of running away and hiding. In a pretest, a preliminary wording ("If I found a goat's head on my door, I would be afraid.") elicited an 85 percent "YES" response. But after "run away and hide" was used as the measure of response, only 26 percent continued to respond "YES." I submit that this 26 percent exhibit an acquiescence to having an extreme reaction in addition (and separate) from what we might all agree to having a fearful feeling. It is the reaction which is the measure of ego-control, and not the fear in the face of what anyone might agree to be a very abnormal event.

Lastly, five (concerning "bad luck"), like the statement using the word "enemies," represents a personification of blame for personal frustration, and measures ego-control. Alternatively, "bad luck" could be interpreted as a synonym for "failure" or "lack of success"--a more direct indication for a lack of self-confidence.

Reaction to these five statements is an indication of how a Ugandan child feels about himself. An individual whose ego-strength was "normal" would be unlikely to "run and hide" even when very afraid; nor would his reality include the feeling that he had personal enemies. Similarly, an individual who possessed "normal" self-confidence, would be less likely to feel that he "always seemed to fail," "rarely succeeded," or was followed by "bad luck."

A second way of assessing the validity of an attitude measure is to relate it to another which has previously demonstrated inter-correlations. How a child feels about himself, with its constituents of self-confidence and ego-control, is parallel theoretically to some indicies of "modernity"--with its constituents of "faith-in-science," "efficacy," and its assumption about "distributive justice" to "hard-working" individuals (Cunningham, 1972:27; Inkeles, 1966).

Three modernity statements were also included within the Ugandan questionnaire. Two were drawn from the O-M Scale (Short Form) reported by Smith and Inkeles (1966); a third was developed by myself. They consist of the following:

(1) One should obey one's elders regardless of whether the elders are right or wrong.

(2) Moscow is the capital of the United States.

(3) A man is bad if he attends neither a church nor a mosque.

Responses to the three were summed and they demonstrate consistent inter-correlations with the measure of a child's feelings about himself. The zero-order correlation is .199; it holds constant when controlled for sex and school location, and is consistently significant at the $p < .001$ level.

A third method of assessing a scale's validity is to submit the statements to a test of internal consistency. Ideally, a scale's validity should be aided by the degree of intra-correlation between the subitems. This I have done, utilizing the Kuder-Richardson formula (Kuder and Richardson, 1937; Ferguson, 1951). The five items have a K-R internal consistency of .36. In reporting results from his brazilian study, Holsinger

constructed a series of similar scales in deciding which of the many items included on his questionnaire formally made-up the best measure of individual modernity. The Ugandan K-R .36 coefficient is lower than the internal consistency of .43 for Holsinger's O-M and his O-M801 scale which appear to be more valid measures. Nevertheless, the .36 is considerably higher than the .09 reported for his O-M501 scale (Holsinger, 1974). The Ugandan internal consistency coefficient results in part from dicotomous precoding ("YES"/"NO") of the attitude responses. Even though this technique creates little variance, it was a necessary approach in a single questionnaire which had the task of investigating a wide range of variables over a variety of languages and cultures. A K-R coefficient of .36 is sufficiently strong to refer to the measure of self-conception as a genuine independent variable in the Ugandan context, and to discuss its relationships with variables around it.

As a set, a pupil who responds to these statements in a consistently negative or a positive direction might be expected to exhibit certain behavior based upon his strong self-confidence and ego-control, or his pronounced lack of it. Concerning those with a pronounced lack, Dreikers (1971) has observed

> We all know people who seem to be blessed with good luck and others who are apparently bedeviled by failure and misfortune. When we closely examine [them]...we find personal patterns peculiar to each. The 'fall guy'...expects to fail before he even starts; hence, he is nervous and tense. In his anxiety, he misjudges the situation and therefore fails--as he expected to do. He makes his own bad dream come true. Then he gives up. Yet even he may occasionally meet with 'success'. This sudden turn disturbs him. It doesn't fit his plan; it compels him to

> reexamine the situation until he has finally confused the issue once more. Then he can fail again, and again, and again. It is his attitude which causes his defeats.[5]

Like Merton's (1957) "self-fulfilling prophecy" of people generally doing what is expected of them and Dreikers' suggestion that "defeat" may be "caused" by attitude, I was interested in whether these Ugandan children would tend to academically perform in relation to what they "expected" of themselves. I hypothesized that a child who has high self-confidence, who does not believe he "always fails" or "never succeeds," whose ego is strong enough so that when faced with a sudden change will not blame personal "enemies" or "run and hide," would tend to perform better on the Primary Leaving Examination.

A Child's Feelings About Himself and Academic Achievement

I have previously reported non-existant relationships between a child's socio-economic status and his academic achievement on the Primary Leaving Examination.[6] However, his attitude toward himself is a better correlate. How a child responds to these five statements has small but very consistent associations with his academic achievement scores. Table 3 illustrates the differences in the sizes of the correlations on three academic measures, plus a total. A child's attitudinal responses have stronger correlations than socio-economic status on every measure of achievement. The correlation between self-conception and the score on the English

Language section is .183; with General Knowledge .140; with Mathematics .208; and with the Total Achievement .169. Even after controlling for

TABLE 3

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN A CHILD'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIMSELF, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

(N = 2,293)

	English	General Knowledge	Mathematics	Total Achievement
Socio-Economic Status[a]	.160[b]	-.03	.04	.05
Self-Conception	.183[b]	.140[b]	.208[b]	.169[b]

[a]A summary measure of parental education, paternal occupation, and status possessions in the home.

[b]Significant at the $p < .001$ level.

socio-economic status, the strength of the relationship does not diminish significantly (Table 4). After selecting for only those children who fell within one-half of a standard deviation of the socio-economic status mean, the correlation altered by only .014 (from .169 to .155). In a second method of controlling for socio-economic status, the partial correlation alters by only .045 (from .169 to .124). Because controls for socio-economic status do not significantly alter the relationship between a child's feelings about himself and academic achievement, socio-economic status cannot be said to be acting as an intervening variable.

TABLE 4

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN A CHILD'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIMSELF AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT BEFORE AND AFTER CONTROLLING FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

(N = 2,293)

All Cases--zero-order correlation	.169[a]
Socio-Economic Status Controlled:	
Average Social Status Cases Only[b]	.155[a]
Partial Correlation	.124[c]

[a]Statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level.

[b]Average socio-economic status is defined as cases within one half of a standard deviation of the mean on a summary scale of parental education, father's occupation, and status possessions in the home.

[c]Statistically significant at the $p < .07$ level.

Feelings About Oneself and Socio-Economic Status Among Ugandan Primary School Children

In industrial societies where there are relationships between socio-economic status and achievement, and also between socio-economic status and self-conception (Battle and Rotter, 1963; Crandall, Katkovsky and Preston, 1962; Crandall, Katkovsky and Crandall, 1965; Coleman et al., 1966), finding the unique influence of one upon the other is a statistical question which research has yet to disentangle. Among P7 Ugandan children however, I am not faced with disentangling three interconnecting relationships. Contrary to industrial societies, no relationship exists between a child's feelings about himself and his socio-economic status (Table 5). The

correlation between mother's education, father's education, possessions in the home, and a summary socio-economic status measure and achievement is actually -.04; with father's occupation -.02. Nor does a relationship appear when the independent variables of sex or urban residence are controlled. Furthermore, these findings are strengthened by the results of

TABLE 5

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN A CHILD'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIMSELF AND FIVE MEASURES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

(N = 2,293)

Mother's Education	-.04
Father's Education	-.04
Father's Occupation	-.02
Possessions in the Home	-.04
Summary Socio-Economic Status	-.04

a dissertation recently completed at Stanford University on self-concept among Kenyan school children. The correlation between the "total" self-concept of children in the Kenyan sample and their mother's education was .01; with father's education .01; and with father's occupation .08 (Mwaniki, 1973:131). Thus, unlike more industrialized areas of the world, knowing a child's place among varying social strata in these contexts tells us very little about how he feels about himself.

There are two immediately relevant questions that occur at this point. First, whey weren't measures of self-concept related to measures of socio-economic status; and second, could one justify labelling a socio-economic category as a "social class" without individuals feeling on the average in any way different about themselves than individuals in other social categories? So central has been the hypotheses that a positive and significant relationship should be found between these variables, that a brief review of social stratification theory, and the several generalizations that emerge from them seems necessary to place these East African findings in perspective.

Social Stratification Theory In An African Context

Measurements of socio-economic status have had their origins in those same industrial societies that gave birth to the study of sociology. However, there are two reasons for believing that socio-economic status measures can be adapted and transferred. First, scales of occupational prestige have already demonstrated their inter-societal validity (Hodge, Treiman, and Rossi, 1966). Second, African cultures, unlike some in the Orient (Gertz, 1956), appear to place a very high emphasis upon income and wealth as status determinants (Fallers, 1966:142). Thus, elements of paternal occupation level, parental education, and the number of modern possessions are valid, albeit rough, measure of general social status.[7]

However, in the view of some scholars, these socio-economic differentiations in Africa do not exhibit the necessary ingredients of social

class. It has been pointed out that the location of an African residence and the interaction among clansmen or relatives occurs commonly across lines of social status (Banton, 1965:144; Little, 1959). Nor are African socio-economic groups known for their corporate political activity (Mitchell and Epstein, 1959:35) perhaps because of the intermingling of traditional and modern prestige criteria (Forde, 1956:43; Southall, 1956:574).

Other observers however, in fixing their attention upon the modern, privileged sector, suggest that these new African elites form a particular social class in traditional Marxist terms (Moumouni, 1968), in their special interests (Lloyd, 1966:59; 1967:357), or in their corporate relations with "outside" societies (Plotnicov, 1970).

Empirical studies have approached this question by trying to determine the structural openness of the social system, principally by asking who goes to school and how large a role socio-economic status plays in determining occupational attainment. Though higher status groups have consistently been found to be over-represented, in comparison to industrial societies, African patterns of mobility appear relatively open (Foster, 1965; Foster and Clignet, 1966; Anderson, Bowman, and Olson, 1969; Kelley and Perlman, 1971). These African studies of mobility have supported C. Arnold Anderson's challenge (1956) to the thesis expounded by Lipset and Bendix (1959) and Miller (1960) that industrialized societies have more open patterns of social mobility.

But in industrialized societies, it is not uncommon to confuse measures of socio-economic status with the notion of social class. Perhaps this is not surprising insofar as the concept of social class gave primacy to economic, and particularly, occupational status.[8] "This is always the generic connotation of the concept of class," wrote Max Weber, "that the kind of chance in the market is the decisive moment which presents a common condition for the individual's fate. 'Class situation' is, in this sense, ultimately [the] 'market situation'."[9]

Differences Between Social Status and Social Class, As Measured by Feelings of Self-Conception

When one conceives of class as defined solely by economic criteria, the interchangability of class and socio-economic status as terms can be expected. But the conception of social class as entirely economic in origin suggests a narrow understanding of how classes are formed, and how they are maintained. It ignores the area of internalized self-consciousness which has been fundamental to the theory of social class from its very inception. For example, even though Marx thought of "consciousness" as resulting from one's situation (and not vice versa),[10] and he also took some care to describe what one was supposed to <u>feel</u> as a member of a particular class. "The possessing class and the proletarian class," he once said,

> represent one and the same human self-alienation. But the former feels satisfied and affirmed in this self-alienation, experiences the alienation <u>as a sign of its own power</u>* and possesses in it the <u>appearance</u> of a human existence. The latter, however, feels disappointed in this alienation, seeing in it its own impotence and the reality of an inhuman existence. To use Hegel's expression, this class is, within depravity, an <u>indignation</u> against this depravity, an indignation necessarily aroused in this class by the contradiction between its human <u>nature</u> and its life situation, which is a blatant, outright and all-embracing denial of that very nature.[11]
>
> *(Marx's emphasis)

Weber also, in conceptualizing the requisites of communal action, explored the necessity for certain feelings to occur. "For however different life chances may be," he said, "this fact in itself, according to all experience, by no means gives birth to "class action." The fact of being conditioned and the results of the class situation must be clearly recognizable" (Weber, 1969, p. 26-27).

With the rise of psychology and the sophistication of psycho-attitudinal measurements, having felt the "class situation" has been suggested as an empirical prerequisite for determining the existence of a social class. "Today," says Ossowski, "there is a growing body of field research devoted to the class structure of the United States, and particularly, research which has as its common assumption recognition of the psychological criterion of social class..." (Ossowski, 1969:207). In this vein, the work of Tumin should also be noted. In his view, social stratification at some stage involves a "process of evaluation" where an individual begins to think of himself on a scale from "superior to inferior, better or worse, more to less distinguished" (Tumin, 1967:24). The evaluation is a process of "invidious distinction" which Tumin suggested as being endemic on the individual level at varying intensities corresponding to levels of social strata. This parallels the 19th Century Marxian concept of worker "self-alienation." That a psychological foundation of social class should survive attests to the existence of logical and empirical justifications.

Besides the psychological experimental approach to measuring how one feels about oneself which finds socio-economic status as a constant correlate (McPartland and Cumming, 1958), there are two relevant sociological surveys

which elicit the same findings and are worthy of mention. Kohn's study on social class discovered a number of values which have relationships to social position. Among those most central were their feelings about themselves. Kohn reports that

> Men of higher class position see themselves as more competent, more effective, more in control of the forces that affect their lives... the findings are consistent with our expectations. The higher men's social class position, the more self-confidence and the less self-depreciation they express; the greater their sense of being in control of the forces which affect their lives; the less beset by anxiety they are; and the more independent they consider their ideas to be...men's views of how effectively they function are associated with their social class positions--ment at the top being more confident of their own capacities than are men lower in the social hierarchy.[12]

A second might be Runciman's work which concerned the notion of relative deprivation among the English working class. He found that among manual laborers, significant distinctions could be made between those who were apt to rate themselves as "middle class" and those who rated themselves as "working class." The former were more likely to wish their sons to be non-manual workers, or specifically, teachers rather than foremen--even if paid 25 percent less. In addition, those who thought of themselves as middle class were far more likely to want a private education for their children (Runciman, 1969).

These studies from the U.K. and the U.S. illustrate how strong the evidence is that particular feelings can be isolated as psychological corrolaries of socio-economic status.[13] Couldn't one safely assume that these feelings would be a consistent and universal characteristic associated with social stratification? Perhaps one test of the existence of social class

might be the extent to which individuals of differing socio-economic backgrounds tend to perceive themselves "positively" or "negatively"--whatever their criteria. A good empirical case for the existence of social classes in Africa could be made by establishing the fact that individuals from differing socio-economic backgrounds distinguish themselves in terms of personal attitudes toward themselves. If individuals from different social strata do feel differently about themselves, if correlations could be found between lower social status and lower individual self-conception, then one could safely say that a foundation for social classes had been laid.

But among P7 children there is no relationship between these two characteristics (Table 5). This adds weight to those who argue that African socio-economic groupings do not yet exhibit the characteristics of social classes. But in addition, the fact that a child's feelings about himself are not even weakly associated with any of the indicies of socio-economic status is crucial to understanding how divergent a function educational selection can play in Uganda. In industrial societies the process of educational selection can create self-dislike among the children of the poor. In Uganda, however, it has the opposite effect. I will argue that the process of educational selection in the Ugandan context is one of three factors which helps account for the fact that the children of the impoverished do not seem to feel any differently about themselves than the children of the privileged.

The Origin of Self-Conception Among Ugandan Primary School Children

Three ingredients of Ugandan mobility patterns might be advanced to explain the non-relationships between self-conception and socio-economic status: (1) the recentness and scarcity of schooling; (2) the requisite of government employment as the primary avenue to occupational status; and (3) the overwnelming importance of the Primary Leaving Examination as the criterion for any further educational experience beyond the primary level.

The Recentness of Schooling and The Absence of Class Culture

Typical of other East African countries, schools were established in Uganda only in the last eighty years. Moreover, certain areas remained without any schooling opportunities until after World War II. Because school expansion was left almost entirely to missions by laissez faire British authorities, progress was arduous and sporatic. In 1939, even after fifty years of school expansion, there were only 51,000 pupils in primary schools. In all post-primary schools combined (including all junior and senior secondary, technical, trade, farm, vernacular, English Language Teacher Training Colleges, and Makerere College), there were only 3,000 pupils (Smyth, 1971:42). Even primary school attendance was not the norm in any district except the capital until after World War II. No post-secondary school opportunity was available until 1941. And today, even after major post-independence expansions post-primary experience is available to less than five percent of an average

age cohort. The fact remains that the normal level of educational expectations is still primary school or less.

Today Uganda is educationally undeveloped compared to Brazil, Columbia, Thailand, and many other countries commonly thought of as being in the "Third World" (Table 6). Ghana, for example, has twice the percentage of its primary school age cohort and three times the percentage of its secondary

TABLE 6

PERCENT OF AN AGE COHORT IN SCHOOL: ONE MEASURE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN COUNTRIES[a]

Country	Year	Ages 6 - 11[b]	Ages 12 - 16
Haiti	1966	40	4
Malawi	1968	36	2
Uganda	1967	51	5
Zambia	1967	69	10
Ghana	1968	90	14
Brazil	1968	128	23
Cuba	1968	122	26
Argentina	1968	101	41
Bolivia	1968	88	21
Chile	1968	105	31
Columbia	1967	93	22
Indonesia	1967	93	22
Iran	1968	60	21
Jordan	1968	96	39
Kuwait	1968	99	66
Pakistan	1967	43	19
Kyria	1968	83	33
Thailand	1968	81	13
Turkey	1968	77	24
India	1965	56	15

[a]SOURCE: United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization, Statistical Yearbook, (Paris: UNESCO, 1970).

[b]Figures over 100 percent are due to higher rates of repeating.

school age cohort in school. Uganda has approximately the same percentage of its age cohort in secondary school as does Haiti, economically the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

The recentness of economic opportunity and its continuing scarcity compared to more industrial societies may be illustrated by the fact that even among the wealthiest elite in Uganda, tnere is not a family which does not include illiterate members. Unlike their counterparts in Britain or America, bank chairmen, or university professors, authors, and even presidents have numerous relatives who have never been to school, who are peasants, and with whom they must interact socially.

With the possible exception of the few aristocracies from tribal monarchies, true elite economic differentiation has been largely a product of the post World War II economic and governmental expansions. The recentness of both schooling and political power[14] has mitigated against entrenchment of elite positions in the hands of an inherited social group. There simply hasn't been time for this "first generation" of politically and socially prominent elite to have developed the genealogical purity which is necessary to adopt the rationales of superiority which permeate social classes in England or Western Europe. Thus, despite considerable ostentatious displays of unequal income, Fallers (1966:145) believes there to exist no class "culture" in Uganda. As early as 1957 he had observed that

> The new elites do not seem to have acquired a class culture any more than did their predecessors in the nineteenth century. Present day Baganda are proud of material possessions, such as fine houses, large cars and fine clothes; they admire advanced education and good

> command of English; they ardently pursue high position and are proud, even hauthty, when they achieve it. But still they do not have what Western people mean when they speak of "class consciousness." They are not class conscious because they still do not have a class culture. Material possessions contribute to a real class culture only when their acquisition and use involves more than simple purchase. They must involve also the exercise of a taste which can be acquired only through training, perhaps over generations...social mobility and the development of a class culture in the sense in which I have been using the terms are obviously interrelated. Only a restriction of mobility can allow time for a class culture to develop.[15]

In sum, because schooling and occupational differentiation is so recent and so scarce (only 6.5 percent of the labor force is today salaried),[16] privileged elites tend to be first generational. If one acknowledges the elite's unfamiliarity to privileged social status and the fact that it is normal and not necessarily a social stigma to be poor, one may begin to understand why feelings of self-conception among primary school children are randomly distributed between socio-economic groups.

Social Mobility: The Primacy of Educational Certification and Civil Service Employment

The fit between education and income is tighter in Uganda than it is in those industrial societies for which data are available. Jencks (1972:223) claims that each additional year of education boosts future income of Americans about four percent. Knight (1968:256) says that an additional year of schooling for Ugandans will boost their future incomes by eighteen percent and will ultimately explain a full fifty percent of their income variance.

The tightness of the Ugandan fit results from the explicit tying of government salaries to level of educational attainment. Forty-two percent

of all salaries, and eighty-two percent of all high level salaries are paid out by the government. Thus, the private sector in Uganda is so small that scarcely one out of five professionals can locate employment outside of the civil service. Knight says that

> A close relationship can be shown between income and education; more precisely, between income and educational qualifications required by the government...education is the decisive factor in the determination of public sector salaries.[17]

Setting a minimum educational requirement in the public sector has had its effect upon the "openness" of the social system. Being public, hiring is open to scrutiny. Requirements for employment are openly published and easily available. Each position has its appropriate educational standard regardless of one's prestige, ethnicity or family position, attainment in school is a sine qua non of employment in the civil service. Knight observes

> No matter how favorable a person's position--be he male, able, ambitious, city born, of dominant tribe, European (in the past) or African (in the present) with powerful or wealthy connections--he would generally not be able to increase his basic salary in the public sector much above the mean for his education or age. Similarly, a person without these qualities if he had somehow managed to receive an education, would still be protected by his paper qualification.[18]

Educational Certification and The Primary Leaving Examination

I suspect that the link between educational attainment and occupational attainment is not unknown even in the minds of primary school children. Contrary to earlier fears that school children, being ignorant of their chances for employment, would "flock" to urban areas (Balogh, 1962; Moumouni, 1968),

research has quite clearly demonstrated a marked awareness and acceptance of the realities of economic life (Foster, 1964; Koff, 1967; McQueen, 1965; Peil, 1968; Weeks and Wallace, 1972; Brownstein, 1972; Heyneman, 1972).

School children, even in the most isolated of areas, seem aware that their chances of occupational success (or of even finding salaried employment) are few. When asked an open-ended question about what they expected to be doing if they didn't pass the Primary Leaving Examination, only 6.9 percent mentioned seeking urban employment; 47 percent said they would be "digging" (i.e.: agriculture) or helping their parents at home.

P7 children are not ignorant about their chances for success. That only ten percent of those who sit for the examination can be offered further education is widely known among them. In fact, seven percent flatly stated that they will be trying to repeat next year, regardless of the likelihood of their being punished if caught.

What is startling about Ugandan children is not their low expectations, but the seeming irrelevance of social status to their aspirations. Ambitious children of both presidents and peasants know two things perfectly clearly: First, they know that occupational success depends upon meeting the minimum educational requirements for a job. In industrial societies, success in school depends upon a child's grades, or personality, or neighborhood, or tax base, or homework, or conduct. But second, each Ugandan child knows that the only criterion for achieving an opportunity for advancement beyond primary school is to attain a Grade I pass [a score of 200 in 1972] on the Primary Leaving Examination.

Consequently, it is common for a child to feel that despite all of the particularistic characteristics present in other societal arenas where ethnic group and family connections facilitate mobility, the secretly-written, uniformly-administered, multiple choice, computer-graded Primary Leaving Examination represents a trustworthy and fair system of evaluation.

Perhaps a strong reason for the random distribution of self- conception between these pupils' social economic groupings is the trustworthiness of the system of academic evaluation. The fact that children realize that they will be evaluated solely on the basis of performance on a test uniform throughout the country, that their teachers, families, and tribal affiliations will be unknown and irrelevant to the machine which reads their penciled answers, must be a morale boost to those in more compromising social milieus. Given all the nuances of personality testing, I.Q., class grades, and other methods of evaluation in America, Britain, and Western Europe, the Primary Leaving Examination, as the sole criterion,[19] suggests that in the area of educational selection, Uganda may be a very universalistic society.

Summary

Thus it seems that social class culture has not been able to permeat present social differentiations for three reasons. Because of the recentness and the continuing scarcity of schooling, individuals in the upper stratum are often of the first generation insuring a constant elite/non-elite interaction within one's closest family.

Moreover, because of the direct link between school attainment and civil service employment, academic achievement in Uganda carries more "weight" than it would in a society where entrepreneurial enterprise is a more possible avenue for occupational success. This makes performance on the Primary Leaving Examination a necessary (but insufficient) step on the road to economic security. Lastly, because performance on this examination is monitored by a computer, children even in the most unpromising of social circumstances did not feel at a disadvantage and did not feel less self-confident than did children from more privileged backgrounds about their chances for success. Not despite, but because of the impersonality in the selection process, each pupil, regardless of sex, tribe, poverty, or rural isolation, felt he had an opportunity for selection to higher levels of education, and therefore, economic security.

But to return to the question raised earlier as to whether one could justify labelling a socio-economic category as a "social class" without the affective element of self-consciousness, my response would be no. Differing feelings of self-concept could be the distinguishing characteristic which separates a socio-economic stratum from a social class. Given these preliminary findings from East Africa, caution must be applied if it is assumed that different levels of self-concept will be a universal correlate of varying levels of socio-economic status. One must not indiscriminately mingle measures of socio-economic status with notions of "social class"; for affiliation with the latter, as I have argued, is dependent upon additional measures.

Footnotes

[1]James S. Coleman, et al. Equality of Educational Opportunity (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1966), p. 319.

[2]Stephen P. Heyneman, "Influences on Academic Achievement In Uganda: A 'Coleman Report' From an Unindustrialized Society," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, forthcoming, 1975).

[3]Schools which did not progress as far as P7 were, therefore, eliminated from the possibility of being included within the sample.

[4]Julian B. Rotter, Melvin Seeman, and Shepard Liverant, "Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcements: A Major Variable in Behavior Theory," in Decisions, Values, and Groups: Proceedings of a Conference, ed. by N.F. Washburne (Alburquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1957), pp. 473-516.

[5]Rudolf Dreikers, Social Equality: The Challange of Today (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1971), p. 5-6.

[6]Stephen P. Heyneman, "Socio-Economic Status and Academic Achievement in Uganda: How Fair is the Primary Leaving Examination to the Less Privileged"? Paper Presented to the Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society, Washington, D.C.: March, 1974; "A Brief Note on the Relationship Between Socio-Economic Status and Test Performance Among Ugandan Primary School Children," Comparative Education Review (forthcoming, 1975).

[7]A socio-economic status scale should not be confused with a measure of social prestige. Just as measures of socio-economic status usually neglect crucial honorary or voluntary leadership activities (president of the bowling club, Elks, etc.) which help to define an individual's social prestige in an industrial society, so also are they forced to neglect parallel roles (clan or religious elder, etc.) in a non-industrial context. Thus, though the two measures may often overlap, one ought to keep them as distinct as the economic/non-economic categories from which they have been generated. This study did not attempt to create a scale of social prestige in Uganda.

[8]Karl Marx once wrote: "What constitutes a class--and the reply to this follows naturally from the reply to another question, namely: What makes wage-laborers, capitalists and landlords constitute and three great social classes? At first glance--the identity of revenue and the sources of revenue." from Das Capital, Volume 3, and quoted in Karl Marx, Karl Marx Dictionary, ed. by Morris Stockhammer (New York: Philosophical Library, 1965), p. 37.

[9]Max Weber, "Class, Status and Party," in Structured Social Inequality: A Reader In Comparative Social Stratification, ed. by Celia S. Heller, (London: Macmillian Publishers, 1969), p. 26; see also: Max Weber, Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretative Sociology, ed. by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), p. 305.

[10]"It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness."--taken from German Ideology and quoted in Karl Marx, Karl Marx Dictionary, op. cit., p. 49.

[11]Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Holy Family: A Critique of Critical Criticism and contained in Karl Marx, "Alienation and the Social Classes," Marx-Engels Reader, ed. by Robert C. Tucker (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Incorporated, 1972), p. 104-6.

[12]Melvin L. Kohn, Class and Conformity: A Study In Values (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1969), p. 80-4.

[13]Other findings have indicated additional psychological distinctions between individuals of differing social classes. See: Bernard Barber, Social Stratification: A Comparative Analysis of Structure and Process (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1957; A.B. Hollingshead and F.C. Redlish, "Social Stratification and Psychiatric Disorders," American Sociological Review, 18 (1953), 163-9; A.B. Hollingshead and F.C. Redlish, "Social Stratification and Schizophrenia," American Sociological Review, 19 (1954), 302-6; Jerome K. Myers and Leslie Schaffer, "Social Stratification and Psychiatric Practice: A Study of An Out Patient Clinic," American Sociological Review, 19 (1954), 307-10; Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb, The Hidden Injuries of Class (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973).

[14]Because Ugandan military leadership is dominated by less affluent, less educated, minority groups (Kakwas and Lugbaras) suggests that a very different elite will dominate access to the civil service from the groups which originally led independence movements (Baganda, Batoro, Bateso, Basoga, Acholi, etc.). Though access to executive positions was in no way 'closed' under premiliary government, the army's ascent to political power implies a reopening of an already fluid sociological situation. Military control may have an indirect by-product of further delaying for an additional generation or more any cementing of elite positions in the hands of the socially privileged which may have occurred in the brief period since independence.

[15]Lloyd A. Fallers, "Social Class in Modern Buganda," Paper Read at a Conference of the East African Institute for Social Research, Moshi, Tanganyika, June, 1957, p. 9. [mimeographed].

[16]This figure is derived from the following: Uganda Government, Enumeration of Employees, (Entebbe: Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, June, 1970), p. 5; and Uganda Government, Report on the 1969 Population Census, Volume I: The Population of Administrative Areas, (Entebbe: Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, November, 1971).

[17]J.B. Knight, "The Determination of Wages and Salaries in Uganda," Bulletin of the Oxford University Institute of Economics and Statistics (November, 1968), p. 256.

[18]ibid.

[19]Teacher evaluations are used only in 'border-line' cases, and for selection into particular schools.

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