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ABSTRACT

The paper describes a study to measure the relationship of teacher expectations to student characteristics and academic achievement. Specifically, the study assessed the validity of principles regarding teacher expectations set down by sociologists Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis. Bowles and Gintis maintained that teacher expectations are substantially affected by students' personalities, social and family backgrounds, presentation of self, and cognitive skills. Data were taken from 1,825 eighth grade students in 18 desegregated junior high schools in Washington, Texas, and California. Teachers rated students with regard to personality characteristics, cognitive skills, and students' presentation of self. Ratings and predictor variables including ethnicity and sex were analyzed by standard regression techniques. Findings indicated that the Bowles and Gintis model was not entirely upheld because teachers' expectations were much more powerfully influenced by teacher perceptions of cognitive skills than by students' presentation of self, personality characteristics, or ascriptive characteristics. Additional research is suggested on processes of development and change in areas of personality characteristics, skills regarding the presentation of self, student educational and occupational expectations, cognitive skills, academic success, and teacher expectations. (DB)

Ethnic and Class Bias in Teacher Expectations of Junior High School Students: A Test of the Bowles and Gintis Thesis

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Ethnic and Class Bias in Teacher Expectations of Junior High School Students: A Test of the Bowles and Gintis Thesis

The achievement expectations of teachers have been identified as an integral part of the complex process affecting student achievement. The models proposed for assessing the interplay of expectations and achievements have become the focus of considerable research and debate (Sewell and Hauser, 1972; Nolle, 1973; Bowles and Gintis, 1972). These models range from empirical maps of informal student-teacher interaction within the classroom to complex status attainment models that describe intergenerational processes. These models have generated various definitions and measurements of teacher expectations and have resulted in conflicting findings. For this reason, we wish to clarify empirically the process operating in the formation of teacher expectations within the confines of at least one theoretical model of student achievement.

It has been suggested that a close interface exists between the demands of the industrialized labor market and the schooling system in the United States. Proponents of this perspective maintain that processes exist by which students in the public school system are reinforced in certain behavioral patterns which are functional to the needs of industry for effective workers (Gintis, 1971). The process of acquiring these behavioral patterns or characteristics is more generally posited as a "correspondence principle," that is, the social relations of schooling correspond to the social relations of production (Bowles and Gintis, 1972). This statement assumes that a stratified and ascriptively differentiated system of rewards and positions

occurs in both the school and the larger society and that this system effects the process of acquiring behavioral characteristics.

In our own analysis we have questioned whether the model of employer demands for particular worker attributes is reflected in corresponding school evaluation processes. Four sets of characteristics that employers apply to workers, as suggested by Bowles and Gintis, appear relevant to the school evaluation process: (1) cognitive attributes as reflected in scholastic achievement, including concrete technical and operational skills; (2) personality traits that enable the individual to operate effectively in the worker role, i.e., motivation, perseverance, docility, etc.; (3) appropriate manners of self-presentation, such as speech and dress, as well as patterns of peer identification and social positioning within the system; and (4) the ascriptive characteristics of ethnicity, sex, and family socioeconomic background. Teacher evaluations and expectations, according to this model, should encompass these characteristics. Bowles and Gintis state that the analytical problem now lies in the determination of the precise content of these salient attributes and the way in which these affect stratification and evaluation processes.

Research Review

Ascriptive Characteristics. In the traditional approach to such an evaluation within the schooling system, the fourth set of characteristics, ascriptive background traits, has been consistently found to be a critical constituent of teacher expectations (Murphy, 1974). Several early sociological studies cited social class as an important variable in the educational experiences of students (Hollingshead, 1949; Warner et al., 1944). Conclusions from these studies generated empirical research into the

student-teacher interaction process and the resulting evaluations of teachers. Literature in the area has focused on verbal encouragement, amounts and patterns of verbal interaction, language cues, and symbolic evaluations as associated with various background characteristics of the students involved. Discriminatory teacher interactions and evaluations within the school environment were interpreted as related to the lower class or non-Anglo statuses of the students involved (Rist, 1970; Jackson and Cosca, 1974). The relation of social class to teacher expectations was also investigated by Miller et al. (1968). They found that lower class students were the objects of negative teacher expectations, even when IQ and achievement scores were comparable. In an experimental setting, Harvey and Slatin (1975) also found that teacher evaluations were significantly related to perceived student socioeconomic status (SES). The ascriptive characteristic of race also was found to "complicate" the SES relationship to teacher evaluations in the Harvey and Slatin experiment. C. H. Persell concludes, in her review of the literature, that when teachers have relatively few clues as to student performance, they are influenced in their expectations by race (Persell, 1977). Weinberg (1977) also suggests that, overall, studies of teacher attitudes indicate a generally negative orientation of the teaching staff toward minority students. Discriminatory evaluations have also been reported because of sex differences by Sears and Feldman (1966) and Palardy (1969).

Other research found no significant variations in teacher expectations and ascriptive background characteristics. Sewell and Hauser (1972) found no evidence of socioeconomic discrimination in student perceptions of their encouragement by teachers. Instead, they found that teacher judgments de-

pend primarily on student academic ability and school performance. Williams (1975) also rejects the hypothesis of social class bias by asserting that students socialize teachers in respect to expectations to a far greater extent than teachers influence student expectations.

Sociability: Presentation of Self. Attempts have been made to include additional variables, beyond the traditional emphasis on teacher social class biases, to expand the model. In addition to the variables proposed by Bowles and Gintis, more informal characteristics, such as "in-group" pupil statuses, were proposed for inclusion by Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963). A number of studies, generated from Hollingshead's study of adolescence in Elmstown, endeavor to map the relationships of student peer groups, student statuses, teacher interactions, and expectations for success. Gordon (1957) illustrated that the teacher's role in influencing the student's expectations of achievement was relatively ineffective in the informal school setting, regardless of the student's status. Hauser (1972) also showed only modest effects of teacher expectations on the student's own achievement expectations when the influence of the teacher role was isolated from that of significant groups. Nolle (1973) maintains that the directionality and causation of teacher and student expectations and their social roles have not been sufficiently validated.

Personality Characteristics. There have been other attempts to evaluate within the formal structure of the classroom the construction of teacher expectations for their students based on trait sets of personality and social behavior. Particular personality characteristics of pupils, including rigidity, conformity, tidiness, dependence, and passivity, were consistently found by Feshbach (1969) to bias student-teacher evaluations of students.

Gintis's review of the literature (1971) demonstrated that personality traits associated with subordination, docility, etc., are independent variables in school evaluations. The notion of a "hidden curriculum" which goes beyond the academic performance raises the need for an understanding of the process by which noncognitive traits, such as those proposed by Bowles and Gintis, interact with cognitive traits and the extent to which these characteristics independently contribute to schooling and evaluation processes.

The intent of this paper is to examine the sources of teacher expectations that are operating in the formation of their educational evaluations. Concern has been expressed that these evaluations and expectations are based to a significant degree on ascribed background variables and informal trait evaluations that are unrelated to performance in an academic sense. By focusing analysis on formally expressed achievement expectations and evaluations, we avoid the necessity of attributing causality between teacher expectations and interactions with students. Yet it is possible to examine the relation of those characteristics proposed by Bowles and Gintis to teacher evaluations of the occupational and educational futures of their students.

Hypothesis

In accordance with the Bowles and Gintis thesis, we would predict that teacher educational and occupational expectations will be based on (1) teacher perceptions of specific personality attributes of the student consistent with the "ideal worker," (2) teacher perceptions of students' cognitive skills, (3) teacher perceptions of specific characteristics of the student that deal with presentation of self, and (4) demographic background

characteristics, sex, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Additional control variables are introduced into the model to maximize the explained variance in teacher educational and occupational expectations: student's subject grade in the responding teacher's class as an additional measure of cognitive skills and performance in school, and student's own educational and occupational expectations as a measure of student motivation and goal orientation.

Sample

Data is derived from a study of eighteen junior high schools from seven districts in three western states: Washington, Texas, and California. School districts were recruited to participate in the evaluation of the desegregated junior high schools in their districts. All students in the eighth grade who were present on the day of data collection were included in the sample. A stratified random subsample was selected from the total sample population. The total sample is 1,825: 763 Anglo students, 273 Hispanic, 400 Black, 202 Asian American, 56 Native American, 108 "other," and 23 with ethnicity not identified.

Design

The measures of worker personality characteristics, teacher perception of student cognitive skills, and presentation of self were derived from a series of ratings the teachers completed on each of the students in the sample. The rating consisted of 18 bipolar adjectives, each set presented in the format of a seven-point semantic differential. The ratings were factor analyzed to identify the dimensions of the scale. Table 1 presents

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Insert Table 1 here

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the factor loadings. A .4 cutoff was determined appropriate, given the sample size and number of items. Items that did not load on any of the factors or were redundant with one or more factors were dropped from the scale. The scale consists of teacher ratings on: easy to discipline/difficult to discipline, obedient/disobedient, obstructive/cooperative, patient/impatient, unkind/kind, and prone to anger/not prone to anger. Factor 2 was identified as the cognitive skills scale. The scale is composed of teacher ratings on the dimensions of: intelligent/dull minded, slow/quick, and good memory/poor memory. Factor 3 was defined as a measure of student presentation of self. The scale is composed of teacher ratings on the adjectives: unsociable/sociable, aloof/friendly, cheerful/morose, cold/warm, extroverted/introverted, and colorful/colorless. Scale reliabilities were .92 Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) for the measure of worker personality characteristics, .91 alpha for the measure of cognitive skills, and .88 alpha for the measure of presentation of self. Items that were judged to be redundant (loadings greater than or equal to .40 in more than one factor) were dropped from the scale.

Student educational and occupational aspirations were measured by two questions. Each student was asked to estimate how far he or she would like to go in school and what kind of job he or she would like to have when he or she finished school. The first question had a range of five: (1) not finish high school, (2) finish high school, (3) go to college or trade school for awhile, (4) finish college with a B.A. degree, and (5) go beyond college, master's or doctoral degree. The second question was open-ended; responses were coded into the Duncan SES scale (Duncan, 1961). Coded responses to the first question were multiplied by two to weight the item

asked directly of the student. Occupation of the head of the household was coded in accordance with the Duncan SES scale.

The average class grades of the students were reported by their teacher, for the subject taught by that teacher (in most cases, English or social studies). The dependent variable in the model, teacher educational and occupational expectations, was composed of the number of years of schooling the teacher reported that he or she expected each student in the sample would complete and what level of occupation he/she expected the student to achieve as an adult. The scale was computed in the same manner as the student educational and occupational aspirations scale.

Data Analysis

Standard regression technique was used in the analysis. All predictor variables were entered into the regression equation simultaneously. Ethnicity and sex were converted into dummy variables. In the case of ethnicity, seperate dummy variables were created for Black, Anglo, and Hispanic identity. Asian-American, American indian, and "other" ethnic identities composed the residual categories. Females composed the residual category for sex identity. Table 2 presents the correlation coefficients between all variables in the model.

Initially, it can be seen that the teacher perceives both Black and Hispanic students as having lower levels of cognitive skills than Anglo students, -.17 ($p \leq .001$) and -.09, $p \leq .001$), respectively. Also both Black students, specifically, and male students, in general, had significantly lower scores on teacher's perceptions of worker personality characteristics, -.21,($p \leq .001$) and -.16 ($p \leq .001$), respectively. This same pattern is reflected in the grades students receive in class. Hispanic, Black,and male students score lower on grades than their respective comparison groups, -.10 ($p \leq .001$),-.19 ($p \leq .001$), and-.15 ($p \leq .001$), respectively. In addition to perceptions of cognitive skills and grades,

Hispanic students had significantly lower levels of aspirations than any other ethnic group in the school, -.16 ($p \leq .001$). Socioeconomic status was also found to be a correlate of teacher's ratings of cognitive skills, .09 ($p \leq .001$), student's educational/occupational aspirations, .13 ($p \leq .001$), and average grade .09 ($p \leq .001$) in the pattern one would expect.

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Insert Table 2 here

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Table 3 presents the statistically significant regression coefficients for the full sample predicting teacher's educational and occupational expectations. Listwise deletion technique was used in the data analysis. Sample attrition was approximately 40 percent. However, the completed questionaires did not diverge significantly from the total sample population in regard to ethnic proportions. Also, the correlation matrix using pairwise deletion, retaining almost the entire sample, was virtually the same as the one using the listwise deletion. Therefore, one would not anticipate differences in the regression coefficients if the sample was complete.

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Insert Table 3 here

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In accordance with the hypothesis, both academic skills, .52 ($p \leq .001$) and the ascriptive characteristics of ethnicity, -.06 and -.05 ($p \leq .05$) for Hispanic and Black students, respectively, had a significant effect in predicting teacher expectations. Neither worker personality characteristics nor presentation of self had a significant direct effect on the dependent variable. Students' own aspirations, .18 ($p \leq .001$), as well as, average grade, .18 ($p \leq .001$), were statistically significant in the formulation of expectations. This is especially important to note, given that minority students had lower levels on teacher's

perceptions of cognitive skills, average grade, and in the case of the Hispanic student, student aspirations.

The correlation coefficients between worker personality characteristics and average grade (.46, $p \leq .001$) and presentation of self and average grade (.29, $p \leq .001$) may be an indication that both variables are taken into account in the teacher's grading practices. Table 4 presents the significant regression coefficients in the analysis, omitting average grade from the formula. It is to be noted that even with the omission of average grade, only worker personality characteristics entered significantly into the formula (.05, $p \leq .05$).. It can be also seen that when average grade is omitted, the ethnicity of the individual increases slightly in importance in the formulation of teacher expectations. Given these high correlations between worker personality characteristics and presentation of self with average grade and teacher perceptions of students cognitive skills, it appears that the contribution of worker personality characteristics and presentation of self may be primarily indirect. That is, students who have higher levels of worker personality characteristics and skills in the presentation of self are more likely to be perceived as having the cognitive skills to achieve in the school and occupational system. It appears that the three factors are not as distinct and independent, as originally theoretically conceived by Bowles and Gintis (1976).

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Insert Table 4 here

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Regression analysis computed seperately for Anglo, Hispanic, and Black students give more insight into the signicant contribution of ethnicity in predicting teacher expectations. Tables 5, 6, and 7 present the significant regression beta weights for Anglo, Hispanic, and Black students. Overall the prediction formulas are the same for both Anglo and Hispanic ethnic groups.

The rank order of correlations in degree of magnitude is the same.

Insert Tables 5, 6, and 7 about here

Only in the case of the Black students, do worker personality characteristics enter the formula (.10, $p \leq .05$). It is interesting to note the absence of both the socioeconomic status and average grade variables from the formula. Neither variable was statistically significant in predicting teacher expectations for Black students.

Conclusion

The Bowles and Gintis thesis was not entirely upheld by the data. Only in the case of the Black students do worker personality characteristics add significantly to the prediction of teacher educational and occupational expectations. Teacher ratings of students presentation of self do not enter significantly into the model. On the other hand, the signficance of the ascribed background characteristics of SES and race were consistent with the theoretical model. It can be said that ethnic and class discrimination are present in teacher expectations. Class bias alone is present in the case of Anglo students; for Hispanic students, both ethnic and class bias are present; while for Black students, only ethnic bias is evident. Cognitive skill is by far the best predictor of teacher expectations, accounting for more variance than any other single factor and the majority of the variance in the model in general. However, it is important to note that teacher's perceptions of cognitive skills were significantly lower for minority students and students from lower socioeconomic status. It may be that there is bias in the standards used to judge levels of cognitive skills.

It is interesting that only in the case of Black students is the teacher

evaluation of worker personality characteristics significant in the formulation of teacher expectations of student success. This finding may be considered an added aspect of discrimination that Black student face in the junior high school. As noted previously, Blacks are rated significantly lower than other ethnic groups on both cognitive skills and worker personality characteristics. This may indicate that teacher's perceptions are not sensitive to Black students' potential, and that criteria for evaluation appears to be biased in terms of race. It is also important to note the absence of sex discrimination in teacher educational/occupational expectations. At this level of schooling, the mechanisms that direct students into specific tracks may not be as developed as in the senior high school, and it can be hypothesized that one is more likely to find sex discrimination in teacher expectations at the senior high school level.

The Bowles and Gintis model merely defines those variables that are important in teacher expectations. Our findings indicate that a model is needed which specifically depicts the process by which worker personality characteristics, skills regarding the presentation of self, student educational and occupational expectations, cognitive skills, academic success, and teacher expectations develop and change. It is clear that the three factors; cognitive skills, worker personality, and presentation of self are not as distinct, as originally hypothesized.

Although 61% of the variance was accounted for in the general model, the regression analysis performed in this paper provides only a crude prediction of teacher expectations. A specific causal model depicting the process of socialization and sorting is needed to display the importance of the development of specific personality characteristics and skills regarding student presentation of self and affecting achievement outcomes and teacher expectations. Further work is needed in explicating the inter-relationships between the designated attributes of the individual. Persell's work, Education and Inequality, provides

the bases for this theoretical development (Persell, 1977). Persell develops a theoretical model which attempts to map out the interrelationships between structural and processual factors of the school and attributes of the individual. However, in Persell's work the central importance placed upon teacher expectations may be the weakness in the model. It may be that a conflict approach must move away from placing the blame upon teachers (their predjudice and bias)and to place more emphasis upon investigating the standards used to determine success in the system. The bias that has been long searched for may be found in the system of knowledge in the school (curriculum), the means of transmitting this knowledge, and the techniques of assessing familiarity with this knowledge (Bernstein, 1973). More research is needed in investigating the effects of characteristics of the system in general, and less upon predjudices of individual's within the system. What the analysis does find is a persistence of a direct relationship between SES and ethnicity with teacher eduational and occupational expectations, even after controlling for cognitive skills, student motivation (student educational and occupational aspirations), and personality characteristics. However the ascriptive characterisitics generally explained the smaller percentages of the variance in comparison with the teacher's assessment of cognitive skills and grades.

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Table 1

Factor Loadings for Teacher Ratings of Eighth-Grade Junior High School Students

Principal Components Factor Analysis, Varimax Rotation

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1			
Easy to discipline/Difficult to discipline	.86	.20	.05
Obedient/Disobedient	.82	.24	.08
Cooperative/Obstructive	.81	.29	.14
Patient/Impatient	.74	.32	.06
Kind/Unkind	.71	.21	.25
Not prone to anger/Prone to anger	.72	.12	.09
Redundant items removed from scales			
Able to concentrate/Subject to distraction	.48	.70	.04
Organized/Disorganized	.47	.68	.12
Persevering/Quitting	.55	.59	.17
Factor 2			
Intelligent/Dull minded	.16	.81	.27
Quick/Slow	.10	.81	.27
Good memory/Poor memory	.29	.81	.18
Factor 3			
Sociable/Unsociable	.10	.21	.79
Friendly/Aloof	.33	.10	.76
Cheerful/Morose	.34	.15	.77
Warm/Cold	.39	.13	.67
Extroverted/Introverted	-.29	.09	.69
Colorful/Colorless	-.02	.21	.68

Table 2

Statistically Significant Correlation Between Variables in the Model for the Entire Sample of Eighth-Grade Junior High School Students (N = 1,054)

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	$\bar{X}$	SD
1	Presentation of self											373.06	74.25
2	Worker personality	.31**										389.10	87.94
3	Cognitive skills	.45**	.48**									11.04	2.86
4	Student educational/ occupational aspirations	.18**	.23**	.32**								644.66	201.02
5	Socioeconomic status	--	--	.09**	.13**							38.91	28.60
6	Ethnicity (Anglo)	--	.12**	.13**	--	.15**						.47	.50
7	Ethnicity (Hispanic)	--	--	-.09**	-.16**	-.18**	a					.16	.37
8	Ethnicity (Black)	.06*	-.21**	-.17**	--	-.05*	a	a				.18	.39
9	Sex (male)	-.06*	-.16**	-.05*	--	--	--	--	--			.51	.50
10	Teacher educational/ occupational expectations	.34**	.41**	.73**	.42**	.19**	.15**	-.15**	-.18**	-.07*		307.97	117.96
11	Average grade	.29**	.46**	.64**	.24**	.09**	.13**	-.10**	-.19**	-.16**	.59**	7.41	1.58

* $p < .05$
** $p < .001$

[a]Correlations between ethnic dummy variables are ipsative

Table 3

Statistically Significant Regression Coefficients of Variables Predicting Teacher Educational/Occupational Expectations of Eighth-Grade Junior High School Students

Variable	Standardized Regression Coefficient
Cognitive skills	.52**
Student educational/occupational aspirations	.18**
Average grade	.18**
Socioeconomic status	.09**
Ethnicity (Hispanic)	-.06*
Ethnicity (Black)	-.05*
R^2	.61
N = 1,061	

* Significant at the .01 level
** Significant at the .001 level

Table 4

Statistically Significant Regression Coefficients of Variables Predicting Teacher Educational/Occupational Expectations of Eighth-Grade Junior High School Students, Average Grade Omitted from Equation

Variable	Standardized Regression Coefficient
Worker personality characteristics	.05
Cognitive skills	.61**
Student educational/occupational aspirations	.19**
Socioeconomic status	.09**
Ethnicity (Hispanic)	-.07**
Ethnicity (Black)	-.07**
R^2	.59
N = 1,139	

* Significant at the .01 level
** Significant at the .001 level

Table 5

Statistically Significant Regression Coefficients of Variables Predicting Teacher Educational/Occupational Expectations of Eighth-Grade Anglo Students

Variable	Standardized Regression Coefficient	$\bar{X}$	SD
Cognitive skills	.49**	11.45	2.84
Student educational/occupational aspirations	.19**	645.57	197.42
Socioeconomic status	.08*	43.24	28.08
Average grade	.26**	7.63	1.43
R^2	.61**		
N = 504			

* Significant at the .01 level
** Significant at the .001 level

Table 6

Statistically Significant Regression Coefficients of Variables Predicting Teacher Educational/Occupational Expectations of Eighth-Grade Hispanic Students

Variable	Standardized Regression Coefficient	$\bar{X}$	SD
Cognitive skills	.46**	10.45	2.74
Student educational/occupational aspirations	.21**	572.36	216.77
Socioeconomic status	.13	27.14	27.04
Average grade	.21*	7.06	1.62
R^2	.56**		

N = 174

* Significant at the .01 level
** Significant at the .001 level

Table 7

Statistically Significant Regression Coefficients of Variables Predicting Teacher Educational/Occupational Expectations of Eighth-Grade Black Students

Variable	Standardized Regression Coefficient	$\bar{X}$	SD
Worker personality characteristics	.10	344.99	94.82
Cognitive skills	.66**	9.68	2.87
Student educational/occupational aspirations	.14**	627.16	172.95
R^2	.55**		

N = 280

* Significant at the .01 level
** Significant at the .001 level