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Black Youths in Predominantly White Suburbs: AnExploratory Study of Their Attitudes and Self-Concepts

James A. Banks,* College of Education, University of Washington (Seattle)

INTRODUCTION
As the income gap between Blacks and Whites narrowed during the 1960s and 70s,1 and with the enactment of fair housing legislation, the number of Black Americans living in suburban communities increased significantly. By 1977 the increase reached 71.8 percent2 and by 1980 one in every five Blacks was a suburban resident.3 This Black suburbanization is not a monolithic movement. Although many Black suburbanites live in predominantly Black spillover communities, a significant number of Black suburban residents live in predominantly White communities where they are a small but increasingly significant minority.

There is a dearth of research that describes and interprets the social, psychological, and educational experiences of Black suburbanites. The present study is part of a larger study of Black families who live in selected, predominantly White suburban communities

*The author expresses appreciation to the Rockefeller Foundation for supporting this study through its Research Fellowship Program; the families who participated; Cherry McGee Banks for help with the procedures; Percy D. Peckham for help with the data analysis; and to Banks, Peckham, and Dianne L. Monson for helpful reactions to an earlier draft of this article.

of a large metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest, the population of which exceeds one million. The study was designed to describe the self-concepts of ability, general self-concepts, levels of externality, and the attitudes toward physical characteristics, neighborhoods, and schools of the children in the larger study who were ages eight to eighteen.

The variables selected for examination in this study were chosen because of their possible relationship to socialization within a predominantly White suburban community. Several variables, such as self-concept of ability and internality, were selected because they are important correlates of academic achievement. While there is no measure of academic achievement in this study, the variables studied can provide inferences about the academic achievement of the children in this sample.

Many researchers who have studied the self-concepts and racial attitudes of Blacks have studied low-income Black students, Blacks in artificially integrated situations, or have not sufficiently controlled for social class, i.e., they have treated Blacks as a monolithic group without determining the effects of social class on their behavior. The conflicting results from various studies of the self-concepts, locus of control, and racial attitudes of Black youths may result in large part from the fact that social class, degree of assimilation, region, and the racial composition of the community in which the students live are not adequately controlled or examined. Most of the youths who participated in this study have upper middle-class and highly educated parents. These parents, because of their attitudes and socio-economic status, have voluntarily chosen to live in predominantly White suburban communities and to send their children to the public schools in their neighborhoods. Because of the unique characteristics of the Black children in this study, its findings should contribute to a better understanding of the complex relationship between race, social class, racial attitudes, and externality. The children in this study are among the very few Blacks in their classes and/or schools. Consequently, an examination of their attitudes and self-concepts will help us to understand

better the social and psychological characteristics of individuals whom social scientists have described as "marginal." 

**METHOD**

**Subjects**

A method was developed to identify Black families with school-age children who lived in selected predominantly White suburban communities of a metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest. This method consisted primarily of asking members of Black churches, social and civic organizations, and community groups to identify families with the above characteristics. The identified families were then asked to name other such families. Sixty-four of the identified families participated in this study. The 98 children (55 boys; 43 girls) who became subjects were members of 57 of the 64 participating families. The children had a mean age of 12.8 years and were in grades three through twelve.

There are inherent difficulties in identifying Black families who live in predominantly White suburban communities. This study required all members of the family (parents and school-age children) to participate during what is normally their leisure time, a Saturday afternoon. These constraints eliminated both the possibility of a larger sample as well as a random selection of the subjects. However, the nature and size of the sample was adequate to satisfy the major goals of this exploratory study.

**Procedures**

The families that participated in this study had the option to complete the questionnaires at a central site on a university campus or to request that a member of the research staff administer the questionnaires in their homes. Half of the 98 children in this study completed the questionnaires in each of the two sites. At the central testing site, questionnaires were administered in standardized group situations by staff members trained in the technique. In the home settings, the same staff members administered the questionnaires to the children individually or with other family member subjects.

**Instruments**

The children were administered the following scales: the Brookover Self-Concept of Ability Scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale,

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the Stephan-Rosenfield Racial Attitude Scales, the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale, and a 45-item questionnaire developed by the investigator with subscales that measure (a) Attitudes Toward School, (b) Physical Self-Concept, (c) Attitudes Toward Blacks, (d) Attitudes Toward Whites, and (e) Attitudes Toward Neighborhood. The internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach’s Alpha) for each of the scales and subscales are presented in Table I.

The Brookover Self-Concept of Ability Scale is an 8-item questionnaire in which students estimate their academic ability. In previous studies, the Brookover Scale has been found to correlate positively with academic achievement. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a measure of general self-concept, in which individuals indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with statements such as, “I feel that I have a number of good qualities,” and, “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.”

The Stephan-Rosenfield Racial Attitudes Scales consist of two parallel parts. The two parts measure attitudes toward Blacks and Whites, respectively. Each part includes 10 items. Each item consists of two paired adjectives, such as, “happy; sad.” For each adjective pair, the students are asked to judge Blacks or Whites as groups by circling the response closest to their opinion. These two subscales will hereafter be referred to as STEP WHITE and STEP BLACK. Both STEP WHITE and STEP BLACK are scored in a negative direction, i.e., the higher the score, the more negative the respondent’s attitudes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE I</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Consistency Reliabilities (Cronbach’s Alpha) of the Instruments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Brookover Self-Concept of Ability Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Stephan-Rosenfield Racial Attitude Scales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Whites Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Blacks Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banks Scales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Self-Concept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Blacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Whites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Neighborhood</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

are toward the ethnic group. It is important to note this scoring method since the other measures in this study are scored in a positive direction.

The Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale measures the extent to which individuals attribute their success or failure to themselves or to others. Individuals who are externally oriented tend to attribute their success or failure to others. Internal individuals tend to attribute their success or failure to their own efforts. This scale consists of 40 items, such as "Are some kids just born lucky?" to which individuals are asked to respond either "yes" or "no." Internality has been found to correlate positively with academic achievement and other behavior usually associated with success. Research indicates that ethnic minority youths tend to be more external than White youths.  

The 45 items that comprised the investigator's attitude scale are declarative statements. The subjects indicated their extent of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Sample items from each of the subscales follow. The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of items in each subscale.

Attitudes Toward School (11): I like school.  
Physical Self-Concept (10): I like the color of my skin.  
Attitudes Toward Blacks (8): I like to spend a lot of my time with my Black friends.  
Attitudes Toward Whites (8): I sometimes feel uneasy around Whites.  
Attitudes Toward Neighborhood (8): I wish I lived in another neighborhood.

Hereafter, these scales will be referred to as SCHOOL, PHYSICAL, BAN BLACK, BAN WHITE, and NEIGHBORHOOD.

Measurement of the Two Derived Variables

In addition to the measures of the ten attitude and self-concept variables described above, two measures of what Stephan and Rosenfield (see note 9) have described as ethnocentrism were computed, using scores obtained by the subjects on STEP WHITE and STEP BLACK and BAN WHITE and BAN BLACK. In each case, this measure indicated how much more positively the subjects evaluated their own ethnic group than they evaluated Whites. The ethnocentric score was computed by finding the difference between a respondent's sum of scores on Black and White measures of attitudes. The

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ethnocentric measure derived from the Stephan-Rosenfield Scale will be hereafter referred to as ETHNO STEP. The one derived from the investigator’s scales will be referred to as ETHNO BAN.

Intercorrelations of the Stephan-Rosenfield Scales and the Investigator’s Scales

In this study, two different scales were used to measure attitudes toward Blacks and Whites. This was done, in part, because intercorrelations among racial attitude measures tend to be low. The Stephan-Rosenfield Racial Attitude Scales are designed for use with a general population of students. An additional scale was needed that would more directly measure the racial attitudes of Black children who lived and went to school in unique sociocultural environments. When the results from these different measures are viewed collectively, a more complex view of the racial attitudes of the children in this study is attained.

The BAN WHITE and the STEP WHITE scales correlated substantially ($r = -0.55; p < 0.001$). The BAN BLACK and STEP BLACK correlated significantly but only moderately ($r = -0.27; p < 0.01$). This correlation may be moderate rather than high because the Stephan-Rosenfield Scales measure global racial attitudes, while four of the eight items on the BAN BLACK scale relate to Blacks in a school setting. Only one of the items on BAN WHITE relate to the school setting. This probably explains why BAN WHITE and STEP WHITE correlate much more highly than STEP BLACK and BAN BLACK.

RESULTS

Relationship Between the Demographic and the Attitudes and Self-Concept Variables

The 98 children who participated in this study lived in ten different suburban communities and went to school in 14 separate districts. A one-way analysis of variance indicated that neither suburb nor school district was significantly related ($p < 0.05$) to any of the attitude and self-concept variables.

A two-tailed $t$-test indicated that site was related to only one of the attitude and self-concept variables; children who completed the questionnaires at home scored significantly more positively toward Whites on the BAN WHITE scale than did children who completed the questionnaires at the central testing site (Group means = 23.25

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and 21.16; \( t = 2.53; p < .01 \)). Because it was not possible to assign subjects to the two different sites randomly, it is not possible to determine whether the differences in the scores on BAN WHITE resulted from differences in the characteristics of the subjects or from differences in the two sites.

However, because BAN WHITE was the only variable in which the two groups of subjects differed significantly, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the all-Black setting of the central testing site may have reinforced positive attitudes toward Blackness and caused the youths in that setting to express fewer pro-White feelings than the youths who completed the questionnaires at their homes in predominantly White suburban communities.

Sex, age, grade, and family type (whether children lived in two-parent or one-parent families) were correlated with the ten primary and the two derived attitude and self-concept variables. As Table II indicates, there were few significant correlations between these variables and the attitude and self-concept variables. Sex correlated significantly but only moderately with attitudes toward neighborhood and attitudes toward Blacks (STEP BLACK). Girls had slightly more negative attitudes (\( r = -.16; p < .05 \)) toward their neighborhoods than boys, and slightly more negative attitudes toward Blacks (\( r = .25; p < .01 \)) when attitudes were measured with STEP BLACK. Age and self-concept of ability were negatively related; however, this correlation was not significant (\( r = -.12; p > .05 \)). Family type did not correlate significantly with any of the attitude and self-concept variables. Whether the children in this study were members of families with one or two family heads was not significantly related to the attitude and self-concept variables.

Age correlated moderately and negatively with attitudes toward neighborhood (\( r = -.24; p < .01 \)), indicating that the older children in this population were slightly less positive toward their neighborhoods than were the younger children. Age also correlated rather substantially with attitudes toward Blacks (STEP BLACK), (\( r = .40; p < .01 \)), indicating that as the age of the children in this study increased, they scored significantly more negatively toward Blacks on the Stephan-Rosenfield Scale. This relationship between age and attitudes toward Blacks is also revealed in the negative correlations between age and ethnocentrism on the investigator’s ethnocentrism measure (\( r = -.10; p > .05 \)) and the ethnocentrism measure derived from the Stephan-Rosenfield Scales (\( r = -.24; p < .01 \)).

Age correlated moderately and negatively with externality (\( r = -.32; p < .01 \)), indicating that externality decreases as children get older. This finding is consistent with the findings of most researchers who have investigated the relationship between externality and
age in school-age populations.\textsuperscript{13} As might be expected because of the strong positive relationship between age and grade, grade correlated significantly with the same variables as age: attitudes toward neighborhood, attitudes toward Blacks (STEP BLACK), and externality. As their grades increased, the children in this study became moderately more negative toward their neighborhoods and toward Blacks, and less external.

**Intercorrelations of the Attitude and Self-Concept Variables**

A discussion of the interrelationships among the attitude and self-concept variables follows. These interrelationships, as determined by a Pearson correlational analysis, are given in Table III.

*Self-Concept of Ability and Self-Esteem.* Self-concept of ability is a strong correlate of academic achievement; consequently, it is an important research variable. In this study, self-concept of ability was not related to most of the measures of racial attitudes. However, it was significantly related to most of the other attitude and self-concept variables and moderately related ($r = .16; p < .05$) to racial attitudes toward Blacks when racial attitudes were measured by BAN BLACK. Self-concept of ability was significantly related, in a positive direction, to self-esteem, attitudes toward school, physical self-concept, and internality. As the self-concepts of ability of the children in this study increased, their self-esteem increased, their evaluation of their Black physical characteristics became more positive, their attitudes toward school and Blacks became more positive, and their sense of control over their fate increased.

Self-esteem consists of a person's generalized evaluation of self, while self-concept of ability is a measure of an individual's opinion of his or her ability to do academic work successfully. Consequently, it was expected that these two variables would be substantially related, as was found to be the case in this study. Self-esteem was also substantially related to attitudes toward school ($r = .50; p < .001$), and physical self-concept ($r = .46; p < .001$), and moderately related to attitudes toward Blacks (BAN BLACK) ($r = .19; p < .03$). However, self-esteem and attitudes toward Blacks were not significantly related when attitudes were measured with STEP BLACK. There was a small but significant relationship between self-esteem and attitudes toward Whites (STEP WHITE) ($r = -.22; p < .01$). However, this relationship was not significant when attitudes were measured by BAN WHITE.

Self-esteem and attitudes toward neighborhood were moder-
### TABLE II

**Relationship Between the Demographic and Attitude and Self-concept Variables**  
(Pearson Correlation Coefficients)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>ESTEEM</th>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>PHYSICAL</th>
<th>BAN BLACK</th>
<th>BAN WHITE</th>
<th>NEIGHBORHOOD</th>
<th>STEP WHITE</th>
<th>STEP BLACK</th>
<th>LOCUS</th>
<th>ETHNO BAN</th>
<th>ETHNO STEP</th>
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<td>.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
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<td>-.11</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>-.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-.34**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 98; *p < .05; **p < .01.

### TABLE III

**Intercorrelations of the Attitude and Self-concept Variables (n = 98)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Self-Concept of Ability</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Self-Esteem</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Attitudes Toward School</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>-.55</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>-.50**</td>
<td>-.38**</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Physical Self-Concept</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Attitudes Toward Blacks (BAN)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.83**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Attitudes Toward Whites (BAN)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>-.55**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>-.84**</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Attitudes Toward Neighborhood</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.47**</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Attitudes Toward Whites (STEP)*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Attitudes Toward Blacks (STEP)*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.70**</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Externality</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ethnocentrism (ETHNO-BAN)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ethnocentrism (ETHNO-STEP)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*† High scores on this scale indicate negative attitudes. All other measures are scored in a positive direction.

* *p < .05; ** *p < .01
ately related \( (r = .21; p < .01) \). The more the children in this study liked their neighborhoods, the higher was their self-esteem. Self-esteem was negatively related to externality \( (r = -.33; p < .001) \). The children in this study who had high self-esteem tended to be internal.

*Attitudes Toward School.* Attitudes toward school and physical self-concept were not significantly related. How the children in this study felt about their Black physical characteristics was not related to whether they liked or disliked school. These findings may mean that the school setting is having a rather neutral impact on how the children in this study view their physical characteristics.

There was a moderate but significant negative relationship between attitudes toward school and attitudes toward Blacks \( (BAN BLACK) \) \( (r = -.23; p < .001) \). This relationship was not significant when racial attitudes were measured by \( STEP BLACK \). Half of the eight items on \( BAN BLACK \) relate directly to the school setting, while none of the items on the \( STEP BLACK \) relates uniquely to the school situation. \( BAN BLACK \) includes these items, "I wish more Black children were in my school," and "I wish I could go to a Black school." Consequently, this negative relationship between attitudes toward Blacks and toward school means, in part, that the more the children liked their schools, the less they wanted them changed by integrating them with more Blacks.

Attitudes toward Whites and attitudes toward school were substantially related. This relationship was significant when attitudes toward Whites were measured by both \( BAN WHITE \) \( (r = .56; p < .001) \) and by \( STEP WHITE \) \( (r = -.55; p < .001) \). The more the children in this study liked school, the more positive they felt toward Whites. This is an expected relationship since most of the teachers and students in the schools attended by these students were White.

There was a substantial positive relationship between attitudes toward school and attitudes toward neighborhood \( (r = .57; p < .001) \). Since the socio-cultural and racial worlds of the schools and neighborhoods in which these students lived were highly similar, it is to be expected that their attitudes toward their schools and neighborhoods would be highly related.

Attitudes toward school and externality were negatively related \( (r = -.34 \ p < .001) \). Consequently, the more the children in this study liked their schools, the more internal they were. Children who like school the most probably experience success in school because they have high academic self-concepts and high academic abilities. Both high academic self-concepts and academic achievement are correlates of internality. The relationship between attitudes toward school and externality found in this study is consistent
with both theory related to externality and previous research findings that relate internality to academic success.

**Physical Self-Concept.** Black children who are socialized within predominantly White suburban communities beginning at an early age experience many situations in which they are a small minority. Consequently, they are likely to internalize White standards of physical beauty and to evaluate their own color and physical characteristics negatively. Previous research on children’s racial attitudes suggests that this may be the case.\(^{14}\) The ten-item scale in this study, the Physical Self-Concept Scale, was designed to measure how Black youths evaluated their physical characteristics and race and to determine how physical self-evaluation related to other variables.

The predominantly White communities in which the children in this study lived do not seem to have had a significantly negative effect on their evaluations of their physical characteristics and race. These children gave positive evaluations of their physical characteristics and Blackness. The mean physical self score was 33.14, out of a possible score of 40 (SD = 3.51, n = 98). Over 92 percent of the children agreed with this statement: “I like the way I look;” 98 percent agreed with this statement: “I like the color of my skin.” Only 8.2 percent of the children agreed with the statement: “My looks bother me.”

Even though the children in this study had high opinions of their physical characteristics, physical self-concept was significantly related to only four of the other attitude and self-concept variables: self-concept of ability, self-esteem, attitudes toward Blacks (BAN BLACK), and ethnocentrism (ETHNO BAN). The children who had positive attitudes toward their physical characteristics tended to have high self-concepts of ability, high self-esteem, positive attitudes toward Blacks, and to be more pro-Black than pro-White when ethnocentrism was measured with ETHNO BAN.

**Locus of Control.** Rotter and Nowicki and Strickland have done pioneering conceptual and empirical research on the concept of internality.\(^ {15}\) Internality has been found to correlate in a positive direction with a number of important variables, such as higher academic achievement (Nowicki and Strickland), persistence (Gor-


\(^{15}\)J. B. Rotter, "Generalization Expectancies for Internal Versus External Control of Reinforcement," *Psychological Monographs, 80* (1966), Whole no. 609; and, Nowicki and Strickland, " A Locus of Control Scale for Children."

A goal of the present study was to describe the extent to which the children in this study were internal and the correlates of internality in this population. The children’s mean score (11.99) on the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale is lower (more internal) than the norms reported for this scale.\footnote{Leftcourt, \textit{Locus of Control}.} Internality was related positively to self-concept of ability, self-esteem, attitudes toward school, and attitudes toward Whites and negatively to attitudes toward Blacks (STEP BLACK) and ethnocentrism as measured by both ETHNO BAN and ETHNO STEP.

The more internal the children were in this study, the higher were their self-concepts of ability, self-esteem, attitudes toward school, and attitudes toward Whites. However, internality and positive attitudes toward Blacks, and internality and ethnocentrism, were negatively related.

**Ethnocentrism and the Other Attitude and Self-Concept Variables**

The relationship between ethnocentrism (pro-Blackness) and the other attitude and self-concept variables is summarized in Table III. Self-concept of ability is not significantly related to ethnocentrism as measured on either ETHNO BAN or ETHNO STEP. Self-esteem is not significantly related to ethnocentrism as measured by ETHNO BAN, but is negatively related to ethnocentrism as measured by ETHNO STEP. This finding is perplexing and seems inconsistent with some of the other findings in this study. Self-esteem, for example, is positively related to racial attitudes toward Blacks when attitudes are measured by BAN BLACK. However, self-esteem is not related to attitudes toward Blacks when attitudes are measured with STEP BLACK.

This finding indicates that ethnocentrism, as derived from mean scores on the Stephan-Rosenfield Racial Attitudes Scales, is moderately but negatively related to self-esteem ($r = - .18; p < .05$). However, this negative relationship between ethnocentrism and self-esteem is not revealed by the other correlations in this study; yet it warrants further discussion.
This finding indicates that children who evaluated Blacks more positively on the Stephan-Rosenfield Scales tended to score slightly lower on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. What factors can explain this unexpected finding? Assimilationist theory can help provide some possible answers to this question. The children who evaluated Blacks more positively on the Stephan-Rosenfield Scales might be more culturally Black, have a stronger Black identity, be more external, and may have experienced more discriminatory situations that have negatively influenced their self-esteem than the children who evaluated Blacks less positively. Consequently, the experiences that have caused children to evaluate Blacks more positively than Whites might be related to the experiences that have caused them to have slightly lower self-esteem. The assimilation process that causes Black youths to acquire more positive self-esteem might also cause them to evaluate Blacks less positively than Whites. The factors and experiences that enable Black youths to become more internal, discussed earlier, may also cause them to acquire higher self-esteem and to evaluate Blacks as a group less positively, but themselves more positively. The fact that self-esteem correlated positively with attitudes toward Whites (STEP WHITE) lends support to the explanation presented here. However, the positive correlation between self-esteem and attitudes toward Blacks does not.

Ethnocentrism correlated negatively with attitudes toward school (ETHNO BAN and ETHNO STEP). This finding indicates that positive attitudes toward school and pro-Blackness are inversely related. This finding is consistent with the earlier reported correlation which shows a negative relationship between attitudes toward school and attitudes toward Blacks.

Ethnocentrism and physical self-concept are positively related when pro-Blackness is measured with ETHNO BAN. However, these two variables are not related when ethnocentrism is measured with ETHNO STEP. Ethnocentrism and attitudes toward Blacks are substantially related when ethnocentrism is measured by both scales. Ethnocentrism (both ETHNO BAN and ETHNO STEP) is correlated negatively and substantially with BAN WHITE. This is an expected relationship.

On both ethnocentrism measures, pro-Blackness correlated negatively with attitudes toward neighborhood. The more the children in this study liked their neighborhood, the less pro-Black they were. Ethnocentrism (both measures) correlated with attitudes toward Whites (both measures) in the expected direction: high ethnocentrism scores were negatively related to scores on racial attitudes toward Whites. Ethnocentrism (both measures) was significantly
related to externality: the more pro-Black the children were in the study, the more external they were.

**CONCLUSION**

The findings of this exploratory study must be interpreted with caution because of the sample size ($n = 98$), the non-random selection of the subjects, and because the study was conducted in only one geographic region. However, the design enabled us to study a population that is extremely difficult to identify and convince to participate in social research. While this study has limitations, it raises important questions and provides fruitful hypotheses that merit further study by researchers.

The predominantly White suburban communities in which the children in this study were being socialized have not prevented them from developing positive attitudes toward themselves, their communities, and their schools. These children were biracial in their attitudes—they had positive attitudes toward both Blacks and Whites—although they were slightly more positive toward Blacks (mean = 26.15) than toward Whites (mean = 22.20). The findings suggest that Black children socialized within predominantly White suburban communities are likely to become highly attitudinally assimilated into White society and that this kind of assimilation may have complex effects on their racial attitudes toward Blacks and their levels of ethnocentrism. As attitudinal assimilation increased, these children became increasingly more positive toward their schools and neighborhoods and more positive toward Whites, but less positive toward Blacks.

The findings of this study suggest, however, that attitudinal assimilation may have some desirable educational consequences: The children in this study who had highly positive attitudes toward Whites and toward their schools and neighborhoods were also more internal. Internality is positively related to academic achievement and to other success-related behavior. Internality was negatively related to positive attitudes toward Blacks and to ethnocentrism. This latter finding raises a question about whether Black children can remain ethnic in their racial attitudes and attain high levels of internality. This question warrants study within a wide range of populations in which Black youths are socialized.

Several findings in this study suggest that the experiences of Black females in predominantly White suburban communities may be slightly more difficult than those of Black males. Girls not only liked their neighborhoods less than boys did but had slightly more negative attitudes toward Blacks as measured by STEP BLACK. This study also suggests that life in White suburbia may be a bit more
difficult for children as they grow older. The older children in this study had significantly more negative attitudes toward their neighborhoods and toward Blacks. These two findings, which must be interpreted cautiously because of the limitations of this study, merit further study and investigation.

Many of the findings of this exploratory study are consistent with those of other researchers. However, a number of questions are raised about the relationship between race, social class, and sociocultural environment. These variables warrant further study so that a more accurate picture of Black life and culture can be described.