

THE RESERVATION ADOLESCENTS' SELF-CONCEPT

by
Patrice Kiefer

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APPROVED:

  Chairman, Dr. James E. Montgomery

 Dr. Joseph W. Maxwell

 Dr. R. W. Beamer

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose	3
Hypotheses	4
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	5
Age, Grade, Sex and the Self-Concept	5
Familial Influence on the Self-Concept	8
Socio-economic Status and the Self-Concept	13
III. PROCEDURES	16
Sample	16
Instruments	18
Data	19
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	22
Results	22
Discussion	28
Limitations and Recommendations	32
V. SUMMARY	34
REFERENCES	38
APPENDIX	42
VITA	52

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LIST OF TABLES

	Page
1. Characteristics of Sample of Indian and White Reservation Adolescents	21
2. Self-Concept of Indian and White Reservation Adolescents by Selected Variables	26
3. Comparison of Self-Concept of Indian and White Reservation Adolescents When Selected Variables Are Held Constant	27

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is generally recognized that a wholesome self-concept is a prerequisite to a self-actualizing and effective person. The importance of the self-concept has been emphasized by Shane (1957) who suggested that we are governed by the concept of self, which is a product of the experiences in the culture in which we are reared. These experiences begin with the development of self at birth and are affected by the social and non-human environment, people, and their interaction "as one seeks satisfaction, security, and acts to maintain well-being." (Sherman 1967).

The self-concept has been explained as the traits and values the individual has accepted as the definitions of himself. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development devoted its 1962 Yearbook to the 'self' and concluded that people must have accurate, realistic, non-defensive self-concepts to achieve adequacy. Brandt (1957) reflected on the importance of the self in the following manner:

Despite our technological advances we have made little progress as a nation in helping many of our citizens and future citizens attain sufficient self-awareness and self-acceptance to realize their potentials.

Early writing in self-theory can be traced to Cooley (1902) who advanced the classic idea that the 'looking-glass self' largely

results from social interaction. In 1934, Mead emphasized the self-in-society, and during the 1940s Rogers, Lecky, and Snygg and Combs each made an attempt to understand behavior by approaching the self in conscious cognition. Although self-theory was then beginning to develop, little empirical investigation of the self was done before the 1950s. Since that time investigations have related the self-concept to school achievement (Brookover 1962), delinquency (Coopersmith 1959), anxiety (Rosenberg 1965) and an infinite number of behavioral patterns from infancy through adulthood.

Family and other social experiences have a significant effect on the self-concept. Different life styles and social environments shape different selves in regard to expectations and behavior (Rainwater 1956). Shane (1957) said, "depending on the culture, the child may become one of many selves or no self at all." One problem of the deprived is a limitation of experiences, or the fostering of undesirable experiences which produce individuals essentially incapable of participating in the mainstream of society.

A case in point is the rural Indian who is perpetually at the bottom of the social ladder. In the fastest growing sub-culture of poverty in America today, the average Indian adult can expect to live to age 42, compared with 72 years for other Americans. Also, the highest rates of unemployment, alcoholism and school dropouts in America are found among the Indian.

Although a considerable amount of research has been done on the self-concept among many segments of the population, virtually no one

has studied this phenomenon among Indian adolescents. Before one can effectively influence or control a phenomenon, such as the self-concept, one must understand its nature. In the case of the Indian adolescent, one needs to understand the nature and correlates of the self-concept. It may be that the image young Indians and later older Indians have of themselves is a critical factor in a life style that places them in the most deprived category. Information on race is pertinent to the adolescent self-concept, but so also are other factors such as age, grade, sex, family patterns, and socio-economic status. Therefore, it would increase understanding of the self-concept if one were to study this phenomenon in a setting that would enable the researcher to compare his findings among reservation Indian and reservation white adolescents.

Rosenberg (1962) defined self-esteem as a sense of worth, or as regarding oneself as "good enough." For the purposes of this study, the wholesome self-concept shall be defined as the self-esteem, the respect which an individual has for himself, or the perception of himself as a worthy person.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to assess the nature of the self-concept of Indian and white reservation adolescents and to analyze this variable in terms of age, grade, sex, ordinal position in the family, the number of children in the family, family communication and socio-economic status.

HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses will be tested:

- 1) There is no significant difference in the self-concept of reservation Indian and reservation white adolescents.
- 2) The self-concept of neither group of adolescents will be significantly related to age, grade, sex, ordinal position in the family, the number of children in the family, family communication and socio-economic status.
- 3) There is no difference between the reservation Indian and reservation white adolescent's self-concept when the following variables are statistically controlled: age, grade, sex, ordinal position in the family, the number of children in the family, family communication and socio-economic status.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into three major sections. The first part will be devoted to the presentation of age, grade and sex influences on the self-concept. Since several studies have considered these variables together, these factors have been grouped. The second section will include a review of research literature on familial influences on the self-concept, including parental influences, the child's ordinal position and the number of children in the family. The third section will review relevant literature on socio-economic influences on the self-concept. To the writer's knowledge, thus far no investigation has dealt with the relationship between the reservation adolescent's self-concept, Indian or white, and any of the seven factors examined in this study.

Age, Grade, Sex and the Self-Concept

Engel, Hill, Perkins and Balester have found significant evidence to support the hypothesis that the self-concept changes with age. Engel (1956) studied 89 eighth graders and 61 tenth graders in 1954 and re-tested them again in 1956. She found that those subjects with a negative self-concept in 1954 when re-examined in 1956, were significantly less stable in self-concept than were those whose self-concept was positive. Over the two year period the increase in mean

favorability of the self-concept was significant beyond the .05 level for the older group, but there was no difference between older and younger groups in self-self relationships. According to Engel's findings, students moved toward positive evaluations of self between 10th and 12th grade, and during this time self-reports became more stable.

Using experimental and control groups of 30 students each in grades nine, ten and twelve, Hill (1956) concluded that attitudes toward self improve with chronological age. This improvement was more pronounced among upper socio-economic groups than among lower groups, when mean scores of attitudes toward self were compared.

From his results, Perkins (1957) found that "children differ by grade and sex in the precepts or traits which they generally incorporate into or exclude from their self-concepts." Using 50 self-referent items for a sample of 251 fourth- and sixth-grade pupils, a significant increase in self-ideal congruence over a six-month period was observed, with greater self-ideal congruence among sixth graders.

Balester (1956) administered a Q-sort, three times, at 30-day intervals to measure the self-concept. His subjects included an adult group, a non-delinquent group 12-16 years of age and a delinquent group 13-17 years of age. The adult group's self-concepts were significantly more consistent than the non-adults, while no differences were noted in the delinquent and non-delinquent groups.

Seven hundred and thirty adolescent boys from 29 public schools in northern Florida were used by Maxwell (1967) to study factors which play an important role in the self-concept. Bills Index of Adjustment and Values was used as the measure of self-concept for Negro and white students ages 13-17. Findings indicated a tendency for older subjects to have a more positive self-concept than younger ones.

In support of age being a relevant variable of the self-concept, Powell's (1964) findings are noteworthy. He was interested in the seven senses of self described by Allport, in relation to the developing adolescent. Male subjects of 13, 16, and 22 years of age were used. Trends were found which suggested that the sense of self-esteem increases with age and that during the adolescent years the positive self-image and self-acceptance increase. In regard to Allport's seven senses, the oldest group tended to reflect more complete senses of self than did the younger ones.

Smith and Lebo (1956) used pubic hair as an indicator of puberty and comparing this with human drawings, paragraph completion and the Vineland Social Distance Scale to study the self-concept, they found that the adolescent's self-concept in regard to dependence or independence from parents is closely related to age. Their study was based on data obtained from 42 male subjects ranging in age from 12 to 15 years. The authors' findings supported the idea that the self-concept becomes more integrated with age.

In Horowitz's (1962) investigation, a significant Pearson correlation coefficient indicated differences in the self-concept

between the sexes. One hundred and eleven fourth, fifth and sixth graders were studied using an adapted children's scale for self-concept measurement.

Research findings within the last 15 years have lent greater understanding to the developing self-concept in relation to age. The preceding investigations support the belief that the self-concept becomes more integrated, more stable, and tends to become more positive as one grows older.

Familial Influence on the Self-Concept

It is generally accepted that parents have a significant and lasting influence on their children's personalities. Recent research on parent-child interaction has suggested a relationship between the parents' attitudes, the child's perception of his parents, and his self-concept. Several researchers have studied the effects of a child's perception of his parents' attitudes toward him upon his self-perceptions. In a study by Jourard (1955) significant correlations were found between college students' perceptions of how their parents regarded them in terms of their body and self, and the students' own self and body-regard. A correlation was found between high self-regard in the child and his feeling that his parents regarded him highly.

Parental influence was studied further by Manis (1958). "Adjusted" and "maladjusted" groups of college students, based on certain MMPI scores, were asked to describe their "real" and "ideal" selves, evaluate their parents, and indicate how they thought their

parents would rate them on the scales. Resulting correlations indicated that the maladjusted subjects felt that they were less highly regarded by their parents than were the adjusted subjects.

Kemp (1965) compared adolescents having many and few problems. In order to identify the number of problems per subject, he employed the Mooney Problem check-list. The adolescent's perception of his parents and of himself were found to be related. Adolescents with few problems were found to have high parental regard. Parents perceived their children to have more personal problems than the adolescents themselves had stated. In this study, all adolescents considered themselves more self-reliant than they were perceived to be by their parents.

In a study of identification, parent-cathexis and self-esteem, Jourard (1957) found that children with high self-regard perceived themselves to have personal characteristics similar to their parents. He also concluded that if a child thinks his parent's characteristics are close to his ideal for that parent, he will regard that parent highly. The concept of parental identification as an influence on the child's self-concept was further validated by Havighurst (1955). In a study of New Zealand and American children concerning the development of ideal self, developmental trends indicated that identification moves from a parental figure in early childhood to an attractive young adult in late adolescence.

An investigation by Reckless, Dinitz, and Murray (1956) examined the socially acceptable concept of self in 125 boys nominated by their

teachers as 'good'. They found the acquired social definition of role from significant figures in the environment was insulation against delinquency when the boys were studied in terms of their self-concept, family, and interpersonal relations conceptions.

Brodreck and Perlmutter (1954) administered a self-dislike questionnaire to 141 female and 132 male college students. They attempted to assess self-dislike in relation to authoritarianism and preference for foreign institutions under the assumption that:

If the socialization process has been successful, then we would expect identification with parents to lead the individual to have positive attitudes toward the self, - to possess high self-esteem.

Findings were consistent with predictions in that self-dislike is a result of conflicting parent-child relationships.

In an investigation by Kagan (1956), children were found to perceive their fathers to be less friendly, more domineering and threatening than their mothers. The child's perception of his parents was examined in 217 children ages six to ten. There was a tendency for older children to view the same sex parent as more dominant and punitive. Hawkes (1957) substantiated Kagan's findings in an investigation based on a sample of rural and small town children in the mid-west. A paper and pencil scale was administered to 730 seventh graders. He observed that the subjects perceived their mothers to be more friendly and less domineering than their fathers.

Wormell (1963) compared perceptions of self, home and school among two groups of ninth graders who were measured as utilizing their intellectual ability at a 'high' or 'low' level. Among 100

students, 'low' utilizers perceived their relationship within the home as less supportive and communication with their parents to be less useful than 'high' utilizers.

The adolescent's self-concept in relation to parental and peer acceptance was examined by Silver (1958). Fifty-six seventh- through twelfth-grade male adolescents in a rural school completed seven self-concept rating scales from their own point of view and the viewpoint of their parents and peers. Parents also rated the subject from two points of view on scales identical to those used by the adolescents. Correlation coefficients indicated that the level and stability of the self-concept are significantly associated with parental acceptance.

Lasko, Eubank and Brown have investigated ordinal position, the number of siblings and the self-concept. The Fels Parent Behavior Scales were used over a period of one year by Lasko (1954) to investigate ordinal position and the self-concept. Forty-six mothers were rated by trained psychologists in their behavior toward their first and second child. It was concluded that parents are less warm emotionally, more restrictive and interact less with their first than with their second child.

Eubank (1962) identified 40 fourth and sixth graders in Georgia whose self-concepts were contrary to what the home circumstances would indicate. Eleven instruments were employed in examining the factors common or unique to each which might account for this discrepancy. He concluded that,

The rank of the child in the family had a significant influence on the self-concept. The greatest concentration of low self-concept pupils was in the oldest child category, this directly contrasted with the concentration of high-self-concept pupils in the youngest ordinal rank.

Bills Index of Adjustment and Values was used by Brown (1967) to measure the self-concept of 73 Negro and white eighth-grade boys and girls. The self-concept was found to correlate with the number of siblings and the perception of parental authority.

Rosenberg (1965) emphasized the importance of birth order on personality development as indicated by recent research, and cited Chen and Cobb as follows:

The evidence indicated that children who vary in ordinal position in the family, or in particular combinations of brothers or sisters, show differences in frequency of the "affiliation motive", in rates of schizophrenia, in rates of duodenal ulcers, in rates of alcoholism, in scientific and political eminence,

In his extensive investigation of the self-concept in more than 5,000 adolescents in New York, Rosenberg examined parental interest and the child's self-concept. The following three areas of parental interest were studied: relationship to friends, academic performance and responsiveness to the child at dinner. The data concurred in all three areas and findings suggested that it is not the type of reaction shown by the parent, be it punitive or rewarding, lenient or strict, but the lack of response or indifference shown by the parent that has a significant relationship to the self-concept. Rosenberg concluded that essential to the development of a feeling of self-worth is knowing that one is important to a significant other.

Sufficient evidence exists to indicate that the child's perceptions of his parents' authority, image and attitudes have a significant influence on his self-concept. Ordinal position of the child, and size of family also have support as influences on the self-concept.

Socio-Economic Status and the Self-Concept

Studies made by Hawk and Nemeroff indicate that social class has an effect upon the self-concept. Hawk (1958) was concerned with the self-concept as a variable in adolescent behavior. He concluded that one's self-concept depends not only upon whether he is a boy or girl, but also upon membership in a social class and peer acceptance or rejection. Hawk's sample included 123 11th and 12th graders. Nemeroff (1964) reported a significant relationship between self-concept and socio-economic status in 229 eighth-grade public school children in a New York suburb. But he found no significant correlation between self-acceptance, academic achievement and self-concept in the same sample.

Klausner (1953) examined 27 adolescent males, 17 years of age. He did not have enough cases to undertake statistical correlations, but he found trends yielding evidence that the self-concept differs with socio-economic status and that members of the same SES group have more homogeneous self-concepts. Using project techniques, Laird (1956) made a study of 11-year old, middle- and lower-class boys. She concluded that middle-class boys perceive themselves and their school more favorably than do lower-class boys.

Eighty-nine male Army Reserve enlisted personnel were used by Bieri and Lobeck (1961) to study the relationship between three socialization variables and two aspects of the self-concept. Parental identification, religious affiliation and social class were viewed with respect to love and dominance. The authors concluded that upper-class males have significantly higher dominance scores than do lower-class males.

Two separate studies of sixth graders were conducted by Spicolo (1961) and Harris (1961); both studies indicated a significant relationship between concept of self and socio-economic status. Spicolo studied 381 white sixth-grade boys in northwest Florida, in order to examine the relationship between self-concept and five correlates including socio-economic status. A significant correlation between self-concept and SES was obtained using the Reeder Adaptation of the Brownfain Categories Inventory as the measure of self-concept.

While studying the relationship between students' beliefs about junior high school and his concept of self and others, Harris (1961) also investigated the socio-economic status in relation to self. Significant relationships were found to exist between self-other conceptions and socio-economic status with a high incidence of self-other concepts found among the highest socio-economic group.

Brown's (1967) study of change in the self-concept supported the theory that the self-concept is a correlate of social class. Eubank (1962) examined factors outside the structure of personality which influence the self-concept. She concluded that there are

significant differences in the self-concept in various socio-economic levels.

Ericson (1946) interviewed 100 mothers from the middle and lower classes, to study child-rearing practices and socio-economic status. Cultural differences in child-rearing practices were revealed, with lower-class parents being more permissive, less demanding and requiring later assumption of home responsibilities by the children than middle-class parents. Results indicated that middle-class children have more anxious and frustrating experiences in childhood than lower-class children. Findings confirm that membership in a social class has an important influence on personality development and therefore the self-concept.

Rainwater (1956) administered the Szondi Personality test to 105 middle- and lower-class boys and girls. His findings implied that different life styles of rearing children result in significantly different personalities in basic psychological needs, drives and tensions. On the whole, middle-class girls differed from lower-class girls more than middle-class boys differed from lower-class boys.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Sample

Selection of Subjects - The subjects for this investigation were selected from the Fort Yates High School, on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in North and South Dakota and the Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School, on the Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Cheyenne, South Dakota. The Bienvenu Family Communication Inventory and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were given to all students in both high schools for ease of administration. Since the Family Communication Inventory was validated on individuals from complete families, only questionnaires completed by students who had both parents living in the home were included in the study. Questionnaires which met the following criteria were included in the analysis:

- 1) all variable data were completed on the questionnaire
- 2) all questions on both instruments were completed
- 3) and there were no response sets of 80% or more on either scale.

Of the 248 Indian and 179 white adolescents who completed the instrument, 141 Indian and 130 white reservation student questionnaires met the established criteria. For a summary of sample characteristics see Table I.

Background Information on the Sample - The Standing Rock Indian Reservation extends from south central North Dakota into north central South Dakota, and included 1,388,612 acres in 1913 when the final allotment was made. In 1915, a presidential proclamation opened some 200,000 acres of land to white settlement. Today the reservation covers approximately 1,200,000 acres; 16% is tribally owned while three-fourths of the land is leased to non-Indians.

Today the total population of the reservation is somewhat in excess of 10,000, of whom 4,300 are Sioux Indians. Standing Rock residents earn their main livelihood by seasonal agricultural labor, farming and livestock grazing. Almost all businesses (98%) in nine reservation communities are owned by whites.

Under the supervision of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the reservation is governed by the Tribal Council which consists of an elected representative from each of seven tribal districts. The BIA provides educational facilities, land operations guidance, commodity food distribution, legal aid and welfare services for the residents of Standing Rock. The recently formed Community Action Program within the Office of Economic Opportunity provides pre-school education, adolescent training and employment, and social services through community aids. The organization emphasizes the training and employment of Indians.

The offices of the Tribal Council, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Community Action Programs and Public Health Services are located in Fort Yates, a town of 1,100 persons, headquarters for the Standing

Rock Reservation. Fort Yates High School enrolled 263 students in 1968-69.

The Cheyenne River Reservation resembles its adjoining neighbor to the north, Standing Rock, with respect to geography, history, local government and established agencies. About one-half of the 1,500,000 acres of reservation land is operated by non-Indians. The main income for some 5,000 Sioux at Cheyenne River is derived from odd jobs, cattle grazing and working farm and timber tracts. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte High School is located in Eagle Butte, reservation headquarters, and had in 1968-69 an enrollment of 214 Indian and 70 non-Indian students.

For a further description of Sioux history and ways of life see Sandoz (1961), Wissler (1967) and Hagan (1961). An up-to-date account of reservation life, economics and government can be obtained from the U.S. Public Health Service in the publication Indians on Federal Reservations in the U.S.

Instruments

In an effort to test the previously stated hypotheses concerning the self-concept of Indian and white adolescents living on the reservations described above, two instruments were used.

Family Communication Inventory - Recently Bienvenu developed an instrument designed to assess family communication. It consists of 40 items concerned with the verbal interchange between parents and children, parental tone of voice, family mealtime conversation and specific parental traits such as confidence, trust and interest in the adolescent.

Options to the questions are usually, sometimes and seldom. The inventory was validated and tested for reliability on 376 high school students in Louisiana in 1967. Variable data were obtained from the general information contained on the last page of the questionnaire. (For an account of the total schedule see Appendix A.)

Self-Esteem Scale - The research instrument selected by the writer to measure the self-concept was the Self-Esteem Scale developed by Rosenberg. This instrument was selected from other self-concept scales because of the following factors: 1) ease of administration, 2) direct, easily understood items, and 3) a reproducibility of 92% based on the standardized group data of the initial study with the questionnaire in 1962. The 10 items of the scale generally deal with a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward self; responses range from strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. (For an inspection of the scale, see Appendix B.)

Data

Collection of Data - Contact was made with officials at Cheyenne-Eagle Butte and Fort Yates High Schools four months prior to the pre-test and administration of the two instruments. At that time the purpose of the study and the nature of the two instruments were explained. The writer made a personal visit to each school at which time arrangements were made for pre-testing and for the final administration of the questionnaire. In the pre-test the instruments were administered to 16 Indian and 16 white reservation adolescents. The

subjects were boys and girls in grades nine through twelve. The purpose of the pre-test was to determine whether the respondent could understand the wording of the questions. The pre-test indicated that the instruments were appropriate for the types of students being studied. Subsequently, both instruments, contained in one questionnaire, were mailed to the reservations and administered by school officials.

Analysis of Data - Responses to questionnaire items were coded, key punched and processed by the Computing Center at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. The total Family Communication and Self-Esteem scores were subdivided into categories according to prescribed procedures. Socio-economic status was determined by the McGuire-White Index of Social Status - short form (1955). Frequency variance was determined by the chi-square test and significance of difference was set at the .05 level or above.

Table 1
 Characteristics of Sample of Indian and White Reservation Adolescents

Variables	Indian sample = 141				White sample = 130			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N=71	%=100.0	N=70	%=100.0	N=63	%=100.0	N=67	%=100.0
<u>Age</u>								
14-15	21	30	17	24	23	37	24	36
16-17	32	45	40	57	33	52	31	46
18-19	18	25	13	19	7	11	12	18
<u>Grade</u>								
9-10	42	59	28	40	36	57	38	57
11-12	29	41	42	60	27	43	29	43
<u>Ordinal position</u>								
1 (oldest)	18	25	18	26	14	22	19	28
2 (in the middle)	43	61	49	70	39	62	35	52
3 (youngest or only child)	10	14	3	4	10	16	13	20
<u>Number of children in the family</u>								
1-3	28	39	17	24	27	43	36	54
4-6	26	37	26	37	25	40	21	31
7 or more	17	24	27	39	11	17	10	15
<u>Socio-economic status</u>								
Middle (23-51)	21	30	23	33	48	76	46	69
Lower (52-84)	50	70	47	67	15	24	21	31

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The three hypotheses tested in this investigation were concerned primarily with the reservation adolescents' self-concept in relation to selected variables. Major emphasis was placed on comparing the self-concept of Indian and white adolescents.

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference in the self-concept of reservation Indian and reservation white adolescents.

This hypothesis was supported with a chi-square value of 3.84 with two degrees of freedom, which indicates no significant difference in the self-concept of the two groups at the .05 level. Only 6.0% of the white and 12.8% of the Indians were included in the lowest self-concept category, while 30% of the adolescents in both groups were in the high self-concept category. Therefore, the null hypothesis must be accepted.

Hypothesis II: The self-concept of neither group of adolescents will be significantly related to age, grade, sex, the number of children in the family, ordinal position, family communication and socio-economic status.

Age - The analysis revealed that the white adolescent's self-concept was significantly related to age at the .01 level of significance. A chi-square value of 17.2 with four degrees of freedom

is significant at the .01 level. The correlation between self-concept and age for Indians is significant at the .01 level also. For the subjects under investigation, one can conclude that as adolescents become older, their self-concepts are more positive. These findings lead to a rejection of the hypothesis that the self-concept is not related to the subject's age.

Grade - Grade was found to be related to the white adolescent's self-concept, with a chi-square value of 10.58 with two degrees of freedom at the .01 level of significance. Nineteen percent of the ninth- to tenth-grade group were in the highest self-concept level while 53% of the 11th-12th graders were in the highest level. For white subjects, this finding supports the results of other studies in that the self-concept becomes more positive as the individual progresses in grade. On the other hand, for Indian adolescents, grade was not significantly related to self-concept.

Sex - The self-concept of the Indian adolescent was significantly related to sex at the .05 level with a chi-square value of 7.2 and two degrees of freedom. Seven percent of the total Indian males and 18% of the Indian females were in the lowest self-concept level. The white adolescent's self-concept and sex were not significantly related.

Ordinal Position in Family - The self-concept of neither the Indian nor white adolescent group was significantly related to the ordinal position of the subjects.

Number of Children in the Family - The data revealed that the number of children in white families was significantly related to the adolescents' self-concept, children from smaller families having higher self-concept scores than those from larger families. But Indian adolescents' self-concepts were not related to the number of children in the family.

Family Communication - In comparing the self-concept and family communication scores for the white group, a chi-square value of 12.57 with four degrees of freedom was obtained which was significant at the .02 level. Forty-one percent of the white adolescents were in the highest self-concept level and family communication category. Twenty-four percent of the adolescents in the lowest communication category were in the highest level of self-concept. The self-concept and family communication of Indian adolescents were not significantly related.

Socio-economic Status - The chi-square values indicated that the self-concept of neither racial group was significantly related to socio-economic status. Therefore, this part of Hypothesis III could not be rejected. For a summary of the statistical analysis of Hypothesis II refer to Table II.

Hypothesis III: There is no difference between the reservation Indian and white adolescent's self-concept when the following variables are statistically controlled: age, grade, sex, ordinal position of the child in the family, number of children in the family, family and socio-economic status.

Grade - Indian and white adolescents' self-concepts were significantly different in grades 11-12, with a chi-square value of 7.01 with two degrees of freedom at the .05 level. While 41% of the white adolescents in the 11th-12th grade group ranked in the top self-concept category, only 31% of the Indian adolescents were so classified. This indicates a difference in the white and Indian adolescent self-concept at this grade level; therefore, Hypothesis III must be rejected with respect to grades 11-12. However, for grades nine to ten the hypothesis could not be rejected.

When the data were examined in terms of Hypothesis III, the Indian and white reservation adolescents' self-concepts were not significantly different when compared with respect to: age, sex, ordinal position in the family, number of children in the family, family communication and socio-economic status.

For a statistical summary of findings with respect to Hypothesis III, see Table III.

Table II

Self-Concept of Indian and White Reservation
Adolescents by Selected Variables

Variables	Self-Concept [†]					
	Indian			White		
	x ²	Degrees of freedom	Significant or non-significant	x ²	Degrees of freedom	Significant or non-significant
Age	22.61	4	S***	17.22	4	S***
Grade	2.17	2	NS	10.58	2	S***
Sex	7.24	2	S*	1.63	2	NS
Ordinal position	7.14	4	NS	3.93	4	NS
Number of children in the family	2.95	4	NS	12.91	4	S**
Family communication	3.59	4	NS	12.57	4	S**
Socio-economic status	5.73	2	NS	1.85	2	NS

[†]In the analysis, scores were trichotomized high, medium and low.

*Significant at the .05 level.

**Significant at the .02 level.

***Significant at the .01 level.

Table III

Comparison of Self-Concept of Indian and White
Reservation Adolescents When Selected
Variables Are Held Constant

Variables	Results of Self-Concept Comparisons		
	Chi-Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significant or non- significant
<u>Age</u>			
14-15	3.23	2	NS
16-17	5.49	2	NS
18-19	5.67	2	NS
<u>Grade</u>			
9-10	2.53	2	NS
11-12	7.01	2	S*
<u>Sex</u>			
Males	.71	2	NS
Females	5.61	2	NS
<u>Ordinal position</u>			
1 (oldest)	.60	2	NS
2 (in the middle)	3.51	2	NS
3 (youngest or only child)	.89	2	NS
<u>Number of children in the family</u>			
1-3	5.24	2	NS
4-6	5.35	2	NS
7 or more	2.67	2	NS
<u>Family communication</u>			
<60 (low)	.63	2	NS
60-90	4.27	2	NS
90-120 (high)	2.39	2	NS
<u>Socio-economic status</u>			
Middle	1.80	2	NS
Lower	2.23	2	NS

*Significant at the .05 level.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the self-concept of reservation Indian and white adolescents in relation to the variables, age, grade, sex, ordinal position of the child, size of the family, family communication and socio-economic status.

The null hypotheses were: 1) There will be no significant difference between the Indian and white reservation adolescents' self-concept. 2) The self-concept of neither group of adolescents will be significantly related to the subject's age, grade, sex, ordinal position in the family, number of children in his family, family communication and his parents' socio-economic status. 3) There is no difference between the reservation Indian and white adolescent's self-concept when the above seven factors are statistically controlled.

The results of the analysis of this study indicate that there is no significant difference between the two groups, although the white group had 6.0% fewer cases in the lowest self-concept category than did the Indians. Maxwell (1965) in a study of the Negro and white adolescent self-concept found the Negro to have a slightly higher self-concept than the white. It may be that the self-concept is a product of the relative situation in which individuals live - one in which an individual views himself in comparison to those around him. Perhaps the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the Indian adolescent do not have the negative impact commonly associated with the impoverished Indian sub-culture. Therefore, one can speculate that a reservation culture may preclude any ethnic or socio-economic

influence that may separate these two groups of adolescents living on the reservation.

In analyzing Hypothesis II, age was the only factor significantly related to the self-concept in both groups of adolescents. In this instance, there was a tendency for the self-concept to become more favorable with age. This could indicate that as one has more associations and experiences in which to view himself, he becomes more stable and secure in his conceptions of self. Although results from an examination of grade and the self-concept do not strongly support this idea, grade and self-concept were significantly related for the white adolescent. The number of Indian adolescents in the high self-concept category increased somewhat from grades nine and ten to 11-12, but not to a statistically significant degree.

A difference was found between the Indian male and female self-concept, with significantly more female than male Indian adolescents in the low self-concept category. The difference between the male and female white adolescent self-concept was negligible. Studies by Pogue (1964) and Carlson (1965) found the self-concept to be independent of sex and sex role expectations. The differences in the self-concept between male and female Indian adolescents may be due to the roles of the Indian male and female which are still relatively well defined within the reservation culture.

Familial influences (family communication and the number of children in the family) and the self-concept were significantly related only in the white adolescent group. There is a definite

increase of subjects having a high self-concept in the highest category of the Family Communication Inventory. Perhaps the family communication questions were not in all instances relevant to the way Indian families communicate. Too, it may be that Indians communicate more by gesture and action than by the verbal communication upon which the white culture depends.

The size of the family was not significantly related to the Indian adolescent's self-concept. This finding may be attributed to the large number of Indian families with many family members. While the Indian sample in this study did not come disproportionately from large families, living in the extended family is common on the reservation with households often including abandoned or illegitimate children, cousins, aunts and uncles.

Socio-economic status and the self-concept were not significantly related in either group of adolescents. The reservation sample in this study included no adolescents from the upper-socio-economic level, but there was a larger proportion of Indian than white adolescents coming from the lower-socio-economic category. Also, the idea of a 'normative' situation may be helpful in explaining this finding. The people who live in poverty may sense it in the lives of those around them and may not be as deeply affected by it as those individuals who live in the larger society who can make numerous comparisons about their situation.

In order to test Hypothesis III, the self-concept scores of the two groups were compared. On the basis of the results of the chi-square

analysis of data, Hypothesis III could be rejected only for the variable grade. A significant difference was found between the Indian and white adolescent self-concept in grades 11-12, with more Indian adolescents in the lower and middle self-concept categories. These findings may indicate that the Indian adolescent is becoming more aware of the larger society, the reservation culture and his place in it. He might view this position with despair or anxiety, therefore, leading to a diminished self-concept. Pogue (1964) and Lefeder (1965), however, found no significant relationship between age, grade and the self-concept.

These ambiguous findings confirm the need for research in the nature of an extensive longitudinal study. Investigation of the self-concept on a continuous basis at all age levels is needed with a thorough examination of the many factors which might affect the self at any given time. A basis for extensive research might be found in Wylies' (1967) critical summarization of self-concept research and theory.

Future research might also deal with the self-concept of individuals in disadvantaged areas on a long-range basis to indicate trends. Bryde (1965) examined the Indian child's school performance in grades four through twelve and found the Indian to have the same academic performance and often be ahead of the white student until the eighth grade. At that level there was a marked decrease in Indian student performance with an ever-increasing dropout rate throughout high school. Bryde attributed his findings to an increased

awareness by the student, as he grows older, of his displacement in the larger society. The present study did not include a large enough sample or cover a wide enough range of ages to find the discrepancies that would inevitably appear if Bryde's findings were conclusive.

However, a study of the total Indian adolescent population might produce substantially different results, since the reservation divorce and separation rate is above the national average. The fact that all subjects in this study came from intact families, with both the mother and father living in the home, may account for the homogeneity of the results in both groups of adolescents.

Limitations and Recommendations

The present study was limited to a select number of reservation youth who came from intact families. Since many Indian families are incomplete, findings are not to be generalized for the total Indian reservation population. Other limitations included the small sample size available which necessitated grouping factors in the analysis. It is possible that this presented a bias. The inability of the researcher to utilize instruments standardized on the groups investigated or on individuals with similar cultural or ethnic backgrounds constitutes another limitation.

Since the researcher did not collect the data, there was no assurance that directions were given uniformly in administering the questionnaire. With a larger sample and uniform questionnaire completion, a more precise statistical technique of data analysis might

have been employed and could have insured that findings were representative of the population. A self-concept measure designed, validated and tested for reliability on the adolescent from the reservation and the larger society might be employed to obtain a more precise and accurate measurement of the phenomenon.

Critical examination of past and present 'accepted' self-theory and research might prove profitable to anyone interested in the self-concept. To a considerable extent, the findings of this study did not warrant the rejection of the hypotheses tested. Yet, the review of literature cited a sizable amount of research in support of positive relationships between the factors examined and the self-concept. Perhaps the knowledge of the self-concept is not as secure and conclusive as textbook writers and social scientists believe. Therefore, more empirical research on the self to establish clear theoretical formulations concerning the basis of the self-concept appears to be highly desirable.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between certain selected variables and the self-concept in reservation Indian and white adolescents.

In order to determine whether a relationship existed between the variable selected, the following null hypotheses were tested:

1) There is no significant difference in the self-concept of the reservation Indian and white adolescent.

2) The self-concept of neither group of adolescents will be significantly related to the subject's age, grade, sex, ordinal position in the family, the number of children in the family, family communication and socio-economic status.

3) There is no difference between the reservation Indian and white adolescents' self-concept when the following variables are statistically controlled: age, grade, sex, ordinal position in the family, the number of children in the family, family communication and socio-economic status.

A survey of the literature revealed research in support of age, grade and sex as correlates of the self-concept. Familial influences on the self-concept included ordinal position of the child, size of the family and family communication, with recent investigations emphasizing the effect of parental attitude and behavior on the formation of the child's self-concept. The background culture and socio-economic

status of an individual have been found to have a significant relationship to the self-concept. Evidence appears conclusive that members of the middle and upper socio-economic classes have a more stable and positive self-concept than do those in the lower socio-economic groups.

Subjects in this investigation were from the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in North and South Dakota and the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. The sample included 141 Indian and 130 white reservation adolescents 14-19 years of age. A 10-item Self-Esteem Scale developed by Rosenberg was used as the measure of self-concept. The Family Communication Inventory, a 40-item instrument developed by Bienvenu, was used to assess the level of family communication.

Findings of the present study can be summarized as follows:

1. There is no significant difference between the self-concept scores of Indian and white reservation adolescents. On the basis of past research, a difference in the self-concepts between the groups might have been anticipated. Perhaps there is a reservation culture which has a stronger, more overriding influence on the adolescent than do other ethnic or cultural factors.
2. Age was found to be significantly related to the self-concept within each adolescent group. This finding is consistent with recent research supporting the theory that the self-concept becomes more positive with age. Although grade and self-concept were significantly related in the white adolescent, there was no significant relationship

in the Indian. It may be that age is more sensitive to the self-concept in the Indian adolescent since it is common to find many 18-19 year old Indian adolescents in the 10th-11th grades.

3. It was suggested that the significant difference between the Indian male and female self-concept may be attributed to the still-defined roles of men and women on the reservation, with women in more subservient work roles while men assume strong leadership positions.

4. Family communication was not significantly related to the Indian adolescent self-concept, but a significant relationship was obtained in the white group. Perhaps Indian communication was not adequately assessed by the instrument used in this study. Moreover, while the larger white society depends to a large extent upon verbal communication, the Indian gestures, speaks much less frequently and seems to rely more on past experiences in interpreting present situations.

5. The Indian and white adolescent self-concepts were significantly different at the 11th-12th grade level. The self-concepts of the Indian adolescent at this grade level tended toward a lower level. This tendency might be attributable to the adolescent's realization of the larger society beyond the reservation and to an evaluation of his present situation with despair for the future.

All subjects in this study were members of intact families. Only 6.0% of the white and 12% of the Indian adolescents placed in the lowest self-concept category, while Rosenberg's findings placed 30-35% of his middle-class sample in this level. These and other findings of the present investigation indicate a need for further

definition and delineation of self-theory. According to this study the Indian and white reservation adolescents are not as different as one might expect, and the self-concept is not the predictable phenomenon past research would have one believe.

Questions can be raised about the stability and consistency of knowledge of the self-concept. In short, there is a need for extensive longitudinal research on the self-concept at all age levels and in various cultural and ethnic settings.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

FAMILY COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

We are trying to learn more about communication between parents and adolescents. To do this we need the cooperation and assistance of many teenagers. You can help a great deal by answering the questions on the following pages which deal with various aspects of family communication. Most youngsters find it rather interesting to answer these questions which takes about 15 minutes.

Communication is how people go about tuning-in to one another--exchanging feelings and meaning, understanding one another and trying to see things from the other person's point of view. This is often done through words but it also occurs through observations of facial expressions, questions, silences, and listening. So, human communication may be accomplished in many ways.

DIRECTIONS

1. There is no time limit, but please answer each question as quickly as you can according to the way YOU FEEL AT THE MOMENT. Since your answers are confidential and your name is not required on this page, please be as frank as possible.
2. Start with the following example for practice. By putting a check, x, in one of the three blanks on the right you show how the question applies to you. There are no right or wrong answers. Read the questions and make your marks now.

	YES usually	sometimes	NO seldom
Do others try to see your side of things?	_____	_____	_____
Do you express your opinions to your parents?	_____	_____	_____

3. The YES column is to be used when the question can be answered as happening most of the time or usually. The NO column is to be used when the question can be answered as seldom or never.

The middle column SOMETIMES should be marked when you cannot definitely answer YES or NO. But USE THIS COLUMN AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE.

4. Read each question carefully. If you cannot give the exact answer to a question, answer the best you can but be sure to answer each one. Do not take too much time and USE THE "SOME-TIMES" COLUMN AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE.

Thank you very much for your help.

	<u>Y E S</u>		<u>N O</u>
	usually	sometimes	seldom
1. Is family conversation easy and pleasant at mealtimes?	_____	_____	_____
2. Do your parents wait until you are through talking before "having their say?"	_____	_____	_____
3. Do you pretend you're listening to your parents when actually you've tuned them out?	_____	_____	_____
4. Does your father tend to lecture and preach too much to you?	_____	_____	_____
5. Does the family do things as a group?	_____	_____	_____
6. Do your parents seem to respect your opinion?	_____	_____	_____
7. Do they laugh at or make fun of you?	_____	_____	_____
8. Do you feel your mother wished you were a different sort of person?	_____	_____	_____
9. Do either of your parents think you are bad?	_____	_____	_____
10. Does your family talk things over with each other?	_____	_____	_____
11. Do you discuss personal problems with your mother?	_____	_____	_____
12. Do you feel your father wished you were a different sort of person?	_____	_____	_____
13. Do your parents tend to talk to you as if you were much younger than you actually are?	_____	_____	_____
14. Do they show an interest in your interests and activities?	_____	_____	_____
15. Do you discuss personal problems with your father?	_____	_____	_____

	<u>Y E S</u>		<u>N O</u>
	usually	sometimes	seldom
16. Does he pay you compliments or say nice things to you?	_____	_____	_____
17. Do your parents ask your opinion in deciding how much spending money you should have?	_____	_____	_____
18. Do you discuss matters of sex with either of your parents?	_____	_____	_____
19. Do you feel your father trusts you?	_____	_____	_____
20. Do you find it hard to say what you feel at home?	_____	_____	_____
21. Does your mother pay you compliments or say nice things to you?	_____	_____	_____
22. Does she have confidence in your abilities?	_____	_____	_____
23. Do your parents make <u>many</u> "wise-cracks" to you?	_____	_____	_____
24. Do you feel your mother trusts you?	_____	_____	_____
25. Does your father have confidence in your abilities?	_____	_____	_____
26. Do you hesitate to disagree with either of your parents?	_____	_____	_____
27. Do you fail to ask your parents for things because you feel they'll deny your requests?	_____	_____	_____
28. Does your mother criticize you too much?	_____	_____	_____
29. Does your father really try to see your side of things?	_____	_____	_____
30. Do either of your parents allow you to get angry and blow off steam?	_____	_____	_____

	<u>Y E S</u>		<u>N O</u>
	usually	sometimes	seldom
31. Do either of your parents consider your opinion in making decisions which concern you?	_____	_____	_____
32. Does your father criticize you too much?	_____	_____	_____
33. Do you find your mother's tone of voice irritating?	_____	_____	_____
34. Do your parents try to make you feel better when you're down in the dumps?	_____	_____	_____
35. Does your mother really try to see your side of things?	_____	_____	_____
36. Do you find your father's tone of voice irritating?	_____	_____	_____
37. Do either of your parents explain their reason for not letting you do something?	_____	_____	_____
38. Does your mother tend to lecture and preach too much to you?	_____	_____	_____
39. Do you ask your parents their reasons for the decisions they make concerning you?	_____	_____	_____
40. Do you help your parents to understand you by telling them how you think and feel?	_____	_____	_____

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name _____ Your Age _____
 Years Months

Sex: Male Female (Circle One)

Grade _____ How many months have you been here? _____

First Time _____ Second Time _____

Name of school _____ Town you live in _____

Race: White Negro Other _____ Religion _____

No. of children living at home not counting yourself _____ Where do you fit into the family? (Circle One):

Oldest Child Youngest

In the Middle Only Child

Do you live with both of your parents? Yes No

If not, please explain _____

HOW FAR DID YOUR FATHER GO IN SCHOOL? _____

HOW FAR DID YOUR MOTHER GO IN SCHOOL? _____

THE MAIN SOURCE OF FAMILY INCOME IS: _____ (Choose one of the following)

- a) Savings and investments
- b) Profits and fees from a business or profession
- c) Salary, commissions or regular income paid on a monthly or semi-monthly basis
- d) Wages: hourly wages, piece work, or weekly pay check
- e) Odd jobs or seasonal work
- f) Social security, welfare or unemployment insurance

MY FATHER'S WORK IS: (Explain what your father does)

MY MOTHER'S WORK: (If she works outside the home)

WHAT TWO THINGS DO YOU WANT MOST OUT OF LIFE?

1. _____

2. _____

WHAT TWO THINGS WORRY YOU MOST ABOUT YOUR FUTURE?

1. _____

2. _____

IF YOU COULD HAVE TWO THINGS CHANGED IN YOUR HOME LIFE WHAT WOULD THEY BE?

1. _____

2. _____

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MAIN WEAKNESS OF AMERICAN PARENTS?

DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE TO TALK THINGS OVER WITH WHO CAN UNDERSTAND AND

HELP YOU WHEN YOU HAVE PROBLEMS? YES NO

(Circle One)

APPENDIX B

SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

PLEASE READ EACH STATEMENT CAREFULLY. CHECK THE RESPONSE WHICH
BEST DESCRIBES THE WAY YOU FEEL.

1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane
with others.

- 1. _____ Strongly agree
- 2. _____ Agree
- 3. _____ Disagree
- 4. _____ Strongly disagree

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

- 1. _____ Strongly agree
- 2. _____ Agree
- 3. _____ Disagree
- 4. _____ Strongly disagree

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

- 1. _____ Strongly agree
- 2. _____ Agree
- 3. _____ Disagree
- 4. _____ Strongly disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

- 1. _____ Strongly agree
- 2. _____ Agree
- 3. _____ Disagree
- 4. _____ Strongly disagree

5. I feel that I do not have much to be proud of.

- 1. _____ Strongly agree
- 2. _____ Agree
- 3. _____ Disagree
- 4. _____ Strongly disagree

6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

- 1. _____ Strongly agree
- 2. _____ Agree
- 3. _____ Disagree
- 4. _____ Strongly disagree

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

- 1. _____ Strongly agree
- 2. _____ Agree
- 3. _____ Disagree
- 4. _____ Strongly disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

1. _____ Strongly agree
2. _____ Agree
3. _____ Disagree
4. _____ Strongly disagree

9. I certainly feel useless at times.

1. _____ Strongly agree
2. _____ Agree
3. _____ Disagree
4. _____ Strongly disagree

10. At times I think I am no good at all.

1. _____ Strongly agree
2. _____ Agree
3. _____ Disagree
4. _____ Strongly disagree

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THE RESERVATION ADOLESCENTS'

SELF-CONCEPT

by Patrice Kiefer

ABSTRACT

The self-concept of 271 reservation Indian and white adolescents was measured by a ten-item self-esteem scale developed by Rosenberg in 1965, and compared with respect to age, sex, grade, ordinal position, number of children in the family, family communication and socio-economic status of the parents. The Indian and white adolescent self-concept did not differ significantly when tested by chi-square. While age proved to be the only factor significantly related to the self-concept in both groups, number of children in the family and family communication were significantly related to the white adolescents' self-concept. Indian and white adolescents' self-concepts differed significantly in grades 11-12. From chi-square values it was concluded that the difference in self-concept between the Indian and white reservation adolescent was negligible and related only to age, grade, number of children in the family and family communication in the white group and age and sex in the Indian.

Perhaps the homogeneity of self-concept between the two groups of reservation adolescents is attributable to a culture on the reservation which precludes any ethnic or socio-economic sub-culture of

the reservation Indian. Extensive research into self-theory and self-concept correlates for a more predictable knowledge pertaining to the self-concept is needed.