NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

Canada

Self-perceptions of low and high achieving students in Jamaica, W. I.

by

Heather D. Lyn

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Educational Psychology

Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology
McGill University, Montréal

June 1995

ISBN 0-612-07940-6

Canada

Short Title:

Self-perceptions of low and high achieving students in Jamaica, W. I.

Abstract

This study investigated the self-perceptions of low and high achieving adolescent students in a rural community of Jamaica, W. I. The effects of achievement level and sex were considered.

The participants were 95 low achieving students and 100 high achieving students who were rigidly tracked into two separate schools. The survey instrument, "How I See Myself and Feel About Myself" was specially designed for this study. Student responses were compared to the subscales from Harter's Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (1988).

The results revealed twelve self-perception categories, four of which were unique to the Jamaican adolescents. High achievers referred more frequently to academic competence, romantic appeal, and close friendship. Low achievers referred more frequently to behavioral conduct. Overall, male students referred more frequently to scholastic competence, athletic competence and behavioral conduct. Female students referred more frequently to social acceptance, romantic appeal, close friendship and family relations.

Résumé

Cette étude avait pour but une investigation de la perception de soi-même parmi des adolescents à haut ou à bas rendement académique dans une communauté rurale de la Jamaïque. Les effets relatifs au niveau de rendement académique et au sexe des participants ont été pris en considération.

Il s'agissait d'une population de 95 adolescents à bas rendement et 100 adolescents à haut rendement, répartis sur des filières strictes et dans deux écoles individuelles. L'instrument choisi pour l'enquête, Comment je me vois et me sens moi-même, a été spécialement élaboré pour cette étude. Les réponses des lycéens ont été comparées aux échelles de Harter dans Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (1988).

Les résultats font apparaître douze catégories de perception de soi, dont quatre spécifiques aux adolescents jamaïcains. Ceux de haut rendement académique ont tendance à mettre l'accent sur la compétence académique, sur des relations romantiques et sur de solides rapports amicaux. Ceux de bas rendement académique, eux, mettent plus fréquemment l'accent sur le comportement social. De manière générale, les garçons montrent une préoccupation pour la compétence scolaire et athlétique ainsi que le comportement social. Les filles, elles, se prononcent plutôt pour l'acceptation sociale, les relations romantiques, les rapports amicaux solides et les relations familiales.

Acknowledgments

This project reflects the efforts and support of several very generous persons. I want to express sincere thanks to my supervisor, Professor Marcia Delcourt, for her guidance, insight, encouragement, patience, enthusiasm, and willingness to share the wealth of her knowledge throughout this process. Also, my appreciation to Professor F. Gillian Rejskind for her interest and help in making this thesis possible.

To Yvonne Campell who administered the survey and assisted with the administrative details in Jamaica, and Patricia Maynard who assisted with the coding, my deepest appreciation is yours. Special thanks to the participating schools: the principals, staff, and above all the students who took the time to fill out the surveys. Thank you Jean Delcourt for translating the abstract. I would also like to express my gratitude to CIDA for funding my studies at McGill University and this project, and also the staff of the Canada-Jamaica Training Project for their support.

I would like to honor and thank my deceased father, Euston Lyn and my mother Myrtell Lyn, for their sacrifices through the years which have enabled me to pursue my goals. To my family and many friends whose words of encouragement, acts of assistance, and prayers provided invaluable support, thank you very much. Finally, to my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for making all this possible, to Him be all glory, praise, and thanks.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Overview of Study

Statement of the Problem

Self-esteem is associated with personal satisfaction and effective functioning. It plays a significant role in a person's psychological well-being (Coopersmith, 1981; Rosenberg, 1986). The quality of personal self-esteem is apparent in the way people act, learn, relate, and feel (Block & Robins, 1993; Coopersmith, 1981; Pepper & Henry, 1991; Thomas-Brantley, 1988).

Adolescence is a very critical developmental stage which is, at best, a period of conflict, uncertainty, and confusion even for those youngsters with confidence in themselves (Colangelo, Kelly, & Schrepfer, 1987; Harter, 1986). Parents, teachers, guidance counsellors, and education administrators are often bewildered by the behaviors and attitudes displayed by this age group. Consequently, they are unsure how best to guide these youngsters through this developmental phase. Examining self-esteem in adolescents will help adults to better understand the motivation underlying adolescent behaviors (Juhasz, 1985). In addition, it will allow parents, teachers, school administrators, and counsellors to positively address not only the cognitive needs, but also the often overlooked affective needs of adolescents at home and at school.

It is recognized that an examination of adolescents' self-perceptions could help to explain the relationships between variables such as gender and academic ability. Consequently, research efforts are now looking beyond global self-esteem to include various subareas of self-esteem such as academic, social, and physical domains (Kelly & Colangelo, 1984; Miller, 1973; Munsie, 1992; Walker & Greene, 1986). Other crucial variables such as developmental level, sex, and personality traits are also taken into account (Block & Robins, 1993; Harter, 1986; Hoge & Renzulli, 1991; Juhasz, 1985).

Unfortunately, when we try to understand the behaviors of others it can be difficult to obtain guidance from the vast literature in areas such as self-esteem. Three main challenges were identified in the literature. First, there was the absence of a single

common definition of the construct of self-esteem. Second, instruments used to assess self-esteem were not sensitive to, and therefore failed to explicate, the variety of sources from which persons derive their sense of self-esteem. Finally, there was the difficulty of generalizing research results to a variety of cultural settings.

In order to address the issues identified in the literature this study sought to carefully define the construct under investigation, develop a response-coding scheme that included a format for assessing sources of students' self-esteem, and design an instrument that was appropriate for the specific cultural setting. The purpose of this study was to determine the self-esteem components of adolescents in two very different types of schools in a rural community in Jamaica, West Indies. The students were rigidly tracked into these schools based on the results of the Common Entrance Examination which is done by all primary school students at age 11+. The 25% who were the most successful gain places in the high schools and were considered to be high academic achievers. Of the remaining 75%, a significant portion of those students attended secondary schools. These students were considered to be low academic achievers. Once placed in a secondary school it was, and continues to be, virtually impossible to gain a place at the high school.

Since "self-perceptions are powerfully informed by culture, comparing self-esteem across cultures without clarifying cultural differences is distracting and unproductive" (Beane, 1991, p. 30). The results from this study serve to provide empirical data that could help future researchers to justify modifications made to self-esteem measures that were standardized on populations outside of Jamaica.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

1. What are the components of self-perception for high achieving (high school) students and low achieving (secondary school) students in rural Jamaica?

2. Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) students and high achieving (high school) students?

   A priori, it was hypothesized that high achieving (high school) students would refer more often to their scholastic competence than low achieving (secondary school) students.

3. Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perceptions for male (low and high achieving) students and female (low and high achieving) students?

4. Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) male students and high achieving (high school) male students?

5. Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) female students and high achieving (high school) female students?

6. Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for high achieving (high school) male students and high achieving (high school) female students?

7. Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) male students and low achieving (secondary school) female students?

The remainder of this thesis will be organized as follows: Chapter Two will present a theoretical overview and a review of the literature related to self-esteem in adolescents; Chapter Three will explain the study design, give an overview of the Jamaican educational system, as well as describe the study participants, the instrument, the procedure, and the analysis of the data; Chapter Four will present the results of the

research; and Chapter Five will summarize the study, discuss the results, present implications for future research and recommendations, and finally the limitations of the study.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

This chapter will be divided into three sections. The first section will address specific issues related to self-esteem. The second section will present research with regards to academic influences on self-esteem. The third section will present research that examined nonacademic influences on self-esteem.

Cognizant of the vast body of literature that exists in the area of self-esteem, specific criteria were predetermined to guide the selection of the studies reviewed. The major concentration of the review focused on research that (a) targeted the adolescent population, (b) clearly indicated self-evaluation as the process under investigation, and (c) sought to explicate components of self-esteem.

Specific Issues Related to Self-esteem

Definition of self-esteem. Since the coining of the term self-esteem in the late nineteenth century by William James (cited in Hoge & Renzulli, 1991; cited in Holly, 1987; cited in Wells & Maxwell, 1976), there has been disagreement about its definition. Self-esteem is often confused with the term "self-concept." Self-concept refers to the belief that people have regarding themselves. It is the collective view a person has about himself or her self based on experiences and subsequent personal interpretations which are reinforced by the evaluations of significant others (Pepper & Henry, 1991; Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). Because self-concept is basically descriptive and nonjudgemental, it is therefore possible for a person to believe that he or she is friendly although he or she may not have many friends (Blyth & Traeger, 1984).

The major distinguishing feature of self-esteem on which there is general consensus is that it is evaluative in nature, and reflects the extent of an individual's personal satisfaction or dissatisfaction about himself or herself (Battle, 1990; Blyth & Traeger, 1984; Coopersmith, 1981; Pepper & Henry, 1991). Self-esteem refers to personal self-perceptions, that is, the perceived sense of worth, feelings of acceptance, and self-respect, which arise out of the evaluations of self-concept. It involves making a

value judgment about the way a person sees himself or herself in relation to a personal set of ideas (Battle, 1989, 1990; Coopersmith, 1981; Juhasz, 1985; Robison-Awana, Kehle & Jenson, 1986; Thomas-Brantley, 1988; Wells & Maxwell, 1976). Although a person with positive self-esteem does not deny personal imperfections, overall, he or she has feelings of self-acceptance, self-liking, and self-respect (Rosenberg, 1986).

Despite consensus regarding the evaluative aspect of self-esteem, for the most part, its definition is also dependent on the theories and context in which the term is used (Holly, 1987; Wells & Maxwell, 1976). For example, viewed within a psychological context self-esteem may be defined as the psychological relations between sets of attitudes, that is the difference between actual perceptions of self with respect to some quality or ability and how one might be or ought to be. On the other hand, self-esteem could also be viewed as a psychological response, in which case the focus is not on the discrepancies a person may detect but, the actual feeling attached to the evaluations of self (Wells & Maxwell, 1976).

This study focused on the evaluations made by adolescents with regards to various aspects of themselves. Such evaluation is frequently referred to as self-esteem or self-perception. The terms, self-esteem and self-perception, will therefore be used interchangeably throughout this study.

Theoretical considerations. Broadly speaking, self-esteem or self-perception refers to a person's perceived sense of worth, feelings of acceptance, and self-respect, based on the evaluations of personal self-concept. Although self-esteem and self-concept are sometimes used interchangeably, self-esteem or self-perception contains an evaluative aspect which is absent from self-concept (Blyth & Traeger, 1984; Coppersmith, 1981; Hoge & Renzulli, 1991; Juhasz, 1985; Pepper & Henry, 1991; Robison-Awana, Kehle & Jenson, 1986; Schunk, 1990; Thomas-Brantley, 1988; Wells & Maxwell, 1976). Recognizing that these terms are often used synonymously, for the purposes of this

research project, care was taken to ensure that the literature reviewed focused on self-evaluation, that is self-esteem or self-perception.

Five models of self-esteem were identified in the literature. They range from those containing unidimensional to multidimensional components. The first model to be considered was proposed by Coopersmith (1981) who suggested that self-esteem be interpreted as a unidimensional construct. This model took into account a person's sense of self across a variety of domains such as academic achievement and physical appearance. Self-esteem was represented as a single aggregate score (Coopersmith, 1987). There was an absence of empirical data to support separate interpretation of the aggregate score into the subcomponents listed by Coopersmith (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). In addition there was little empirical data to support this unidimensional model of self-esteem (Hoge & Renzulli, 1991).

There was extensive data to support a second model of self-esteem, one that was multidimensional. Harter's (1985, 1986) model identified several domains depending on the developmental age of the individual. These domains included scholastic competence, social competence, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct, job competence, romantic appeal, close friendship, and global self-worth. Mulliner and Laird (1971) identified domains in intellectual skills, achievement traits, physical skills, interpersonal skills, and sense of social competence. Reasoner (1986) proposed a five-domain model that included sense of security, sense of identity/self-concept, sense of belonging, sense of purpose, and sense of personal competence. Borba's (1989) model consisted of five building blocks: sense of security, self-hood, affiliation, mission, and competence. The model proposed by Piers (1984) encompassed six areas: intellectual and school status, behavior, physical appearance and attributes, popularity, happiness and satisfaction, and anxiety.

The third model of self-esteem embraced the multidimensional model but also proposed an hierarchical organization of the various dimensions of self-esteem

(Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). According to this model, global self-esteem is at the apexial position. This is then subdivided into academic self-concept and nonacademic self-concept. These two subareas are then further divided at a lower level. For example, academic self-concept is broken down into subject area self-concepts (mathematics, English, science, literature), all of which can then be divided again into to subareas within the individual subject area. A similar occurrence takes place in the nonacademic area which may be divided into such subcomponents as social and physical self-concept. These subcomponents may also be further subdivided, for example, physical self-concept into physical ability and physical appearance. Although there is some evidence to support this model (Byrne & Shavelson, 1986), it fails to acknowledge that the various domains may be weighted differently for an individual (Harter, 1986; Hoge & Renzulli, 1991).

In the fourth model there was an emphasis on global self-worth (Rosenberg, 1979). However, unlike the unidimensional model it emphasized that the various elements of self were weighted, hierarchically organized, and combined according to "an extremely complex equation of which the individual is probably unaware" (Harter, 1986, p. 141). Investigation utilizing this model aimed at uncovering the degree to which a person is satisfied with his or her life, feels that he or she has good qualities, and has a positive self-attitude or by unveiling feelings of dissatisfaction, failure, or uselessness (Harter, 1986, 1990).

The fifth model represented a combination of all the above. This model proposed taking into consideration and assessing both the multidimensional nature of domain specific judgment and global self-worth. However, it also acknowledged the need to assess the importance of success and the place it occupies in the personal hierarchy in order to understand and predict self-worth (Harter, 1986).

The development and maintenance of self-esteem. The earliest model regarding the development of self-esteem was proposed in the late 1800s by William James (cited

in Coopersmith, 1981; cited in Harter, 1986; cited in Hoge & Renzulli, 1991). James' model contended that a person's self-esteem developed primarily through three possible influences: (a) personal achievement measured against aspirations for any given or individually valued area; (b) communal standards of success and status, and (c) the value placed on extensions of self such as relationships and possessions, whereby prosperity of such extensions causes a person to feel good about himself or herself or vice versa (Battle, 1989).

Coopersmith's (1981) review of the models proposed by James, Mead, Alder, Horney, Sullivan, Fromm, Rogers, and Rosenberg, identified four major factors that contributed to self-esteem: (a) the amount of respect, acceptance and concerned treatment received from significant others; (b) the history of successes, status, and position a person held; (c) the extent to which values and aspirations had been modified by personal experiences and interpretations; and (d) the way an individual responds to devaluations, that is, whether devaluation were minimized, suppressed, distorted or demeaned in order to protect self-esteem.

The 1902 "looking-glass self model" presented by Cooley (cited in Hoge & Renzulli, 1991) emphasized that self-esteem was largely affected by the evaluations others had of the individual, how such evaluations were communicated to the person by significant people such as parents, teachers and peers, and ultimately how such communications were perceived (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1983). Within this framework three distinct processes were identified as contributing to the development of self-esteem: "(a) the individual's perception of the image held of them by the 'other' person; (b) their perception of the 'other's evaluation of them; and (c) their affective response to the situation" (Hoge & Renzulli, 1991, p. 9). Gecas and Schwalbe (1983) contended that along with the appraisals of significant others, self-esteem was also efficacy-based as it was dependent on the consequences and products of personal actions.

Developmental patterns identified in the literature suggested that beginning at age 11 self-esteem begins to decline, reaching a low point between the ages of 12 and 13. By age 14, however, there is a gradual improvement which continues to at least early adulthood (Block & Robins, 1993; Rosenberg, 1986). This pattern appeared to be due to a shift in the way self-evaluation was conducted by the individual, in that, the quality of personal self-evaluation seemed to adhere to a cognitive developmental pattern (Blyth & Traeger, 1984; Harter, 1986; Rosenberg, 1986; Wigfield & Karpathian, 1991). Evidence suggested that whereas younger children were more likely to evaluate and describe themselves in very concrete terms such as abilities, physical character and possessions, during adolescence there was an increase in the degree of psychological descriptors used to describe the self (Blyth & Traeger, 1984; Fuhrmann, 1990; Harter, 1985, 1986; Rosenberg, 1986). Although adolescents included overtly visible elements such as physical appearance or characteristics, they differed from younger children in that they incorporated a larger proportion of internal elements like inner thoughts and feelings, specific interpersonal feelings, private wishes, desires, aspirations, nature of interactions with others and attention to other persons (Rosenberg, 1986). Research evidence also indicated that as children got older they increasingly focused their comparisons on those areas they regarded as personally important (Wood, 1989).

Festinger (1954) proposed that within each individual was "a drive to evaluate his opinions and his abilities" (p.117). Such personal evaluations were influenced by the social environment which provided "standards" for comparisons (Coleman & Fults, 1982; Crocker & Major, 1989; Rogers, Smith, & Coleman, 1978; Weiner, 1980; Wood, 1989). For example, studies reviewed by Crocker and Major (1989) indicated that children's academic self-concepts were higher when they attended relatively low-ability schools as students evaluated themselves relative to others in the environment as opposed to using objective criteria. In addition, evidence suggested that feelings about self fluctuated depending on situational variations of the social contexts in which a person finds himself

or herself (Wood, 1989). According to the research, individuals will therefore seek ways to maintain a relatively high level of self-esteem. Suggested strategies included (a) deliberate avoidance of comparisons with others who appear to be more advantaged (Festinger, 1954); (b) selectively devaluing dimensions in which persons consider themselves to be at a disadvantage, or regarding as more important those aspects in which they are personally efficient (Crocker & Major, 1989; Wood, 1989); (c) overvaluing the areas in which they may excel or seeking affiliation with others who share similar characteristics (Crocker & Major, 1989; Wood, 1989). Whatever strategy a person may choose to use, the general tendency was to value the dimensions in which he or she excelled and to minimize the importance of any shortcomings in order to feel good about himself or herself (Harter, 1986; Juhasz, 1985).

Assessing self-esteem. William James conceptualized global self-esteem as the relationship that existed between a person's actual competence and his or her aspirations of competence. This was operationalized as the ratio of a person's success and aspirations towards success in the various domains of life (Harter, 1985, 1986). Despite this early conceptualization, the subsequent confusion regarding the definition of self-esteem made a standard procedure for its assessment almost elusive. This has resulted in a plethora of evaluation methodologies and a multiplicity of tests.

Evaluative practices which were used to measure self-esteem included the use of Q-sorts in which a person orders individual cards with verbal stimuli in the order that best reflected himself or herself; social ranking techniques whereby the respondent compared himself or herself to a specific trait or a particular set of persons; unstructured interviews; and projective techniques (Battle, 1989; Wells & Maxwell, 1976). Responses obtained by use of these methods were then examined to determine discrepancies between a person's reported evaluative and affective feelings of the stimuli presented and the responses given (Wells & Maxwell, 1976). Self-reports or self-descriptions obtained in highly structured clinical interviews were also considered to be effective means of

assessing self-esteem since within this context there was the advantage of being able to observe both the nonverbal and verbal responses of the person being interviewed (Battle, 1990).

The use of a wide range of assessment procedures had made it very difficult to meaningfully compare much of the results of the research undertaken to date (Battle, 1989; Holly, 1987; Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976;). When standardized instruments were used to assess individuals' self-perceptions, comparisons of responses obtained were easier to facilitate. Some of the standardized measurements used in research include the Self-Esteem Inventories (Coopersmith, 1987), the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, (Roid & Fitts, 1988), and the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers, 1984). The majority of these instruments yielded a global or composite score that was purported to indicate the level of an individual's self-esteem.

One of the most widely used instruments to measure global self-esteem has been the Self-Esteem Inventories (Coopersmith, 1987). It was designed to "measure evaluative attitudes toward the self in social, academic, family and personal areas of experience" (Coopersmith, 1987, p.1). Test items consisted of short statements, for example, "I get upset easily at home." Persons indicated whether or not each statement was applicable to them by checking one of two possible responses, "Like Me" or "Unlike Me." Coopersmith (1987) provided technical support for this instrument by reporting the results of a number of studies which were done by several researchers. The results of these studies indicated internal consistency values for grades four to eight ranged from .87 to .92; concurrent validity of .33 ($p < .01$) and; predictive validity for reading ranged from .35 to .53 ($p < .01$) on the various scales of the test. Although the test items included several domains, the final score (Total Self-Score), was derived by adding the number of self-esteem items answered correctly. The focus on the single score suggested that equal weight was given to each domain (Harter, 1986).

Instruments seeking to make more transparent those domains on which the individual's self-esteem may be based included the How I See Myself Survey (Juhasz, 1985), the Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985) and the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988).

Harter (1986) has advocated that self-esteem measures need to tap individual differences in self-esteem components. In addition, she suggested that the content of assessment instruments should correspond to the developmental level of the respondents; hence the language used should be appropriate for the age group under consideration. By adopting a developmental perspective with regard to global self-worth, the focus should be on the mental age which may be a more powerful influence on self-evaluation than chronological age. According to Harter (1986) assessing global self-esteem cannot be accomplished by combining responses across subscales. She recommended that a more meaningful and effective process was through a separate set of items that directly tapped this construct.

> That is, we do not adhere to the view that global self-worth is best assessed by summing responses to an aggregate of items which ask about a wide variety of self-descriptions. Rather, we believe that one's feeling of worth should be tapped directly, by asking about self-worth itself. . . . .We do not want to infer it from sum or average of their responses to many specific questions about their abilities or characteristics. . . . However, by assessing global self-worth separately or independently of the specific competence domains one can then examine the relationship between global self-worth and domain specific perceptions of competence (Harter, 1985, p.6).

The Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985) and the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988) directly tap global self-worth while independently tapping into domain-specific judgments. The subareas assessed by the Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985) are scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic

competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct, and global self-worth. The Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988) includes all the subareas found in the Self-Perception Profile for Children (1986) as well as three additional subareas; romantic appeal, close friendship, and job competence. For each instrument, the wording of the statements was altered to make them more suitable for the target age groups. On both measures the test items consisted of two comparison statements, for example, "Some kids would rather play outdoors in their spare time BUT Other kids would rather watch TV." The respondent is asked to decide which child was most like him or her and then indicates whether this is "Really true" or "Sort of true" for him or her. This format was chosen in order to provide the respondents with more latitude to qualify their answers. Totals for the various subscales including the global self-worth subscale, are then calculated for each domain. This information can then be used to calculate the individual's self-esteem or competency/discrepancy score. This calculation was based on James' original formula that proposed that global self-esteem resulted from the relationship between a person's actual competence and aspirations of competence (Harter, 1985, 1986). For the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents, Harter (1988) reported internal consistency reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) based on four samples for all nine subscales that ranged from .77 - .91. Factor patterns based on results of oblique rotation for each subscale indicated that each of the subscales defined their own factors. Inter-correlation among the subareas indicated moderate relations between the behavioral conduct and scholastic competence subscales. Social acceptance, job competence, romantic appeal, and physical appearance were also moderately related. Physical appearance was found to consistently related to self-worth (correlations ranged from .66 - .73). Except for job competence and athletic competence, all other subscales bore moderate relationship to global self-worth.

The How I See Myself Survey (Juhasz, 1985), a nonstandardized measure, attempted to assess self-esteem using a more a qualitative approach. The purpose of the

instrument was to determine the components on which individual self-esteem rests. According to the author in order to do this " . . . two basic conditions must be met. First, the self or individual must be the scientist, and must contribute the unique aspects of that self. Second, more than one's concept of self must be included" (Juhasz, 1985, p. 880). By so doing, the researcher would not impose items he or she deemed to be salient to the respondents without taking into consideration such pertinent factors as gender, age, and culture. It was the respondent who would identify the items that were of value to him or her. Persons are asked to make a list that indicates areas, characteristics, and abilities about himself or herself that are important, either positively or negatively. The respondent was then asked to circle a number on a scale from one to eight to indicate the kinds of feelings he or she has regarding the items on the list. Possible responses on the scale included "Satisfied," "Would like to change," "Don't care one way or another," "As good as most," and "Worse than most." Responses were later coded and classified according to themes that emerged from the data gathered.

Academic Influences on Self-esteem Components

The effects of ability grouping on self-esteem. From as early as the second and third grade, school or class placement is known to affect students' perceptions of their scholastic abilities and their attitude toward learning (Delcourt, Loyd, Cornell, & Goldberg, 1994). In a meta-analysis of findings from 52 studies on the effects of ability grouping on secondary school students, Kulik and Kulik (1982) found fifteen studies that reported results on ability grouping and student self-concept. Seven studies reported that students in homogeneous classes had higher self-concept than heterogeneous classes, six reported that students in heterogeneous classes had higher self-concept than those in homogenous classes, and two studies found no significant differences in the self-concepts of both groups.

A study conducted by Byrne (1988) examined the differences between the self-concepts 248 low track and 582 high track 11th- and 12th-grade students in two suburban

high schools in Canada. The low track group consisted of those students who exhibited low levels of intellectual ability and tended not to participate in any social, recreational or organizational activities of the school. These students were most likely to withdraw from school as soon as it was legally possible. Once placed in a low track students generally remained in that track.

Byrne (1988) used a battery of 12 instruments to assess general self-concept, academic self-concept, English self-concept, and mathematics self-concept. Results obtained indicated that in relation to English and mathematics there were significant track differences between both groups but only a moderate difference was found in academic self-concept. She proposed that this could be attributed to students in the low tracks using the high track students as a reference point to judge their academic abilities and therefore see themselves as less capable (Byrne, 1988). With regards to general self-concept, no significant difference was found between the two groups suggesting that in spite of their low academic experiences and low evaluations with regard to specific academic subjects, the overall self-esteem of the low tracked students was on par with that of their high track peers.

Schneider, Clegg, Byrne, Ledingham and Crombie (1989) conducted a study to determine (a) if the academic, social, physical and global self-concepts of bright students differed from that of students who were less academically competent, (b) how well peers accepted gifted children in integrated settings and (c) if gifted students in various settings differed in their attitude toward school as compared to their nongifted counterparts. Participants were 291 gifted students in Grades 5, 8, and 10 in Canadian schools. The gifted students were identified through routine group IQ tests administered by the schools. Students were in integrated and self-contained programs. There were also two comparison groups of nongifted students which consisted of classmates of the gifted integrated students.

The results of the study by Schneider et al. (1989) indicated no differences among the groups for social and physical self-concept. However, integrated gifted students in all three grades had higher academic self-concept scores than all the other groups. With reference to acceptance by their peers, integrated gifted students in Grade 5 were the only ones perceived by their peers as being more socially competent and possessing more leadership skills. Within the control groups for Grades 5 and 8, higher IQ was often associated with enhanced social competence while the opposite trend was noted among the gifted. No such relationship was observed at Grade 10. Similar patterns in the social development of gifted and nongifted children was detected with regard to gender. Overall, no differences were noted between any of the groups in attitude towards school. Several differences were detected when grade and gender were examined. Grade 5 girls had more positive feelings toward school than Grade 5 boys. However, Grade 10 girls had less positive feeling towards school than Grade 10 boys. At Grade 5, boys had higher scores for aggression while girls had higher scores for withdrawal. The boys in Grade 8 had higher scores than Grade 8 girls for general self-concept and physical self-concept. Boys in Grade 10 had higher scores for general and physical self-concept, and withdrawal while girls in the same grade had higher scores on social competence and academic difficulties.

Summary. With regards to global self-esteem, tracking appears to favor the more academically competent (Byrne, 1988; Schneider et al. 1989). However those gifted students with the highest global self-esteem were those placed in integrated settings (Schneider et al., 1989). This result concurs with that proposed by social comparison theory that persons will use their environment as the bases for forming their personal self-worth when an objective standard for comparison is absent (Festinger, 1954). Those students who were tracked in 'low' classes appeared to use their peers as a standard when self-evaluations were made about academic areas (Byrne, 1988). However, when the academic component was eliminated no difference in global self-esteem was noted

between high and low ability students (Byrne, 1988, Schneider et al., 1989). In addition there appeared to be no significant difference in attitude towards school regardless of academic ability (Schneider et al., 1989).

Global, academic and social self-esteem. Several studies have sought to go beyond the academic areas to include social aspects of self-esteem. In 1987 Colangelo, Kelly and Schrepfer examined the relationship between academic ability, social self-esteem and academic self-esteem as well as the effects of time on self-esteem. Research participants consisted of three groups of learners: 61 gifted (high achieving) students, 162 general (average) students and 20 students with learning difficulties. All students were in grades 7-9 in schools in six rural communities in Iowa. Students with learning problems were formally identified by their performance on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children -Revised (WISC-R), the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, grade-point average and teacher ratings, and took part in special classes. Gifted students were identified by their above average achievement using the same instruments, in addition to a combination of scores on parent, peer and self-rating instruments. The general students were those whose academic abilities were not at either extreme of the learning continuum and participated in the regular school curriculum. Non-academic variables included measures assessing attitudes towards school, motivation in school, academic self-concept, sense of performance in school, and social self-esteem.

Results of the study by Colangelo et al. (1987) indicated greater variability in the self-concept scores of students with learning needs and average ability students in comparison to the gifted group. The coefficients of the social self-esteem indicated no significant differences among the groups. Among the female students, the gifted had significantly higher scores for academic self-concept than those females in the general group. Among the male students, the special learning need boys scored significantly lower on attitude towards school, performance-based academic self-concept, and reference-based academic self-concept than the general group. The total score for overall

self-concept was the only one on which the gifted males scored significantly higher than the general group. No significant difference in self-concept scores was found for either boys or girls at the beginning and end of the school year. The results of the study by Colangelo et al. (1987) indicated a positive relationship between academic ability and academic self-concept. With regard to social-self-concept and academic ability, the authors proposed that the evidence of the study indicated that

> Academic ability seems to be more clearly related to social self-concept in boys than in girls during early adolescence. Academic success and recognition may have a greater positive impact on social self-concept of adolescent boys than girls. Although girls view academic success as important there may be a wider range of variables that contribute to their social self-concept (Colangelo et al., 1987, p. 77).

A 1984 study by Kelly and Colangelo compared the academic and social self-concepts of 57 gifted, 184 average and 25 students with special learning needs in Grades 7, 8 and 9. These were students in six rural communities. The students were grouped according to their scores on the WISC-R, Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, grade-point average, parent, teacher, peer and self-ratings. In addition students' social self-esteem and academic self-esteem were assessed.

Results of the study (Kelly & Colangelo, 1984) indicated that for social self-esteem male students with special learning needs (Mean score = 102.2) scored significantly lower than the gifted (Mean score = 126) and average (Mean score = 118.2) male students. A similar pattern was obtained for academic self-concept with mean scores of 14.7, 18.2 and 21.4 for gifted, general, and students with learning needs, respectively (lower scores indicated higher academic self-concept). The gifted group score was significantly higher than the average group on the academic self-concept scale ($p < .05$). Comparisons between the female students did not reveal any significant differences for academic self-concept or social self-concept. Overall, the results

indicated that gifted students have significantly higher academic and social self-esteem compared to their nongifted age peers.

Another study that examined the effects of academic achievement, gender, academic self-concept, and social self-concept was conducted in 1990 by Kelly and Jordan. Eighth grade students from three different communities participated. Three sets of students, 30 in each group, were divided according to their scores on verbal and or mathematics achievement tests which were routinely administered by their schools. The highly gifted group consisted of students whose scores were at or above the 95th percentile. The moderately gifted group consisted of those students with scores between the 94th and 90th percentile, and the average group had scores in the 45th to 65th percentile range.

Self-Esteem was assessed using the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA; Harter, 1985). This instrument yields scores indicative of global self-concept as well as eight areas of functioning (reported earlier in this review). In addition academic self-concept was assessed.

Results obtained by Kelly and Jordan (1990) indicated that on academic self-concept, highly gifted boys had higher scores than moderately gifted boys, average boys and average girls. The highly gifted girls, moderately gifted girls and boys and average boys also scored higher than average girls on academic self-concept. In the area of scholastic competence the highly gifted group had significantly higher scores than the moderately gifted and average groups. The moderately gifted group scored higher than the average group on this component. Both the high and moderately gifted groups had higher academic self-concept scores than the average group. Comparisons between boys and girls indicated that boys had significantly higher scores on Scholastic Competence, and Job Competence. Overall, the results indicated that the level of academic self-concept matched the level of academic achievement. Except for a difference in scores in academic self-concept, there were no other differences in other areas of self-concept for

the boys in this study. This indicated that academic self-concept did not necessarily pay extra dividends when boys evaluated competencies in other areas of their lives (Kelly & Jordan, 1990).

Ross and Parker (1980) examined the academic and social self-concepts of 147 academically gifted fifth through eighth grade students. The students were identified using the Otis-Lennon or Henmon-Nelson group intelligence test and scores on the math and reading sections of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills or the SRA. Social self-concept and academic self-concept were assessed.

Results of the Ross and Parker study (1980) indicated no significant differences for either gender for academic self-concept or social self-concept scales. However, there was a significant difference between the academic and social self-concept of the total population of students which indicated that the gifted students had lower expectations for social endeavors as compared to their academic endeavors.

Summary. All four studies reviewed in this section indicated that academically competent students were more likely to have high academic self-concepts as compared to students with lower academic ability (Colangelo et al., 1987; Kelly & Colangelo, 1984; Kelly & Jordan, 1990; Ross & Parker, 1980). With regards to social self-concept the findings were mixed. Two studies found that gifted students had higher social self-concept scores than nongifted students (Kelly & Colangelo, 1984; Colangelo et al., 1987) while one study reported no significant difference between groups (Kelly & Jordan, 1990). It is noteworthy that the studies reporting differences in social self-concept among groups, included students with a wider range of academic ability (gifted, average, and students with learning needs), while the study that detected no differences excluded students with learning problems. When gifted students were examined as a homogenous group, results indicated that they had lower social self-concept as compared to their academic self-concept (Ross & Parker, 1980). This result concurred with that of

Schneider et al. (1989) in which gifted students in similar grades also reported lower scores for social ability with increased scores on academic measures.

Nonacademic Influences on Self-esteem

Parents, peers and self-esteem. During adolescence, relationships with significant others such as parents and peers seem likely to influence how satisfied youngsters are with themselves (O'Donnell, 1976; Blyth & Traeger, 1984).

A study conducted by O'Donnell (1976) investigated the relationship between self-esteem and feelings toward significant others and how these relationships changed during adolescence. Participants were 138 Grade 8 and 139 Grade 11 students in a rural school system. Students were administered a self-concept scale and an inventory regarding feelings toward family. In the latter survey, statements reflected feelings of the participants towards parents, mother, best male friend, and best female friend. Information about IQ was obtained through test scores on the Otis-Lemon (sic) Intelligence Test, and socioeconomic status was based on parents' education obtained from school records.

Overall, findings of the O'Donnell study (1976) indicated that regardless of age and sex, self-esteem was significantly related to feelings toward parents and friends. Self-esteem was positively related to feelings toward parents (Grade 8, $r = .33$, $p < .001$ and Grade 11, $r = .28$, $p < .001$). There was also a significant correlation between self-esteem and friends for both grades (Grade 8, $r = 33$. $p < .001$ and Grade 11, $r = .28$ $p < .001$). At Grade 8, self-esteem was more highly correlated with feelings toward parents than to friends ($t = 3.202$, $p < .001$). A difference between feelings toward parents and friends was detected among Grade 11 students favoring parents less than friends but this did not prove to be significant. Among the girls, there was a shift from same- to opposite-sex friends as age increased but no such shift was detected for the boys.

Walker and Greene (1986) examined the relationship of adolescents' global self-esteem to the quality of relationships they had with parents and friends. In addition, they

examined self-evaluations in areas of school , popularity, and athletics. Participants were 38 boys and 53 girls ranging from ages 11 to 18 years with a mean of 14 years. All participants had been referred to an adolescent out-patient clinic for routine examinations, as well as behavioral or emotional problems. Researchers assessed global self-esteem, peer relationship, self-perceptions of school, and general concepts of health.

Hierarchical multiple regression models were computed separately for boys and girls with self-esteem as the dependent variable. Results obtained by Walker and Greene (1986) indicated that communication with parents made significant contributions to the self-esteem of both boys (increase in R = .12) and girls (increase in R = .19). Peer support was found to make a significant contribution to the self-esteem of girls (increase in R = .16) but not for boys. The effects of parents and peers were not found to vary with age. School performance was most predictive of overall self-esteem for boys while popularity was found to be the most predictive for girls.

Brutsaert (1990) explored a variety of different traits that may affect girls' and boys' self-esteem during early and middle adolescence. Students from four private single sex high schools in Belgium, 162 boys and 196 girls, participated. Students were interviewed at three different points during the time they were in secondary school; the first year at age 12-13, their third year at ages 14-15, and their fifth year at age 16-17. Although the students were all being prepared for a university education they were tracked into two groups. One group had a more demanding curriculum which emphasized classical languages, mathematics or science. The other group had a less demanding curriculum that emphasized general business and social science courses. Self-esteem, students' attitudes toward their parents, and students' sense of mastery were assessed.

Brutsaert (1990) found that for girls, the higher the perceived support of parents during early adolescence the more likely it was that they would have high self-esteem. At the same time, boys' self-esteem was less dependent on parental support and more

dependent on a sense of mastery over their environment. As girls became older their dependence on parents for emotional support was significantly reduced and a sense of mastery became more instrumental in determining their self-esteem levels. Girls who felt that they were instrumentally involved in their achievement developed higher self-esteem. Also, the more rigorous the curriculum of study was, the more likely self-esteem would be high for girls. Self-esteem among older adolescent males was found to be less affected by curriculum-position but continued to be affected by their perceived sense of mastery.

Summary. All the studies reviewed indicated that for adolescent girls, quality of relationship with parents was related to global self-esteem. (O'Donnell, 1976; Walker & Greene, 1986; Brutsaert, 1990). O'Donnell (1976) and Walker and Greene (1986) found boys' global self-esteem was associated to their relationship with parents but no such association was found by Brutsaert (1990).

The two studies that examined peer relationship (O'Donnell, 1976; Walker & Greene, 1986) found that it was positively related to global self-esteem. With increased age, peer support also appeared to increase in importance (O'Donnell, 1976; Walker & Greene, 1986). Walker and Greene (1986) found that girls referred to opposite sex friendships more than the boys. It was noted that peer support (Walker & Greene, 1986) and parental support (Brutsaert, 1990) referred primarily to emotional support as opposed to physical support.

Physical and personality attributes and self-esteem. Adolescents are faced with interpersonal, intrapersonal, and physiological changes which are expected to affect not only global self-esteem but also the actual make-up or components that comprise global self-esteem.

Block and Robins (1993) conducted a longitudinal study to try to determine the degree of consistency and change in self-esteem from early to late adolescence and through early adulthood. They also examined individual differences in developmental

change patterns specifically exploring the predictive validity of personality characteristics among 14-23 year olds in relation to self-esteem. The results reported in their study were based on the responses of 44 males and 46 females from urban settings and was representative of Caucasians, African-Americans and Asian-Americans. Persons were assessed during the first and last years of high school and 5 years subsequent to high school. Congruence in the self-ideal was assessed using a 43 item Q-sort test. Individuals first described themselves and on a later occasion they described their ideal self. Split-half reliability indices of the self-ideal index were .88, .81, and .83 for females ages 14, 18, and 23, and .63, .56, and .75 for males in the same age sequence. At each age, personality characteristics of the participants were independently described by four psychologists. Each psychologist judged then sorted the descriptive statements into a forced, quasi-normal distribution of nine categories ranging from "not at all characteristic or salient to highly characteristic or salient of the subject being describe" (Block & Robins, 1993, p. 913). Internal consistency reliability estimates of the Q-items, based on correlations with observers, for ages 14, 18, and 23. averaged .72, .59, and .23 respectively (Block & Robins, 1993).

Results of this study (Block & Robins, 1993) showed that at all ages, males tended to have higher self-esteem than females with the disparity increasing over time. The mean self-esteem scores (and standard deviations) for males at ages 14, 18, and 23 were .56 (.20), .59 (.15), and .60 (.19), respectively. The mean scores (and standard deviations) for females were .53 (.26), .52 (.26), and .48 (.26) for ages 14, 18, and 23. There was an increase in the boys' self-esteem but girls' self-esteem tended to decrease during the period under investigation. By age 23 the difference was statistically significant (p, .005, one-tailed test). With regard to the longitudinal consistency of self-esteem, females displayed a greater ordering of consistency in self-esteem scores suggesting that personal levels of self-esteem were relatively well established by adolescence. However, the boys' self-views were relatively more malleable throughout the teen years. Analysis of

personality correlates of the change in self-esteem suggested that changes in this variable during adolescence may be more related to personality characteristics for girls than for boys. Block and Robins (1993) reported

> Females who were protective, humorous, sympathetic, and generous at age 14 tended to increase in self-esteem, whereas females who were critical, hostile, irritable, and negative at age 14 tended to decrease in self-esteem. Males who were calm, relaxed, not socially anxious, and who already felt satisfied with themselves at age 14 tended to increase in self-esteem, whereas males who were anxious and who fantasized and day-dreamed tended to decrease in self- esteem (p. 916).

Self-esteem changes in both sexes were rooted in different orientations. Changes for girls seemed to relate more to interpersonal characteristics while changes for boys were more related to self-oriented tendencies. Block and Robins (1993) found that as both sexes progressed from adolescence to adulthood the personality patterns associated with positive self-esteem became increasingly similar, even though important differences still remained in early adulthood. During early adolescence, boys who regarded themselves highly were characterized by observers as stern, meticulous, humorless, unexpressive, lacking in warmth. With increasing age, boys reordered their self-esteem components so that they resembled those components that characterized females with high self-esteem. It was also noted that the personality traits associated with self-esteem were consistent overtime for girls but not for boys. By age 23, both genders with high self-esteem shared common characteristics of being satisfied with themselves, cheerful, assertive, poised, productive, quick to act, and persons to whom others turned to for advice. These same individuals did not procrastinate or avoid action, were persistent even in the face of frustration, were not subject to moodiness, did not feel victimized by life and were not fearful. Despite the commonalities between males and females with high self-esteem there were differences in the sources of this construct. Young women continued to

emphasize interpersonal connectedness while young men were relatively unemotional , uninvolved and independent in distancing ways that enabled them to control social anxiety.

A 1991 study conducted by Harper and Marshall sought to determine (a) if differences existed, and the extent of these differences for problems reported by middle-adolescent males and females, and (b) the relationship between the extent of the problems and self-esteem among the participating Australian students. Participants were 201 secondary school students, 101 males and 100 females ages 14 -16. An extensive checklist was used to evaluate problems in such areas as health and physical development, finances, living conditions, employment, social psychological relations, personal psychological relations, morals and religion, home and family, the future, vocational and educational, adjustment to school work and curriculum and teaching procedures. General self-esteem was assessed. Also, students were also asked to write about their problems and a content analysis was done to determine if girls were better able to articulate their problems than boys.

A multivariate profile analysis of age, sex and school was obtained through the problem check list. The researchers found that the only variable to significantly influenced the shape of profiles was sex (Wilks' lamba = .885, $\underline{F}$ (10, 176) = 2.29, $\underline{p} <$ .02). Results of univariate analyses revealed that girls had significantly higher problem scores than boys on the six areas assessed by the problem check list. On the mean total problem score, girls also had significantly higher scores (Mean = 49.90 $\underline{s.d.}$ = 25.52) than boys (Mean = 39.45 $\underline{s. d.}$ = 35.30). Girls reported lower self-esteem than boys with mean scores of 4.01. ($\underline{s.d.}$ = 3.00) and 2.49 ($\underline{s.d.}$ = 2.64) respectively (lower scores indicated higher self-esteem). Four main areas were identified as significant in predicting girls' self-esteem: adjustment to school work (matters involving curriculum and teaching procedures); physical development especially in the area of health; interpersonal

relationships and personal adjustment; and family issues. Unlike the girls, the boys' self-esteem seemed to be predicated on one area only, social and psychological relations.

Musa and Roach (1973) examined the relationship of self-esteem and physical appearance. Participants were 119 boys and 83 girls attending a junior high school in a midwestern industrial city. The students were asked to compare their physical appearance with that of their peers through the use of a scale represented by a "ladder." Each rung of the ladder was representative of a level of physical appearance with the bottom rung, "one," representing the least desirable and the top rung, "ten," representing the ideal. Students were not given any guidelines as to what constituted the ideal but were allowed to compose their own conception of the ideal physical appearance. Participants first indicated on the ladder which rung most represented the students in their class and then indicated the rung representative of their own physical appearance. Each person's evaluation of his or her own appearance was scored in relation to his or her evaluations of his or her peers. Scores were based on whether or not their own physical appearance was less, equal or more desirable than that of their peers. Personal adjustment was also assessed, as were grade point averages, obtained from school records, and an index of social status.

The findings obtained by Musa and Roach (1973) found no student rating their own or their peers' physical appearance as the ideal appearance. From the responses, 41.5% of boys and 43.4% of girls rated themselves equal in appearance to their peers. Boys (34.7%) rated their own appearance as more desirable than girls (27.7%). Girls (28.9%) more than boys (23.7%) rated their own appearance lower than their peers' appearance. There was a difference in the boy-girl ratings that indicated boys (43.7%) were sufficiently satisfied with their physical appearance and desired no change. Only 12.2% of the girls were satisfied with their appearance and desired no change. Aspects most referred to for change, in order of frequency for the girls, related to their hair, weight, clothes or figure. For the boys who wanted to change, the areas identified were

in relation to clothes, facial characteristics, hair or weight in that order. Girls who rated their appearance as equal to that of their peers had the most favorable adjustment scores and while those girls who rated themselves low on appearance had less favorable adjustment scores. No significant differences in this regard were found for the boys. However, for boys, a positive relationship was detected for self-evaluations on appearance and grades. Effects of socioeconomic status were only detected among the boys. Those boys from the upper socioeconomic class tended to perceive their own appearance at least as equally desirable as their peers. Also, the tendency for perceiving personal appearances as less desirable than their peers increased as social standing decreased.

Summary. Both Block and Robins (1993) and Harper and Marshall (1991) found that girls' self-esteem was more oriented in interpersonal nurturing relationships while boys' tended to be more concerned with personal control in social situations. In reference to physical appearance Musa and Roach (1973) found that boys tended to be more satisfied about their appearance than girls. This result concurred with similar finding by Schneider et al. (1989). Self-evaluations by girls about the physical aspects of themselves appeared to be two-fold, physical appearance as well as physical health. From the studies reviewed, it is not possible to say to what degree , if any, these two aspects (physical health and appearance) interact and impact the self-evaluations of girls.

Socioeconomics and self-esteem. Studies have been conducted to examine the effects of socioeconomic status on the global self-esteem of adolescents. Miller (1973) examined self-esteem and self-disparity with reference to the criteria of color and social class among 721 girls in forms one through three (grades seven through nine) in an urban area of Jamaica, West Indies. The girls attended seven, single sex schools. Self-esteem was measured using a rating scale developed by Miller. Parental occupation was used as an index of socioeconomic status. Occupations were subdivided into six categories:

higher professional and managerial, lower professional and managerial, highly skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled.

With reference to social class Miller (1973) found that students from the highest social class reported highest self-esteem scores (Mean = 122.2, s.d = 12.28) while students from lower socioeconomic categories reported lower scores of self-esteem (Mean = 111.53, s.d. = 13.32). However, self-esteem scores for students whose parents were semi-skilled rated themselves higher (Mean = 116.68, s.d = 13.80) than those in all other categories except the higher professional and managerial group.

Demo and Savin-Williams (1983) investigated the relationshi, between self-esteem and social class among 830 students in fifth through eighth grades (52% female, 48% male) in seven midwestern Catholic parochial schools. The schools were located in inner city and sub-urban areas and students from lower-class, lower-middle class, and middle class families. Of this sample, 60% of the students were African-American and 40% were Caucasian. The measured constructs were self-esteem, self-concept, and academic self-concept. Social class was operationalized as father's occupation and codified according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Occupation was categorized as high, medium and low.

Results of the study by Demo and Savin-Williams (1983) indicated that social class had greater effect at the eighth grade than fifth grade. Father's occupation (high, medium low) yielded mean scores of 33.80, 33.62, and 33.30 on the self-esteem index at Grades 5, and 30.45, 30.93, and 31.55 at Grade 8. The results indicated a clear association between academic ability and self-esteem but only a weak positive association was found between father's occupation and self-esteem.

Mullis, Mullis and Normandin (1992) found similar indications in a study that looked at the effects of socio-economic class and gender on the self-esteem of 140 boys and 130 girls from urban and rural areas over a three-year period during high school. The study was designed to allow for both cross sectional and longitudinal comparisons.

During the first year of the study students in Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 were evaluated but in subsequent years only the original ninth graders continued as participants. For the longitudinal sample, only the students who had completed all three years for the study were included. The school form of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI, 1981) was used to evaluate global self-esteem. Information about age, sex, and socioeconomic status was obtained through a demographic section on the administered survey. Information about socioeconomic status was subdivided into five sections: father's occupation, mother's occupation, father's education, mother's education and family income.

The analysis of the data yielded significant results for the longitudinal analysis only. The results indicated no significant differences in the mean self-esteem scores for males and females. There was an observed increase in the self-esteem with age when viewed longitudinally over the three-year period suggesting an increasing positive view of self during the high school years. However, there was minimal mediational effect with regards to socioeconomic status and gender. Of the five subdivisions of socioeconomic status only family income was found to have a significant relationship to self-esteem over the three years, $F(2, 260) = 4.64$, $p < .01$.

Summary. Although a clear effect of socioeconomics on self-esteem was found in the Miller (1973) study a much weaker association was found by Demo and Savin-Williams (1983) and Mullis et al. (1992). It is noteworthy that Miller's study (1973) was conducted in the West Indies while the other two studies (Demo & Savin-Williams, 1983; Mullis et al. 1990) were conducted in North America. This difference in social context could possibly explain this difference in the findings.

Self-esteem and sex. When all of the previously mentioned studies were examined with reference to gender, two distinct profiles emerged with regards to the self-esteem components of boys and girls. The profile for boys indicated that their self-esteem was related to feelings of scholastic mastery/adjustment to school, (Brutsaert, 1990; Kelly &

Colangelo, 1984; Harper &Marshall, 1991; Walker & Greene, 1986), job competence (Kelly & Jordan, 1990), relationship with parents (O'Donnell, 1976; Walker & Greene, 1986), physical appearance (Musa & Roach, 1973; Schneider et al. 1989), and sense of control in social situations (Block & Robins 1993; Harper & Marshall, 1991). Another profile suggested that the self-esteem components for girls were more related to adjustment to school in the areas of curriculum, teaching , and a sense of mastery (Brutsaert, 1990; Harper & Marshall, 1991); relationships with parents, peers, and in particular, boys (Block & Robins, 1993; Harper & Marshall, 1991; O'Donnell, 1976; Walker & Greene, 1986); emotional support from parents and peers (Brutsaert, 1990; Walker & Greene, 1986); and physical health and physical appearance (Harper & Marshall, 1991; Musa & Roach, 1973).

Summary of the literature review. The evidence in the literature pointed to a positive correlation between academic ability and academic self-esteem (Byrne, 1988; Colangelo et al. 1987; Kelly & Colangelo, 1984; Kelly & Jordan, 1990; Ross & Parker, 1980; Schneider et al. 1989). However, social self-concept appeared to be less dependent on academic ability (Byrne, 1988; Colangelo et al. 1987; Kelly & Jordan, 1990). Self-esteem of both male and female students appeared to be related to the significant persons in their lives (Brutsaert, 1990; O'Donnell, 1976, Walker & Greene, 1986). Physical appearance was found to be more significant for females (Harper & Marshall, 1991; Musa & Roach, 1973) while socioeconomic status was somewhat significant for males (Demo & Savin-Williams, 1983; Mullis et al., 1992) and for high school female students in Jamaica (Miller, 1973). With regards to global self-esteem among males and females, some studies found that males had higher levels than females (Block & Robins, 1993; Harper & Marshall, 1991) while others found no difference (Mullis et al., 1992). Refer to Table 1 for an overview of the studies reviewed in the literature.

Table 1

Overview of the Studies Identified in the Review of the Literature

Study	Age/Grade Level	Self-Concept Areas	Major Findings
Block & Robins (1993)	Ages 14-23	Personality traits, gender and, GSC	Over time, both genders with high self-esteem shared similar personality characteristics.
Brutsaert (1990)	High school	Gender traits and GSC	Early adolescence, GSC dependent on parental support for girls. Later GSC more dependent on sense of mastery for both boys and girls.
Byrne (1988)	Grades 11-12	Academic ability and GSC	Level of academic ability affects ASC but not GSC.
Colangelo Kelly & Schrepfer (1987)	Grades 7-9	Academic ability SSC and, ASC	Level of academic ability affects ASC and SSC.
Demo & Savin-Williams (1983)	Grades 5 & 8	GSC and SES	SES had greater effect on GSC at Grade 8.

Note. GSC refers to general self-concept. ASC refers to academic self-concept. SSC refers to social self-concept. PA refers to physical appearance. SES refers to socioeconomic status.

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Age/Grade Level	Self-Concept Areas	Major Findings
Harper & Marshall (1991)	Ages 14-16	Sex differences in types of problems and GSC	Girls reported more problem areas than boys. Differences in the types of problems were noted.
Kelly & Colangelo (1984)	Grade 9	ASC and SSC	Higher academic ability associated higher ASC and SSC
Kelly & Jordan (1990)	Grade 8	ASC, SSC and, academic achievement	Higher academic ability associated higher ASC. SSC not dependent academic ability.
Miller (1973)	High school (girls)	GSC and SES	High SES associated with high GSC.
Mullis, Mullis, Normandin (1992)	High school	GSC, SES and, gender	Family income only SES factor that related GSC.
Musa & Roach (1973)	High school	GSC, PA	Boys more satisfied with PA than girls.

Note. GSC refers to general self-concept. ASC refers to academic self-concept. SSC refers to social self-concept. PA refers to physical appearance. SES refers to socioeconomic status.

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Age/Grade Level	Self-Concept Areas	Major Findings
O'Donnell (1976)	Grades 8 & 11	GSC and attitude to significant others	GSC related to feelings toward parents and peers for both boys and girls.
Ross & Parker (1980)	Grades 5-8	ASC and SSC	ASC higher than SSC among gifted students.
Schneider Clegg, Byrne, Ledingham, Crombie (1989)	Grades 5 & 8	Academic ability, GSC, peer acceptance, and, attitude to school	Integrate gifted students had higher GSC than segregated gifted and nongifted. Peer acceptance better at higher grades. No differences in attitude to school.
Walker & Greene (1986)	Ages 11-18 (Mean age = 14)	GSC, relationship with significant others, and, areas of school	GSC related to relationship with significant others for both sexes. Popularity most predictive of GSC for girls, school performance for boys.

Note. GSC refers to general self-concept. ASC refers to academic self-concept. SSC refers to social self-concept. PA refers to physical appearance. SES refers to socioeconomic status.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodology employed in this study. First, the design of the study will be describrd. Second, an overview of the Jamaican educational system will be presented. Third, the study participants and their schools will be described. Next, the development of the research instrument and the end product used in this study will be described. Finally, the analysis of the data will be presented.

Design

This was an exploratory study designed to investigate the differences between low and high achieving Jamaican students with respect to their self-perceptions. It also sought to examine the effectiveness of a newly developed survey, How I See Myself and Feel About Myself, to explicate these perceptions. The survey was administered to all Grade 9 students in a secondary school and all Form 3 students in a high school. Both sets of students had been exposed for two years to their respective school environments. This format, therefore, constituted a post-test only research design.

The Grade 9 secondary school students and Form 3 high school students were matched according to the number of males and females in each group in each school.

Overview of the Jamaican Educational System

In the Jamaican educational system, at ages 11 and 12, all primary school students are eligible to sit the Common Entrance Examination. This examination is administered annually, the last Friday of January. It serves to identify those academically competent students who are most capable of meeting the demands of the high school curriculum in preparation for Caribbean Council Examinations, and the General Certificate Examinations - Ordinary Level, which are written in June of the fifth year of high school. Both examinations are internationally recognized and are the major prerequisites for college and other advanced examinations needed for admission to university.

The limited number of available places in the high schools has caused the Common Entrance Examination to be extremely competitive. Of the over 50,000

students who write the Common Entrance Examination annually, approximately 25% are selected to attend high schools. The final decision regarding the specific high school that the successful candidates will attend rests with the Ministry of Education. However, prior to the Common Entrance Examination, parents are asked to identify two schools of their choice if children attain the required scores. Invariably, parents choose the schools renowned for outstanding academic excellence. Because demand exceeds the supply of available spaces, the students with the highest marks in the Common Entrance Examination are allocated to those schools and the remaining students are assigned to other "less reputable" high schools.

The students who attend secondary schools are among the 75% who were not selected through the Common Entrance Examination. Once tracked into a secondary school it is virtually impossible to be admitted to a high school. These students are considered to possess low academic competence. The curriculum in secondary schools emphasizes vocational skills and prepares students for the Secondary School Council Examination. It is generally acknowledged that this examination needs to be seriously reviewed as it is not readily recognized by institutions of higher learning or by employers.

Study Participants

One high school and one secondary school were selected for this study. Both schools were located in a rural area of Jamaica, West Indies. The schools were approximately one mile apart and are easily accessible by public transportation. The major sources of employment in the area included agriculture and associated industries, the bauxite industry, and a variety of private and government enterprises.

The students in the classes, Form 3 and Grade 9, were selected for this study because they had been in their schools for sufficient enough time to adjust to the changes, and demands, of their respective school systems and curricula. Also, at the end of the school year, students would be required to choose the academic and vocational subjects they would pursue in preparation for their school leaving examinations. The need to

make decisions with such long term consequences would therefore cause a heightening of self-awareness for these students.

The students were also chosen because they were at the developmental stage at which self-appraisals had moved from a concrete level to being more psychological in nature. Self-perception components would therefore encompass wider areas. In addition, it was proposed that at approximately 14 years of age, self-esteem appraisals begin to move in a positive direction after a decline in early adolescence (Blyth & Traeger, 1984; Fuhrmann, 1990; Harter, 1985, 1986; Rosenberg, 1986). The combination of these conditions increased the possibility that data obtained from this study would include pertinent student responses.

Secondary school participants. The original sample of low achievers (secondary school students) in this study consisted of 145 Grade 9 students, 70 (48%) boys and 75 (52%) girls. Of the 70 forms completed by the boys, 30 were unusable due to incorrect entries for date of birth or failure to correctly complete the survey, How I See Myself and Feel About Myself. The remaining 40 (42%) of the surveys from the low achievers (secondary school students) were used as the sample for this group. The average age of the boys in the sample was 14 years 10 months. Of the 75 forms completed by the girls, 20 were unusable, the remaining 55 (58%) were used in the study. The average age of the girls in the sample was 14 years 7 months. Refer to Table 2 for the distribution of students in the secondary school.

The participating secondary school was established by the Government of Jamaica in the late 1960s as part of a five year World Bank plan. It was built specifically to serve those students who were unsuccessful in the Common Entrance Examination. The government has been greatly involved in the governing of the school, for example, it appointed the Chairman of the Board. The academic program of the school is divided

Table 2

Distribution of Participants

School	Male	Female	Total
High	n = 45	n = 55	n = 100
Secondary	n = 40	n = 55	n = 95
Total	n = 85	n = 110	n = 195

into two phases. During the first phase, from Grade 7-9, students were tracked into classes based on their academic competence. During this time, students were exposed to regular academic subjects and a wide range of vocational areas such as industrial arts, arts and crafts, home economics, and agricultural science. There were remedial classes for those students identified with learning problems. In the second phase, Grades 10-11, students prepare for the Secondary School Council examinations, General Certificate Examination - Ordinary Level or Caribbean Council Examination depending on their performance in Grades 7 and 8. However, all students were required to cover certain core subjects such as mathematics, English, and social studies, along with their vocational choice. Vocational areas at this phase included, arts and crafts, business education, clothing and textile, machine shop and welding, carpentry and cabinet making, food and nutrition, agricultural science, electrical installation, and cosmetology. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities were also offered. These include 4H and 2H clubs, Red Cross, Guides, Inter-Schools Christian Fellowship, as well as literary, drama, debate, and math clubs.

This secondary school was under review by the Ministry of Education to be upgraded to a high school. Such action on the part of the government attests to the positive results of the efforts of both teachers and students in academic, vocational, and extra curricular endeavors. Students travelled from distances of up 30 miles to attend this school. The student population was more representative of the lower socioeconomic strata. Total student enrollment at the time of the study was 931. The staff consisted of one principal, one vice principal, 37 teachers, and one guidance counsellor.

High school participants. The original sample of high achievers (high school students) in this study consisted of 217 students, 99 (46%) boys and 118 (54%) girls, in Form 3 (Grade 9) at a rural high school. Of the 99 surveys completed by the boys, 8 were deemed unusable due to incorrect entries for date of birth and/or failure to accurately complete the survey, How I See Myself and Feel About Myself. In order to match

between the proportion of males in the high and secondary schools, 45 (45%) male high achievers (high schools students) were selected by random sampling. The average age for the participating high achieving (high school) male students was 13 years 10 months. Of the 118 girls, 5 forms were unusable. In order to match between the proportion of females in the high and secondary schools, 55 (55%) high achieving (high school) students were subsequently selected by random sampling for participation in the study. The average age of the sample group for high achieving (high school) female students was exactly 14 years. Refer to Table 2 for the distribution of students in the high school.

This high school was founded by the Anglican Church in the late 1950's in order to accommodate the growing populations and to stem the exodus of students to high schools in the urban areas. Although the Government provided the funds to pay teachers, the Church was still greatly influential in governing the school. Within the short time of its existence this school established a strong record of academic excellence. Its alumni boasts several scholars of renown including a Rhodes scholar, and top scholars in the Caribbean Council Examination. With regards to extra curricular activities the standard was no less for sports activities such as table tennis, soccer, cricket, and netball. The school choir won several national awards and students excelled in the National Schools Debate, National Schools Challenge Quiz and several national science competitions.

This high school served a wide geographical area with students commuting from as far away as 40 miles from adjoining parishes. One of the social effects of the Common Entrance Examination is that students from a wide-range of socioeconomic strata were represented in the high school populations. However, it is generally acknowledged that the majority of students selected through the Common Entrance Examination were more representative of the lower middle to upper class strata of the society.

When students were first admitted to this high school they were randomly placed in Forms 1-3 (Grades 7-9). At the end of the third year, they were tracked according to their performance in the school's end of year examinations. Students with the highest

averages were then placed in the forms with the most rigorous academic program within the school. At the end of the fifth year all the students sat the Caribbean Council Examination and General Certificate Examination - Ordinary Level. Those students who did well were eligible to return for an additional two years to prepare for General Certificate Examination - Advance Level.

At the time that the study was conducted the student enrollment was 1,281. The teaching staff consisted of 67 teachers. The principal and several members of staff were past students of the school. There was one guidance counsellor.

Instrumentation

The instrument How I See Myself and Feel About Myself was designed specifically for this study. Although there were several instruments available for use with adolescents in the area of self-perception, these assessment tools did not include Jamaican students in their standardization samples. The cultural differences between North American and Jamaican students could prove to be a source for misinterpretations of seemingly common phrases or terms employed in the standardized surveys. In a 1973 study conducted in Jamaica, Miller (1973) adapted a North American instrument for use with Jamaican students. However, the utility of this measure developed 22 years ago was questionable for use in this study. In addition, there have been economic, social, and cultural changes in Jamaica since that time which may have caused a shift in the way students viewed themselves.

A pilot study was conducted using the first draft of the How I See Myself and Feel About Myself survey. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the survey's effectiveness in soliciting the desired information. The pilot study was completed in Jamaica three months prior to the actual study. Four boys and two girls with an average age of 14 years, 5 months participated. The results of the pilot study indicated the need for clearer instructions and the superfluity of some of the lead statements. Adjustments were made accordingly and the final product was used in this study (See Appendix A).

The How I See Myself and Feel About Myself survey, a paper and pencil instrument, was developed to find out not only how the students saw themselves, but whether or not they were pleased with the identified aspects of themselves. In order to accomplish this, the students were asked to engage in three tasks. First, they were asked to identify positive and negative aspects of themselves which they deemed to be personally important. This was accomplished by asking the students to complete the sentence "As a person I . . . ." Second, they indicated their feelings about the aspect of themselves identified in the first statement by circling one of two statements, "I am happy about this" or " I want to change this about myself." Third, they were asked to indicate the reason for their feeling by completing the sentence "I feel this way because. . . " Each set of three tasks constituted one complete response. Students were given the opportunity to complete 12 responses. Refer to Appendix A for the survey. By using this kind of open format the students were allowed to choose the salient dimensions of themselves without undue influence from the researcher (Juhasz, 1985; McGuire & Padawer-Singer, 1976). Furthermore, because the instrument was targeted for administration in a school setting it was anticipated that students would be inclined to limit their responses to school-related issues. By presenting the opportunity to supply 12 responses, it was expected that students would extend their responses beyond the confines of school to include wider aspects of themselves such as their perceptions of their family and physical appearance. However, students did not have to give 12 responses as the emphasis was for them to share only those aspects of themselves that were important to them.

Responses of the students were coded using the categories of the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA; Harter, 1988) and two categories determined a priori by the researcher. The SPPA (1988) categories were :

1. Scholastic Competence which tapped perceptions of ability with regard to scholastic performance.

2. Social Acceptance which tapped perceptions of acceptance by peers and feelings of popularity.
3. Athletic Competence which tapped perceptions of athletic ability.
4. Physical Appearance which tapped feelings about one's body and feelings of beauty.
5. Behavioral Conduct which tapped how one feels about behaviors in various situations.
6. Romantic Appeal which tapped perceptions of romantic interest to and from others.
7. Close Friendship which tapped one's ability to make close friends.
8. Job Competence which tapped feelings competence in relation to part-time jobs.
9. Global Self-worth which tapped the extent of satisfaction with who one is.

The researcher, a native of Jamaica, proposed the following two a priori categories based on her knowledge of the Jamaican culture. The categories were:

1. Religious Belief which reflected spiritual and religious beliefs.
2. Family Relations which indicated feelings toward parents, grandparents, siblings and other family members.

Procedure

Approximately three months before the study was conducted, the principals of the targeted schools were contacted. The nature and purpose of the study were presented and permission was sought to conduct the study in their schools. Both principals agreed. A formal letter of request was sent at a later date (See Appendix B).

Each student was given a letter that explained the purpose of the exercise and asked for their assistance. It was made clear that participation was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed as students did not indicate their names on the surveys (See Appendix A). All the students agreed to participate. The research assistant and students

read the instructions on the survey together to ensure that the students understood what was being asked of them. The students were also informed that they should feel free at any time to ask questions if they were unclear as to what was required.

The instrument was administered by one trained research assistant in both schools during October 1994. This assistant was given explicit instructions for administration of the questionnaire. One day was spent at each of the schools at which time all the targeted students were given the instrument to complete. The instrument was administered to all classes within the form or grade level. This was done to minimize the possibility of students consciously or unconsciously altering their responses because of their involvement in the study. Such behaviors would then cause the instrument to become a reactive measure (Webb, 1966). From the correctly completed forms returned, students would then be selected for inclusion in the study. Due to the cooperation of the principals, the teachers, and guidance counsellors, the instrument was administrated during regular class times. The survey took approximately 35 minutes to complete.

Analysis

Coding. All the returned forms were assigned an identification number. They were then checked to identify those that had been completed correctly. As a result of this exercise, it was determined to use all the correctly completed forms from the low achieving (secondary school) students. Forms from the high achieving (high school) students were then randomly selected to correspond to the number of participating male and female low achieving (secondary school) students.

Coding of the responses was done by the researcher and another person of West Indian origin. This assistant lived and worked for twenty years in Jamaica. Her work experience included conducting research in conjunction with the University of the West Indies.

Coding of the of the students' responses proceeded as described in the instrument sections using the categories of the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA;

Harter, 1988) and the two categories determined a priori by the researcher. Responses that did not readily fit into any of the predetermined categories were placed in a Miscellaneous category. These were later sorted into other categories based on emerging themes.

Prior to the coding exercise, coding categories were reviewed to ensure common understanding of the categories between both coders. Coding was done in two stages. During the first stage, forty forms were divided into sets of five. Both coders coded the first set (five each) of the forms. This was done independently by each coder. Inter-rater agreement was 80%. When this was completed, both coders conferred to ensure that there was agreement between the student responses and the categories to which they were assigned. This process was repeated for the second, third and fourth sets of forms until a total of forty were coded. At the end of this stage there was 100% inter-rater agreement for assigning responses to categories.

In the second stage, the remaining survey forms were divided and coded independently by each coder. When coding was completed the data were entered into a data base. The responses were then sorted and compared in order to answer each of the research questions, and to test the research hypothesis.

Data analysis. Differences between the groups, for each of the coded categories, were calculated using the statistical formula to determine significant differences between uncorrelated proportions (Guilford & Fruchter, 1973). Two-tail tests at the .01 level of significance were conducted to address the research questions posed for this study. A one-tail test, at the .01 level of significance, was conducted for the proposed research hypothesis.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter will present the results of the coding and statistical analysis in regard to the research questions and research hypothesis. A summary of the results will follow.

Instrument Effectiveness

The design of the survey, How I See Myself and Feel About Myself, was effective in explicating the self-perceptions of the participating adolescents in this study. The students were asked to complete the survey by engaging in a three-step task. Each completed task constituted one complete response. First the students completed the lead statement, "As a person I . . . " to indicate the aspect of themselves they deemed to be important. Next they circled one of two statements," I am happy about this" or "I want to change this about myself" to indicate their feeling about the aspect identified in the first task. Finally, they gave a reason for their feeling indicated in the second step by completing the statement, " I feel this way because . . . ." The students were given the opportunity to provide up to 12 responses. These were coded according to 12 possible categories. Examples of actual students' responses are given for each category:

Examples of the students' responses for each category are presented below.

1. Athletic competence:	As a person I like playing table tennis.
	As a person I play football very well.
2. Behavioral conduct:	As a person I like to tell the truth most of the times.
	As a person I am very polite and have good manners.
3. Social acceptance:	As a person sometimes I feel that I don't have any friends in the world.
	As a person I see myself as being disliked.
4. Scholastic competence:	As a person I am very slow learning.
	As a person I am doing very well in school.
5. Physical appearance:	As a person I am very handsome.
	As a person I am very conscious of my weight.

6. Romantic appeal:	As a person I would like to have many boyfriends.
	As a person I think I am very sexy and sweet.
7. Close friendship:	As a person I think I am lucky to have a friend like my friend (name of friend).
	As a person I am happy to have a friend like (name of friend).
8. Global self-esteem:	As a person I like myself, I respect myself, I will not hurt myself, I will not do anything to harm myself.
	As a person I feel important.
9. Future aspiration:	As a person I want to be a doctor.
	As a person I want to become a chef.
10. Family relationship:	As a person I like my family.
	As a person I don't like my brother.
11. Religious Belief:	As a person I am very religious.
	As a person I am a Seventh Day Adventist.
12. Economic status:	As a person I wish my parents had more money to buy me some of the things I want.
	As a person I am poor, I cannot afford to live the way I want.

The inclusion of the third task often indicated the source of the students' perception. This provided clarification as to which category the students' responses should be assigned. For example, "As a person I am miserable" followed by "I feel this way because I am not doing well in class" or "I feel this way because I am getting alot of low marks, "would be assigned to the category scholastic competence. However, "As a person I am miserable" followed by "I feel this way because I don't have any friends" or "the children in my class don't seem as if they like me" were assigned to the social acceptance category.

The third statement also showed the difference in the understanding of what appeared to be commonly understood words. For example, the first statement, "As a person I am intelligent" followed by "I feel this way because I know what to say to people and how to say things" was coded as behavioral conduct. In this case the word "intelligence" was understood as knowing how to behave in a given social situation. However, "As a person I am intelligent" followed by "I feel this way because whenever I get tri-weekly tests or exams I pass" was coded as scholastic competence. In this case, the student's comprehension of the word "intelligence" was obviously related to academic or school-related tasks.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Question One: What are the components of self-perception for high achieving (high school) students and low achieving (secondary school) students in rural Jamaica? Twelve components of self-perception emerged from the students' responses. With the exception of Job Competence, all the categories of the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescence (Harter, 1988), and the two a priori categories emerged from the students' responses. Job Competence did not emerge as a category for the participants in this study because in the Jamaican context, students at this age (approximately 14 years) do not typically have after school or summer jobs. However, two new categories emerged from the data, namely: Future Aspirations which referred to long-term career goals, and Economic Status which referred to feelings towards present financial circumstances.

In summary, the final twelve categories to which low achieving (secondary school) and high achieving (high school) students referred to on the survey were athletic competence, behavioral conduct, social acceptance, scholastic competence, physical appearance, romantic appeal, close friendship, global self-worth, future aspiration, family relationships, religious belief, and economic status.

Question Two: Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) students and high achieving (high school) students? The two-tail test of significance for uncorrelated proportions ($p < .01$) was used to determine differences between the responses of low achieving (secondary school) students and high achieving (high school) students for each of 11 defined categories. The twelfth category of scholastic competence was analyzed for this question using a one-tailed test. There was a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to behavioral conduct from low achieving (secondary school) students as compared to high achieving (high school) students. High achieving (high school) students referred more frequently to romantic appeal and close friendship than low achieving (secondary school) students. Refer to Table 3. With the exception of scholastic competence, the remaining categories did not indicate any significant differences.

Hypothesis: High achieving (high school) students would refer more often to their scholastic competence than low achieving (secondary school) students. The one-tail test of significance for uncorrelated proportions ($p < .01$) with regards to scholastic competence indicated a significant difference between the two groups. The high achieving (high school) students had a significantly greater proportion of responses which referred to scholastic competence as compared to the low achieving (secondary school) students. The research hypothesis was therefore supported. Refer to Table 3.

Question Three: Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self perceptions for male (low and high achieving) students and female (low and high achieving) students? The two-tail test of significance for uncorrelated proportions ($p < .01$) was used to determine differences between the responses of male students and female students for each of the twelve categories. The proportions of responses with regards to athletic competence and scholastic competence were significantly greater for male students as compared to female students. Female students

had a significantly greater proportions of responses that referred to social acceptance as compared to male students. Refer to Table 4.

There was a significantly greater proportion of responses with regards to behavioral conduct and future aspirations from male students as compared to female students at the .05 level of significance. Refer to Table 4. The remaining categories did not indicate any significant differences.

Table 3

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low and High Achievers

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Athletic Competence			
Low achieving	18	.019	
High achieving	33	.029	1.565
Behavioral Conduct			
Low achieving	452	.468	
High achieving	411	.364	4.836**
Social Acceptance			
Low achieving	159	.165	
High achievers	203	.180	.907
Scholastic Competence			
Low achieving	32	.033	
High achieving	62	.055	2.396††

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 962 responses by low achievers and 1,128 responses by high achievers.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

††$p < .01$, one tailed. *$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 3 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low and High Achievers

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Physical Appearance			
Low achieving	95	.100	
High achieving	108	.096	.294
Romantic Appeal			
Low achieving	5	.005	
High achieving	35	.031	4.302**
Close Friendship			
Low achieving	1	.001	
High achieving	14	.012	3.074**
Global Self-worth			
Low achieving	105	.109	
High achieving	122	.108	.055

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 962 responses by low achievers and 1,128 responses by high achievers.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

††$p < .01$, one tailed. *$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 3 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low and High Achievers

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Future Aspirations			
Low achieving	13	.013	
High achieving	9	.008	1.230
Family Relations			
Low achieving	25	.026	
High achieving	48	.043	2.065
Religious Belief			
Low achieving	22	.023	
High achieving	39	.035	1.593
Economic Status			
Low achieving	3	.003	
High achieving	3	.002	.193

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 962 responses by low achievers and 1,128 responses by high achievers.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

††$p < .01$, one tailed. *$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 4

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Male and Female Students

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Athletic Competence			
Males	41	.048	
Females	10	.008	5.889**
Behavioral Conduct			
Males	377	.441	
Females	486	.394	2.195*
Social Acceptance			
Males	103	.120	
Females	259	.210	5.374**
Scholastic Competence			
Males	51	.060	
Females	43	.035	2.731**

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 855 responses by males and 1,235 responses by females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 4 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Male and Female Students

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Physical Appearance			
Males	79	.092	
Females	124	.100	.616
Romantic Appeal			
Males	18	.021	
Females	22	.018	.539
Close Friendship			
Males	7	.008	
Females	8	.006	.462
Global Self-worth			
Males	83	.097	
Females	143	.116	1.373

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 855 responses by males and 1,235 responses by females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 4 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Male and Female Students

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Future Aspirations			
Males	14	.016	
Females	8	.006	2.213*
Family Relations			
Males	27	.032	
Females	46	.037	.704
Religious Belief			
Males	24	.028	
Females	37	.030	.256
Economic Status			
Males	3	.004	
Females	3	.002	.460

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 855 responses by males and 1,235 responses by females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Question Four: Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) male students and high achieving (high school) male students? The two-tail test of significance for uncorrelated proportions ($p < .01$) was used to determine differences between the responses of low achieving (secondary school) male students and high achieving (high school) male students for each of the twelve categories. The proportion of responses with regards to scholastic competence and romantic appeal were significantly greater for high achieving (high school) male students as compared to low achieving (secondary school) male students. For low achieving (secondary school) male students there was a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to behavioral conduct as compared to high achieving (high school) male students.

There was a significantly greater proportion of responses with regards to economic status from low achieving students as compared to high achieving students at the .05 level of significance. Refer to Table 5. The remaining categories did not indicate any significant differences.

Question Five: Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) female students and high achieving (high school) female students? The two-tail test of significance for uncorrelated proportions ($p < .01$) was used to determine differences between the responses of low achieving (secondary school) female students and high achieving (high school) female students for each of the twelve categories. Refer to Table 6. It was found that high achieving (high school) female students had a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to romantic appeal, close friendship, and family relations as compared to the low achieving (secondary school) female students. The remaining categories did not indicate any significant differences.

Table 5

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Males and High Achieving Males

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Athletic Competence			
Low achieving	13	.037	
High achieving	28	.055	1.232
Behavioral Conduct			
Low achieving	191	.546	
High achieving	186	.368	5.137**
Social Acceptance			
Low achieving	34	.097	
High achieving	69	.137	1.744
Scholastic Competence			
Low achieving	12	.034	
High achieving	39	.077	2.607**

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 350 responses by low achieving males and 505 responses by high achieving males.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 5 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Males and High Achieving Males

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Physical Appearance			
Low achieving	30	.086	
High achieving	49	.097	.562
Romantic Appeal			
Low achieving	2	.006	
High achieving	16	.032	2.601**
Close Friendship			
Low achieving	1	.003	
High achieving	6	.012	1.440
Global Self-worth			
Low achieving	29	.083	
High achieving	54	.107	1.169

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 350 responses- low achieving males; 505 responses- high achieving males.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 5 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Males and High Achieving Males

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Future Aspirations			
Low achieving	8	.023	
High achieving	6	.119	1.243
Family Relations			
Low achieving	11	.031	
High achieving	16	.032	.021
Religious Belief			
Low achieving	7	.020	
High achieving	17	.034	1.789
Economic Status			
Low achieving	3	.009	
High achieving	0	0	2.084*

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group. There were 350 responses- low achieving males; 505 responses- high achieving males.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*p < .05 two-tailed. **p < .01 two-tailed.

Table 6

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Females and High Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Athletic Competence			
Low achieving	5	.008	
High achieving	5	.008	.028
Behavioral Conduct			
Low achieving	261	.426	
High achieving	225	.361	2.349*
Social Acceptance			
Low achieving	125	.204	
High achieving	134	.215	.468
Scholastic Competence			
Low achieving	20	.033	
High achieving	23	.037	.406

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 612 responses- low achieving females; 623 responses- high achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 6 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Females and High Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Physical Appearance			
Low achieving	65	.106	
High achieving	59	.095	.672
Romantic Appeal			
Low achieving	3	.005	
High achieving	19	.030	3.400**
Close Friendship			
Low achieving	0	0	
High achieving	8	.012	2.812**
Global Self-worth			
Low achieving	75	.123	
High achieving	68	.109	.736

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 612 responses- low achieving females; 623 responses- high achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 6 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Females and High Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Future Aspirations			
Low achieving	5	.008	
High achieving	3	.005	.735
Family Relations			
Low achieving	14	.023	
High achieving	32	.051	2.640**
Religious Belief			
Low achieving	15	.025	
High achieving	22	.035	1.113
Economic Status			
Low achieving	0	0	
High achieving	3	.005	1.710

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 612 responses- low achieving females; 623 responses- high achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Question Six: Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for high achieving (high school) male students and high achieving (high school) female students? The two-tail test of significance for uncorrelated proportions ($p < .01$) was used to determine differences between the responses of high achieving (high school) male students and high achieving (high school) female students for each of the twelve categories. The proportion of responses that referred to athletic competence and scholastic competence was significantly greater for high achieving (high school) male students as compared to high achieving (high school) female students. Responses from the high achieving (high school) females had a significantly greater proportion that referred to social acceptance as compared to high achieving (high school) male students. Refer to Table 7. The remaining categories did not indicate any significant differences.

Question Seven: Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) male students and low achieving (secondary school) female students? The two-tail test of significance for uncorrelated proportions ($p < .01$) was used to determine differences between the responses of low achieving (secondary school) male students and low achieving (secondary school) female students for each of the twelve categories. The low achieving (secondary school) male students had a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to athletic competence and behavioral conduct as compared to the low achieving (secondary school) female students. Low achieving (secondary school) female students had a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to social acceptance as compared to low achieving (secondary school) male students. Refer to Table 8.

Low achieving (secondary school) male students had a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to economic status as compared to low achieving

Table 7

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for High Achieving Males and High Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Athletic Competence			
Males	28	.055	
Females	5	.008	4.694**
Behavioral Conduct			
Males	186	.368	
Females	225	.361	.249
Social Acceptance			
Males	69	.137	
Females	134	.215	3.410**
Scholastic Competence			
Males	39	.077	
Females	23	.037	2.953**

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 505 responses- high achieving males; 623 responses- high achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 7 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for High Achieving Males and High Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Physical Appearance			
Males	49	.097	
Females	59	.095	.132
Romantic Appeal			
Males	16	.032	
Females	19	.031	.114
Close Friendship			
Males	6	.012	
Females	8	.013	.144
Global Self-worth			
Males	54	.106	
Females	68	.109	.120

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 505 responses- high achieving males; 623 responses- high achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 7 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for High Achieving Males and High Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Future Aspirations			
Males	6	.012	
Females	3	.005	1.326
Family Relations			
Males	16	.032	
Females	32	.051	1.628
Religious Belief			
Males	17	.034	
Females	22	.035	.151
Economic Status			
Males	0	0	
Females	3	.005	1.561

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 505 responses- high achieving males; 623 responses- high achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 8

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Males and Low Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Athletic Competence			
Males	13	.037	
Females	5	.008	3.191**
Behavioral Conduct			
Males	191	.546	
Females	261	.427	3.565**
Social Acceptance			
Males	34	.097	
Females	125	.204	4.303**
Scholastic Competence			
Males	12	.034	
Females	20	.033	.134

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 350 responses- low achieving males; 612 responses- low achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 8 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Males and Low Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Physical Appearance			
Males	30	.086	
Females	65	.106	1.025
Romantic Appeal			
Males	2	.006	
Females	3	.005	.169
Close Friendship			
Males	1	.003	
Females	0	0	1.323
Global Self-worth			
Males	29	.083	
Females	75	.123	1.907

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 350 responses- low achieving males; 612 responses- low achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

Table 8 (continued)

Analysis of Uncorrelated Proportions for Low Achieving Males and Low Achieving Females

Components and Groups	Frequency of[a] Responses	Proportion[b]	z[c]
Future Aspirations			
Males	8	.023	
Females	5	.068	1.898
Family Relations			
Males	11	.031	
Females	14	.023	.802
Religious Belief			
Males	7	.020	
Females	15	.025	.450
Economic Status			
Males	3	.009	
Females	0	0	2.290*

Note: Due to the diversity of responses in the Miscellaneous category it was not included in the table.

[a]Frequency of responses refers to the total number of student responses in each group: 350 responses- low achieving males; 612 responses- low achieving females.

[b]Proportion refers to the proportion of the total responses for each group.

[c]These values indicate the difference between uncorrelated proportions.

*$p < .05$ two-tailed. **$p < .01$ two-tailed.

(secondary school) female students. This finding was significant at the .05 level. The remaining categories did not indicate any significant difference.

Summary of Results. The results indicated that high achieving (high school) students had significantly greater proportions of responses that referred to scholastic competence, close friendships, and romantic appeal as compared to low achieving (secondary school) students. Responses of low achieving (secondary school) students had a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to behavioral conduct as compared to high achieving (high school) students.

Comparisons between male (high and low achieving) students and female (high and low achieving) students indicated that males referred more frequently to athletic competence, scholastic competence, behavioral conduct, and future aspirations. Females referred more frequently to social acceptance.

Same sex comparisons indicated that low achieving (secondary) male students had a significantly greater proportion of responses that referred to behavioral conduct and economic status while high achieving (high school) males referred more to scholastic competence and romantic appeal. Responses from low achieving (secondary school) female students referred more frequently to behavioral conduct as compared to high achieving (high school) females who referred more frequently to family relationships, close friendships, and romantic appeal.

Comparisons between high achieving (high school) males and females indicated that males had a greater proportion of responses that referred to athletic competence and scholastic competence. Female high achievers referred more frequently to social acceptance as compared to male high achievers. Comparisons between low achieving (secondary) males and females indicated that males referred more frequently to athletic competence, behavioral conduct, and economic status. Low (secondary school) achieving females referred more frequently to social acceptance as compared to the low

achieving (secondary school) males. No significant differences were found between any of the groups with respect to physical appearance, global self-worth,, and religious belief.

This chapter presented the findings of this research project. The fifth and final chapter will provide a discussion of the results.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study sought to determine the self-esteem components of high and low achieving adolescent students in two different schools in a rural community in Jamaica, West Indies. A specific definition of self-esteem was used to guide the development of a specially designed survey which would be sensitive to, and explicate the variety of sources from which these Jamaican students derived their self-perceptions.

This chapter will first discuss the research questions and hypothesis, and general conclusions of the study. Implications for future research, recommendations and limitations of the study will then be presented.

Discussion of Research Questions and Hypothesis

Self-perception categories. The How I See Myself and Feel About Myself survey was effective in providing the answer to the first research question; "What are the components of self-perception for high achieving (high school) students and low achieving (secondary school) students in rural Jamaica"? Twelve categories emerged from the responses of the students in this study. Eight of the categories: athletic competence, behavioral conduct, social acceptance, scholastic competence, physical appearance, romantic appeal, close friendship, and global self-worth were common to those of the Harter subscales (1988) developed in the North American context. The category of job competence hypothesized by Harter (1988), did not emerge as a category as Jamaican students do not typically have after school or summer jobs. However, the uniqueness of the Jamaican students was reflected by the emergence of four additional categories: future aspirations, family relationships, religious belief, and economic status.

Comparison of high achieving (high school)and low achieving (secondary school) students. The comparison of uncorrelated proportions with regards to the category of scholastic competence confirmed the research hypothesis that high achieving (high school) students would refer more often to their scholastic competence than low achieving (secondary school) students. This finding indicated that the high achievers

(high school students), by virtue of their performance on the Common Entrance Examination, and subsequent school placement, were cognizant of their academic prowess, also this category featured prominently in their self-evaluations. Other studies also found that high achievers had significantly higher academic self-esteem than low achieving students (Byrne, 1988; Colangelo et al., 1987; Kelly & Colangelo, 1984; Kelly & Jordan, 1990; Ross & Parker, 1980; Schneider et al., 1989).

Since the high achievers (high school students) in this study were in a school environment that emphasized academic accomplishment, academic performance was expected to be a significant variable in their self-evaluations. Of the total responses from the high achievers, 48% of the responses indicated that the students were happy about this aspect of themselves. However, the remaining 52% of the responses indicated a desire to improve in their school performance. It is therefore evident that although these high achievers (high school students) referred more frequently to their scholastic performance it did not necessarily indicate satisfaction in this area.

It was interesting to note that although low achievers (secondary school students) referred less frequently to the area of scholastic competence, their responses were generally more positive. Of the responses from the low achievers (secondary school students) that referred to scholastic competence, 88% indicated satisfaction with this aspect of themselves.

The answer to the second research question, "Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) students and high achieving (high school) students"?, was obtained through the analysis of uncorrelated proportions for the remaining eleven categories. There were significantly greater proportions of responses from the high achieving (high school) students that referred more often to their scholastic competence, feelings of being attractive to the opposite sex, and having peers to whom they felt a sense of closeness as compared to low achieving (secondary school) students.

The responses from the low achievers (secondary school students) referred more frequently to knowing how to conduct themselves in various social situations, that is, knowing right from wrong, and how to act, as compared to the high achieving (high school) students. The rigid tracking of students into the secondary school, which places less emphasis on academic subjects, may have served to communicate to the secondary students that high intellectual achievement is not expected of them. This segregation appears to have resulted in the low achieving (secondary school) students' diminished importance of scholastic accomplishments. However they emphasized the concept of behavioral conduct, an area in which they perceive themselves capable of controlling the outcomes of their efforts (Crocker & Major, 1989; Wood, 1989).

The self-evaluations of both groups of students, high achieving (high school) and low achieving (secondary school), appeared to be influenced by the expectations communicated to them by virtue of the school environment in which they were placed. For example, at the participating high school, photographs of outstanding academic achievers were prominently displayed for public viewing while no such display was evident in the secondary school. However, the secondary school tried to organize a variety of social events and work experiences in the community in order to equip the students for the social situations they will be most likely to encounter. It would therefore appear that the students of both the high and secondary schools referred most frequently to those areas in which the end product was dependent not only on their own efforts, that is efficacy based (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1983), but where there appeared to be expectations of success within their respective school environments.

Like Schneider et al. (1989), this study did not find any significant differences between high and low achievers in their perceptions of physical appearance. With regard to global self-worth, no significant difference was found between high and low achieving students. Byrne (1988), Kelly and Jordan (1990), and Schneider et al. (1989) also found similar results. In the remaining categories: athletic competence, social acceptance,

future aspiration, family relations, religious belief, and economic status, no significant differences were detected between the high (high school) and low (secondary school) achievers in this study. These results demonstrated that during the self-evaluation process, high and low achieving students referred to different self-perception categories.

Comparison of male and female students. Comparisons of uncorrelated proportions for each of the twelve categories were conducted to answer the third research question, "Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perceptions for male (low and high achieving) students and female (low and high achieving) students"? The results indicated significant differences between the male and female students with regards to five self-esteem components: scholastic competence, athletic competence, behavioral conduct, future aspirations, and social acceptance.

When total male and total female responses were compared, the male students referred more frequently to achievement in areas of educational, sporting and athletic activities, plans for the future, and to their conduct in social situations. These areas of significance for male students represent dimensions in which prowess, dominance, and control play significant parts in determining final outcomes. This trend lends support to the similar findings of other research indicating that the self-esteem of adolescent males is dependent on a sense of mastery, self-oriented tendencies, and personal control (Block & Robins, 1993; Brutsaert, 1990). When compared to the male students, female students referred more often to having friends, and the need to feel accepted and supported. Brutsaert (1990), Kelly and Colangelo (1984), Kelly and Jordan (1990), Harper & Marshall (1991), and Walker and Greene (1986) also obtained similar results with the female participants in their studies.

With respect to global self-worth, like Mullis et. al (1992), this study did not find any significant difference between male and female students. This result is unlike those of Block and Robins (1993); and Harper and Marshall (1991) in which males were found to have higher self-esteem than females. Contrary to Harper and Marshall (1991) and

Musa and Roach (1973), this study found no differences between male and female students with regard to the physical aspects of themselves, particularly, physical appearance. No significant differences were detected for the remaining categories of romantic appeal, close friendship, family relations, and religious belief.

Comparisons of achievement groups. To address the fourth research question, "Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) male students and high achieving (high school) male students"?, an analysis of uncorrelated proportions was done for each of the twelve categories. The results indicated that high achieving (high school) male students referred more frequently to their perceptions of their academic capabilities and to their personal attractiveness to the opposite sex, that is, their romantic appeal as compared to the low achieving (secondary school) male students. Scholastic competence was expected to be significant for the high achieving (high school) male students, however, the emergence of romantic appeal as a significant category for high achieving (high school) males was not anticipated. Compared to high achieving (high school) males, responses from the low achieving (secondary school) male students indicated that knowing the proper conduct required in social situations and concerns about economic status were more significant for them. It is interesting to note that "intelligence" was defined by some students as knowledge of what was or was not appropriate behavior in a given situation. In effect, some low achieving (secondary school) male students may perceive themselves as being as "intelligent" as the high achieving (high school) students.

No significant differences were found between high achieving (high school) male students and low achieving (secondary school) male students in the remaining categories of athletic competence, social acceptance, physical appearance, close friendship, global self-worth, family relations, future aspirations, and religious belief.

An analysis of uncorrelated proportions for each of the twelve categories was performed to address the fifth research question, "Are there significant differences

between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) female students and high achieving (high school) female students"? The results showed that high achieving (high school) females students referred more frequently to romantic attractiveness, close friends and relationships with family members than low achieving (secondary school) female students. Behavioral conduct was referred to more frequently by the low achieving (secondary school) female students as compared to high achieving (high school) females. Brutsaert (1990), O'Donnell (1976), and Walker and Greene (1986) found female global self-esteem was dependent on parental and peer support. In this study, the high achieving (high school) female students appeared to be more dependent on the support of parents and close friends than low achieving (secondary school) female students. The low achieving (secondary school) female students were more concerned with knowing how they should or should not behave in social situations. No significant differences were found with regards to the remaining seven categories of athletic competence, social acceptance, scholastic competence, physical appearance, global self-worth, future aspirations, and religious belief.

It was anticipated that high achieving (high school) female students would place more significance on their scholastic competence than low achieving (secondary school) female students. Such feelings would be expected to arise from the recognition, and affirmation, of their high academic ability through the success in Common Entrance Examinations and their subsequent placement in a reputable high school. However, the proportion of responses that referred to scholastic competence did not prove to be significant for high achieving (high school) female students. Social acceptance, and support from family members and friends were referred to more frequently by high achieving female students as compared to low achieving females. These results could be suggestive of two situations. First, it could be that these scholastically talented female students may see their educational achievement as being inconsistent with their

perceptions of themselves as feminine. Such perceptions may cause them to believe that they could be socially rejected (Hollinger & Fleming, 1988). Secondly, it is also possible that these high achieving female students may have chosen to channel their energies into developing relationships with their peers and family members in addition to their scholarly pursuits.

To address the sixth research question, "Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for high achieving (high school) male students and high achieving (high school) female students"?, an analysis of uncorrelated proportions for each of the twelve categories was conducted. This study found that athletic capability was referred to more frequently by high achieving (high school) male students as compared to high achieving (high school) female students. Kelly and Jordan (1990) also obtained similar results. Furthermore, responses from high achieving (high school) male students made reference more frequently to proficiency in school-related activities than high achieving (high school) female students. The responses from the high achieving (high school) female students referred more often to issues related to the need for, and the acceptance by their friends as compared to their male counterparts. The remaining nine categories did not prove to be significant for either group.

An analysis of uncorrelated proportions for each of the twelve categories was conducted to address the seventh research question, "Are there significant differences between the proportions of the components of self-perception for low achieving (secondary school) male students and low achieving (secondary school) female students"? The results indicated that low achieving (secondary) males referred more frequently to athletic competence, knowing how to conduct themselves in social situations, and concerns about economic status while low achieving (secondary) female students referred more frequently to feeling accepted by their peers. No significant differences were detected for the remaining eight categories.

It was noted that regardless of the type of academic program in which male students were placed, athletic competence proved to be significant for them as compared to their female counterparts. Of the total responses of the high and low achieving males, 90% indicated satisfaction with regard to athletic mastery. Since success and failure in academic pursuits, athletic activities, and public conduct are highly visible, and largely dependent on the individual's skills or abilities, these results appear to support the view that males attribute success more to their own capabilities than to luck (Weiner, 1980). Responses of the females students, regardless of their level of academic achievement, indicated that feeling accepted by their peers was significant for them as compared to their male counterparts. The need for females at this age to have friends and to be able to relate to their peers has also been found in other studies (Block & Robins, 1993; Harper & Marshall, 1991; O'Donnell, 1976; Walker & Greene, 1986).

Implications for Future Research

The findings of this study clearly indicate that future attempts to examine self-esteem should look beyond single aggregate scores and focus on the underlying composition out of which such scores emerged. Furthermore, the study provides evidence for the need to assess self-perceptions in a manner that allows the individuals to express ideas about themselves in their own words so as to have a valid assessment of the individuals' perspectives.

The findings of this study also attested to the inappropriateness of using measures standardized on one culture with another culture (Beane, 1991). Using standardized measures which were not normed on the population being studied could result in misinterpretations by the study participants and therefore, misrepresentations of the population being studied. The social implications of such an occurrence are highly undesirable and unproductive. Critical variables such as developmental level, sex, age, and culture must always be considered when selecting an assessment instrument.

Presently, there is no self-esteem measure that has been standardized on the Jamaican population. This study will therefore provide data that could assist in the adaptations necessary when North American self-esteem instruments are used with the Jamaican population.

Recommendations for Educators and Parents

Regardless of the school in which students are placed, it is generally acknowledged that the purpose of school is to help each student to develop to his or her full potential. Educators of low achieving (secondary school) students need to bear in mind that, "Given a range of possible persons for comparison, someone close to one's own ability or opinion will be chosen for comparison" (Festinger, 1954, p. 121). To encourage improved scholastic performance, academically successful students in the secondary schools should be recognized and used as models for the other secondary school students. Using students from their own school would speak to the possibility of success for other students in the same school environment. This process would also serve to validate and reinforce the academic efforts of the more successful secondary school students.

For low achieving (secondary school) students, being able to act in a right way, knowing right from wrong, and generally the way to conduct themselves in various social situations was identified as being significant for this group during the self-evaluation process. Parents, educators, and counsellors of secondary school students should assist them to achieve success in this area. School programs should be aimed at equipping the students to maximize their chances of success through the acquisition of decision making skills, communication skills, proper work ethics, general etiquette, and interpersonal relationship skills.

Although parents, educators, and counsellors of high achieving (high school) students may realize that these students place a high premium on the academic component of their self-esteem, they may be less aware of the stress and fears this poses for the students. Recognizing that these high achieving students represent some of the

best natural resources of the nation, efforts at home and at school should aim at addressing the concerns of the high achievers. It is highly possible that academic failure could cause high achievers to diminish or devalue this aspect of themselves as well as negatively affect their feelings self-worth. Stress management, how to handle fears of failure, instances of failure, and feelings of inadequacy are some of the issues that need to be addressed with these students. Efforts to help the high achievers to acquire executive skills such as organizational and time management skills, and effective study skills may also prove to be productive.

With respect to the high achieving female students, their may be the need to help them enhance their perceptions of their scholastic potential. Activities to assist in this process, suggested by Rodenstein, Pfleger and Colangelo (1977) include (a) extending the counselling and guidance curriculum to include such programs as achievement motivation training and assertive training; (b) providing experiences for these female students that would have a low probability of occurring spontaneously or naturally; (c) making a concrete effort to identify female role models in the school and community and include contact between these women and high achieving and or gifted female students; (d) identifying and providing assertive training and achievement motivation training for those girls who may need more self-confidence to develop their potential; (e) begin career guidance for these female students on a systematic basis as early as possible; (f) in the career guidance program provide opportunities for gifted females to integrate and synthesize career-relevant experiences. However, these efforts should not be done in a manner that would invalidate those other categories; social acceptance, romantic appeal, close friendships, and family relationships which are also significant for high achieving (high school) female students in their self-evaluation process.

Limitations of the Study

It is recognized that due to limited number of schools and the restricted geographical area in which the study was conducted, it is not possible to generalize the findings of this study.

Regarding the selection of subjects, the participation of all the Grade 9 and Form 3 students, and the subsequent random selection of participants provided definite sources of validity for this study (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). However, it is recognized that those survey forms that were unusable may have represented those students with the greatest learning difficulties. Consequently, the results may not adequately represent the self-perceptions of a wide range of students. Follow-up interviews with those students would have helped to eliminate this shortcoming. This follow-up process is recommended for future research.

Due the constraints of time, a post-test only design was employed in this study. The utilization of a pre-post-test design in a study of this nature would have facilitated greater insight into the effect of the school environment on students' self-perceptions.

References

Battle, J. (1989). Enhancing self-esteem and achievement. Alberta: James Battle & Associates.

Battle, J. (1990). Self-esteem : The new revolution. Alberta: James Battle & Associates.

Beane, J. A. (1991). Sorting out the self-esteem controversy. Educational Leadership, 49 (1), 25-30.

Block, J. , & Robins R. W. (1993). A longitudinal study of consistency and change in self-esteem from early adolescence to early adulthood. Child Development, 64, 903-923.

Blyth, D. A. , & Traeger, C. M. (1984). The self-concept and self-esteem of early adolescents. Theory into Practice, 22 (2), 91-97.

Borba, M. (1989). Esteem builders. Bollings Hills Estate: Winch and Associates Jalmar Press.

Brutsaert, H. (1990). Changing sources of self-esteem among girls and boys in secondary school. Urban Education, 24 (24), 432-439.

Byrne, B. M. (1988). Adolescent self-concept, ability grouping, and social comparison. Youth and Society, 20 (1), 46-67.

Byrne, B. M. , & Shavelson, R. J. (1986). On the structure of adolescent self-concept. Journal of Educational Psychology, 78 (6), 474-481.

Campbell, D. T. , & Stanley, J. C. (1963). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research. Boston : Houghton Miffin.

Colangelo, N. , Kelly, K. R., & Schrepfer, R. M. (1987). A comparison of gifted, general, and special learning needs students on academic and social self-concept. Journal of Counselling and Development, 66, 73-77.

Coleman, J. M. , & Fults, B. A. (1982). Self-concept and the gifted classroom: The role of social comparisons. Gifted Child Quarterly, 26 (3), 116-120.

Coopersmith, S. (1981). The antecedents of self-esteem. California: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Coopersmith, S. (1987). Manual of the self-esteem inventories (rev. ed.). California: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Crocker, J. , & Major, B. (1989). Social stigma and self-esteem: The self-protective properties of stigma. Psychological Review, 96 (4), 608-630.

Delcourt, M. A. B. , Loyd, B. H. , Cornell, D. G. , & Goldberg, M. D. (1994). Evaluation of the effects of programming arrangements on student learning outcomes (Research Monograph 940608). Charlottesville : University of Virginia, The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

Demo, D. H., & Savin-Williams, R. C. (1983). Early adolescent self-esteem as a function of social class: Rosenberg and Pearlin revisited. American Journal of Sociology, 22 (4), 763-774.

Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison process. Human Relations, 7, 117-140.

Fuhrmann, B. S. (1990). Adolescence, adolescents. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman/Little, Brown Higher Education.

Gecas, V. , & Schwalbe, M. L. (1983). Beyond the looking-glass: Social structure and efficacy-based self-esteem. Social Psychology Quarterly, 46 (2), 77-88.

Guilford, J. P. , & Fruchter, B. (1973). Fundamental statistics in psychology and education (5th ed.). New York : McGraw Hill.

Harter, S. (1985). Manual for the self-perception profile for children. Denver CO: University of Denver.

Harter, S. (1986). Processes underlying the construction, maintenance, and enhancement of the self-concept in children. In J. Suls & A. G. Greenwald (Eds.),Psychological Perspectives on the Self Vol. 3 (pp. 137-182). Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Harter, S. (1988). Manual for the self-perception profile for adolescents. Denver CO: University of Denver.

Harter, S. (1990). Issues in the assessment of the self-concept of children and adolescents. In A. La Greca (Ed.), Childhood assessment: Through the eyes of a child (pp. 292-325). Boston : Allyn and Bacon.

Harper, J. F. , & Marshall, E. (1991). Adolescents' problems and their relationships to self-esteem. Adolescence, 26 (104), 799-808.

Hoge, R. D., & Renzulli, J. S. (1991). Self-concept and the gifted child (Research Monograph 9103). Charlottesville: University of Virginia, The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

Hollinger, C. L ., & Fleming, E. S. (1988). Gifted and talented young women : Antecedents and correlates of life satisfaction. Gifted Child Quarterly, 32 (2), 254-258.

Holly, W. J. (1987). Student self-esteem and academic success. Oregon School Study Council 31 (2): University of Oregon. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 287 205).

Juhasz, A. M. (1985). Measuring self-esteem in early adolescents. Adolescence, 20 (80), 877-887.

Kelly, K. R. , & Colangelo, N. (1984). Academic and social self-concepts of gifted, general, and special students. Exceptional Children, 50, 551-554.

Kelly, K. R. , & Jordan, L. K. (1990). Effects of academic achievement and gender on academic and social self-concept : A replication study. Journal of Counseling and Development, 69 (2), 173-177.

Kulik, C. C. , & Kulik, J. A. (1982). Effects of ability grouping on secondary school students: A meta-analysis of evaluation findings. American Educational Research Journal, 19 (3), 415-428.

McGuire, W. J. , & Padawer-Singer, A. (1976). Trait salience and the spontaneous self-concept. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 33 (6), 755-763.

Miller, E. L. (1973). Self-evaluation among Jamaican high school girls. Social and Economic Studies, 32, 407-426.

Mulliner, N. , & Laird, J. D. (1971). Some developmental changes in the organization of self-evaluation. Developmental Psychology, 5, 233-236.

Mullis, A. K. , Mullis, R. L. , & Normandin, D. (1992). Cross-sectional and longitudinal comparisons of adolescent self-esteem. Adolescence, 27 (105), 51-61.

Munsie, S. D. (1992). Multi-dimensional self-concept in junior high school students : Issues of gender, intelligence and program effects. Unpublished master's thesis, McGill University, Montreal.

Musa, K. K. , & Roach, M. E. (1973). Adolescent appearance and self-concept. Adolescence, 8 (31), 383-394.

O'Donnell, W. J. (1976). Adolescent self-esteem related to feelings toward parents and friends. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 5, 179-185.

Pepper, F. C., & Henry, S. L. (1991). An Indian perspective of self-esteem. Canadian Journal of Native Education, 18 (2), 145-160.

Piers, E, V. (1984). Manual for the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (rev. ed.). Los Angeles CA: Western Psychological Services.

Reasoner, R. (1986). Building self-esteem. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Roid, G. H., & Fitts, W. H. (1988). Manual for the Tennessee Self-Concept (rev. ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Western Psychological Services.

Robison-Awana, P., Kehle, T. J., & Jenson, W. R. (1986). But what about smart girls? Adolescent self-esteem and sex-role perceptions as a function of academic achievement. Journal of Educational Psychology, 78 (3), 179-183.

Rodenstein, J. , Pfleger, L. R., & Colangelo, N. (1977). Career development of gifted women. The Gifted Child Quarterly, 21 (3), 340-347.

Rogers, C. M. , Smith, M. D. , & Coleman, J. M. (1978). Social comparisons in the classroom: The relationship between academic achievement and self-concept. Journal of Educational Psychology, 70 (1), 50-57. Rosenberg, M. (1979). Conceiving the self. New York: Basic Books.

Rosenberg, M. (1986). Self-concept from middle childhood through adolescence. In J. Suls & A. G. Greenwald (Eds.), Psychological Perspectives on the Self Vol. 3, (pp. 107-136). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ross, A. , & Parker, M. (1980). Academic and social self- concepts of the academically gifted. Exceptional Children, 47 (2), 6-10.

Schneider, B. H. , Clegg, M. R. , Byrne, B. M. , Ledingham, J. E. , & Crombie, G. (1989). Social relations of gifted children as a function of age and school program. Journal of Educational Psychology, 81 (1), 48-56.

Schunk, D. H. (1990). Self-concept and school achievement. In C. Rogers & P. Kutnick (Eds.), The Social Psychology of the Primary School (pp. 70-91). New York: Routlege.

Shavelson, R. J., Hubner, J. J., & Stanton, G. C. (1976). Self-concept: Validation of construct interpretation. Review of Educational Research, 46 (3), 407-441.

Thomas-Brantley, B. J. (1988). The relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in a group of high, medium and low secondary public high school achievers. Ed. D. Dissertation, International Graduate School: Missouri. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 323 486).

Walker, L. S., & Greene, J. W. (1986). The social context of adolescent. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 15 (4), 315-322.

Webb, E. J. (1966). Unobtrusive measures: Nonreactive research in the social sciences. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally.

Weiner, B. (1980). Human Motivation. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Wells, L. E., & Maxwell, G. (1976). Self-esteem: Its conceptualization and measurement. California: Sage Publication.

Wigfield, A. , & Karpathian, M. (1991). Who am I and what can I do? Children's self-concept and motivation in achievement situations. Educational Psychologist, 26, 233-261.

Wood, J. V. (1989). Theory and research concerning social comparisons of personal attributes. Psychological Bulletin, 106 (2), 231-248.

Appendix A : Cover letter and the survey How I See and Feel About Myself

c/o McGill University , Montreal , Quebec, Canada

Dear Students,
I am a student at McGill University in Canada. I am doing a project in which I am trying to find out how young Jamaican teenagers see themselves and feel about themselves. I am asking for your help with this project. As students I am sure you understand the need to complete assignments and will therefore assist me in this matter.

For this survey **YOU MUST NOT WRITE YOUR NAMES ON THE PAPER.** I would like you to tell the truth when you answer so do NOT write your name. Your papers will be sent directly to me. They will be seen only by my professor and myself-. Feel free to say what you really want to say. Remember, this is not a test.

I am interested in what **you** have to say so please do not talk to anyone while you answer the questions. Think about what you write but also do this as quickly as possible. You will have this class period to write your responses.

If you have any questions at anytime please do not hesitate to ask the instructor. Thank you for your kind assistance.

Sincerely,

Heather Lyn

(Please turn over)

How I See and Feel About Myself

REMEMBER YOU MUST NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE PAPER.

Circle: Male Female Write your date of birth in the order shown___/___/___
Day/Month/Year

Directions:
Please write what you consider to be important about who you are as a person. It can be related to any area of your life such as home, school, with friends, etc. You can write about things you like or dislike about yourself as long as they are important to you. Please write as many ideas as you can.

There are three (3) parts to each of your answers. Please be sure to do ALL three (3) parts.

(a) Write what is important to you about yourself.
(b) Circle the letter before the statement that shows how you feel.
(c) Write a brief statement to tell why you feel the way you do.

Example 1
As a person I am easy going.

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because I get along better with people.

Example 2
As a person I am easy going.

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because people take advantage of me.

Go Ahead and write your responses.

(1) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

(Please turn over.)

(2) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

(3) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

(4) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

(5) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

(Please turn over.)

(6) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

_____

(7) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

_____

(8) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

_____

(9) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

_____

(Please turn over.)

(10) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

(11) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

(12) As a person _____

_____

A. I am happy about this. B. I want to change this about myself.

I feel this way because_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time in completing this survey.

Appendix B : Letter sent to school principals

4880 Borden Ave Montreal Quebec H4V 2S8 Canada Tel. 514-369-8129

September 14, 1994

The Principal,

Jamaica, W.I.

Dear ,

Further to our conservation in late June, I write to confirm the matters we discussed at that time. First let me express my gratitude to you and the Guidance Counselling Department for agreeing to assist me in this project. The aim of the study is to determine the self-esteem factors of grade nine students. As I explained this is part of the requirements toward obtaining a Masters Degree in Educational Psychology at McGill University in Canada.

Miss Yvonne Campbell, the research assistant, will be contacting you shortly to make arrangements as to the date and other necessary details about the administration of the survey.

I have attached an abstract outlining the details of the project and a copy of the questionnaire that will be administered to the students. I hope the information obtained will be of practical value to the students in the rural area and in particular to those attending your school. Again thank you for you assistance.

Sincerely,

Heather Lyn

Research Project : How I See Myself and Feel About Myself-

Conducted by: Heather Lyn

Explanation of the Project

Annually, Jamaican students age 11+ sit the Common Entrance Examinations (Common Entrance Examination) to compete for the extremely limited places in traditional high schools. Only 25% are selected. These students are considered to be high ability achievers. The remaining 75% are left to seek placement in secondary schools and are considered to be low ability students. Once placed in a secondary school it is almost impossible to seek placement in a traditional high school.

Academically, female students are doing better than males. Pass marks for the Common Entrance Examination are lowered for male students to maintain an equal ratio between the sexes.

Based on the high premium placed on passing the Common Entrance Examination by the society and the subsequent prestige attached to attending a traditional high school, it is assumed that students in the traditional high schools have higher self-esteem than those in the secondary schools. However, this is probably based on the assumption that both sets of students base their self-esteem on the same set of factors.

The purpose of this study is to try to determine the self-esteem components of young teenagers in a rural area of Jamaica. A questionnaire will be administered to students who passed the Common Entrance Examination and are attending a traditional high school and to students at a secondary school who did not pass the Common Entrance Examination. Comparisons will be made between both sets of students, males and females in the same school, males in both schools and females in both schools.

The results obtained from this project could lead to better understanding of self-esteem in this particular age group. This could help to sensitize administrators and principals to the affective needs of both male and female students as well as suggest possible reasons for the disparity in the achievements of the sexes. Guidance Counselors

could be better guided as to the needs of each population and tailor programs accordingly. It could also help to provide evidence for the hastening of the discontinuation of the Common Entrance Examination for a more equitable system that is geared to helping each student achieve his or her true potential.